Yellow!

Digital display advertising for small business.

Everything you need to know about digital display advertising.

If you use the internet, you've seen digital display ads. They pop up almost everywhere you go online – alongside news articles, on social media or at the top of your favourite gossip site or sports blog.

Eye-catching and impactful, display ads can include photos, images, videos and interactive elements in a range of shapes, sizes and formats. And because they're so versatile, they're an effective way to boost brand awareness, reach new audiences and push potential customers toward a sale.

The good news? You don't need a massive marketing budget to get results with digital display advertising. In fact, it's more affordable than it seems, even for smaller businesses. That's one of the reasons display should be an integral part of your online marketing, along with search and social media.

This how-to guide is designed to get you started. We take you through the basic guidelines and technical specs and provide some tips to help you maximise the impact of your ad spend.

Let's get started.

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Digital advertising by the numbers.

Digital advertising in Australia, by the numbers.

Despite inflation and other pressures on Australians, the digital advertising market is still showing strong growth – in fact, overall spend is projected to reach a massive $12.56 billion in 2023.

The past decade has seen Australian businesses move roughly half their ad budgets online, with SMBs shifting an even larger proportion to the digital space. A significant 44% of digital ad spend now comes from small businesses.

Video and mobile continue to dominate, with 82% of global internet traffic coming from video[1] and 58% of web traffic from mobile devices.[2]

These trends reflect the continuing effectiveness of digital advertising for all types and sizes of businesses. For smaller companies, in particular, digital is a cost-effective way to reach consumers as ad budgets shrink.

Digital also offers a level of precision and insight that was once out of reach for smaller businesses – specific targeting, personalisation and smart analytics.

What does this mean for your business? Digital advertising is no longer an add-on, it's a standard part of the advertising package – and mobile-optimised content, along with video, needs to be included. If you're not using these tools to promote your small business, it's time to start.

Digital display: the basics.

There are many different paid ad types on the internet – search ads, social media ads, native advertising and display.

Display ads are the ones that look most like traditional print ads, often with a headline, image and link in a defined box or banner format. They appear in set paid ad spaces on websites, either as a banner at the top of the page, in a column at the side of the text or between paragraphs of text.

How do you get your ads to pop up in the right spaces, in front of the right audience? Here's a look at the basics.

How do you buy a display space?

Most digital advertising is managed by network providers – companies that sell space on behalf of publishers (websites, apps and email providers) to advertisers (that is, businesses like yours).

These providers usually offer tools to help you design your ads and analyse your campaign results, and they also sell ad spaces. One of the best-known providers is, naturally, the Google Display Network (GDN), which displays ads across over 35 million websites and apps.

Display advertising with Yellow Pages.

Not quite ready to deal with the big guns at Google? Yellow Pages' Digital Display service is an SMB-focused Aussie alternative. With local knowledge and buying power, we're uniquely placed to support smaller businesses with their digital strategy.

We manage everything for you – from budgeting and ad design to bidding and placement, performance analytics and reporting. You get your ads on the same relevant local websites, apps and social media as major Australian brands without the need to work out the details yourself. Even better, we're cost-effective in comparison with larger providers.

The basics continued: paying for display.

How you pay for display advertising depends on the goals of your campaign. Here's a look at the three main pricing structures.

Cost per thousand impressions (CPM).

With CPM, your advertising costs are based on the number of viewers who see your ad. This model works well when you know your campaign will have a strong click-through rate (for example, if you have a major sale or promotion running) and want to maximise potential customers.

Cost per Click (CPC).

CPC pricing means you only pay when a potential customer clicks on your ad. This can be a cost-effective way to begin with display advertising. You still get the brand awareness benefits even if fewer customers click through.
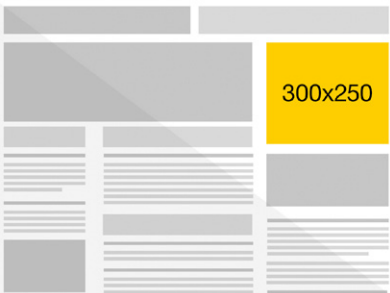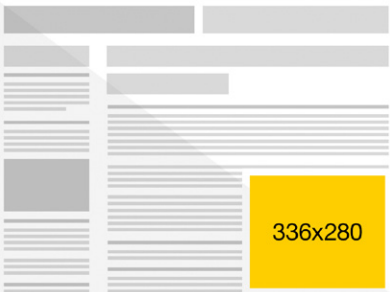
Cost per acquisition (CPA).

Sometimes called Cost per lead (CPL). Under this structure, you only pay when users complete a specific action, like buying a product or signing up for your email list. CPA can be an excellent way to drive audience growth, but you must ensure you have a system set up to follow up leads after the campaign.

Ad formats and sizes, at a glance.

Because you'll probably manage display ads through a provider, you won't need to fiddle with formatting and pixels too much.

Still, it's useful to understand the basic ad sizes and formats to understand what your campaign will look like to your customers. Here's a look at the five top-performing display formats, according to Google.

Ad type	Size and use	Text ads	Display ads	Mobile text & display ads
MREC 	**300 x 250 pixels** Performs well when embedded within an article or at the end of articles. View actual size.	✓	✓	✓
Large rectangle 	**336 x 280 pixels** Performs well when embedded within text content or at the end of articles. View actual size.	✓	✓	

Continued over the page.

Ad formats and sizes, at a glance.

| Ad type	Size and use	Text ads	Display ads	Mobile text & display ads
Leaderboard	**728 x 90 pixels** Performs well if placed above main content and on forums. View actual size.	✓	✓	
Half page	**300 x 600 pixels** One of the fastest growing sizes, which indicates a trend where businesses are preferring more visually impactful ads. View actual size.	✓	✓	
Large mobile banner	**320 x 100p pixels** Also known as the 'large mobile banner'. Can be used as an alternative to the 300 x 250. These ads offer advertisers twice the height of standard 'mobile leaderboard'. View actual size.			✓

Beyond the banner: other ad formats.

Of course, some ads don't fit into the standard formats. Depending on the content you want to use, the customers you want to target and the goals of your campaign, you may want to look beyond the static skyscraper or banner format.

▶ Rich media ads.

'Rich media' refers to content that changes when a viewer interacts with it. For example, a banner or in-text ad that expands when a user scrolls over it or a video that starts to play when it appears on a user's screen. Rich media can be a way to get your valuable video content in front of more potential customers.
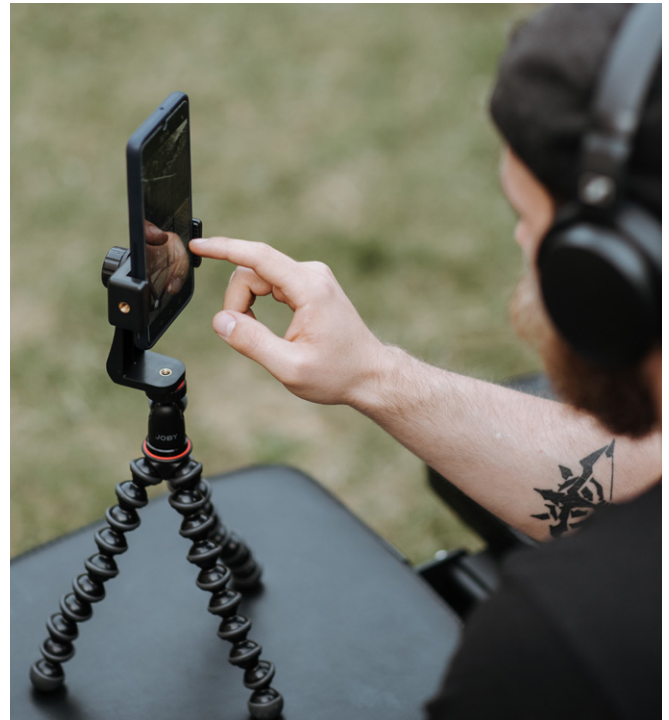
➤ Interstitial ads.

Instead of appearing on a web page, these full-screen ads pop up 'between' pages; for example, when you click through to read an article or scroll further down a page.

Generally, users need to click out or click a close button to move away from the ad. Because interstitial ads demand an action from the user, they can be an excellent way to encourage customers to sign up for your newsletter or enter a competition.
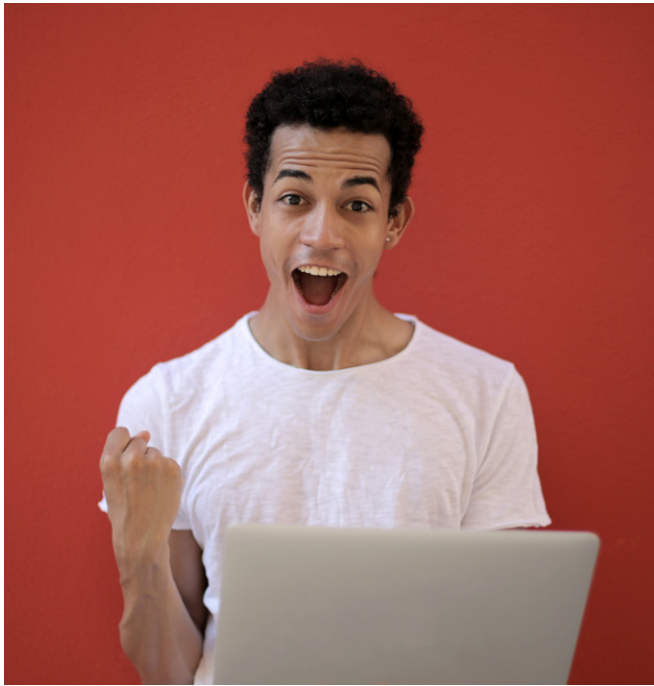
⧉ Overlay ads.

Overlay ads appear over the top of a web page or video and must be closed manually by the user. Unlike interstitial ads, they're transparent, making them slightly less obtrusive. Because this format can be used in video content it can reach audiences who may not read articles or traditional online content.

Five tips for display success.

Internet users see hundreds, if not thousands, of display ads daily. How do you make your little ads stand out in this oversaturated environment? It's about being clear, direct and personal. Here's how:

1. Keep it simple.

You're paying for ad space, so you might as well cram every message in, right? Not quite. Keeping your ad layouts clear, clean, and simple is far more effective – use few words, one main image and just three to four colours to make your ad visually engaging without being overwhelming.

2. Engage, don't annoy.

Eye-catching visuals and interactive elements are great, but annoying, repetitive content is not. Noise, flashing visuals, interruptions and hidden close buttons are quick paths to turning people off rather than pulling them in. Trust that your customers will click if they're interested rather than forcing them to engage.

3. Use landing pages.

Dedicated landing pages are about making life easier for your customers so they're more likely to stick around. For example, if you're promoting a product giveaway, your landing page would include a sign-up form and key product information. Then, instead of going to your main webpage and navigating around to find what they're looking for, customers get the information they need with one click.

4. Get creative with calls to action.

A call to action (CTA) tells your customer what to do – and the more specific you can make it, the better. That means, instead of 'buy now' or 'find out more' try 'Get your $20 voucher now' or 'Click to download your free eBook'.

5. Test, tweak, test.

The ability to test and adjust is a major benefit of online advertising. Most display providers offer analytics and reporting tools. You can try different formats, content and target audiences, then adjust your approach as you find out what works for your business.

Great display ads in the wild.

What do those display best practice pointers look like in real life? Here's a look at some businesses using display to great effect – with fantastic results.

Simple layout and minimal text

Strong call to action

Limited colour palette

Great display ads in the wild.

WHAT AMAZING
IDEAS WILL YOU
INSPIRE NEXT?

LEXUS

Curious? Click to learn more.
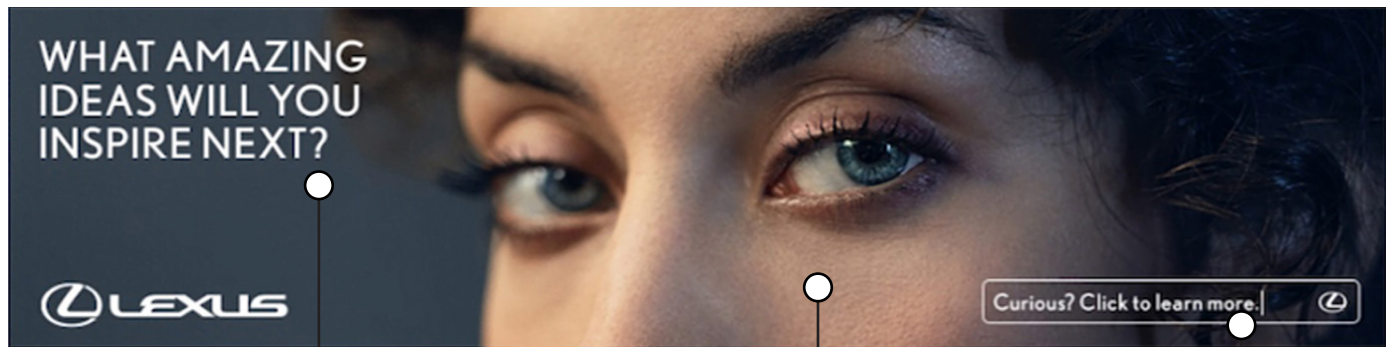
Limited text used to draw in user

Compelling image

Intriguing CTA

CarDekho
RIGHT CAR, RIGHT NOW

Book Now

CarDekho
RIGHT CAR, RIGHT NOW

Book Now

CarDekho
RIGHT CAR, RIGHT NOW

Book Now

Limited colour palette
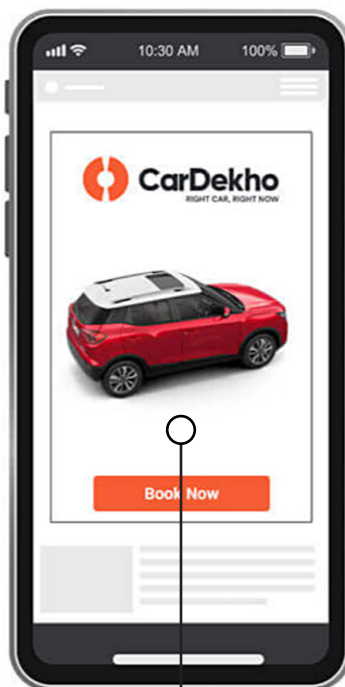
Simple design

Interactive rotating image

Zeroing in on your target audience.

Defining your target audience may be the most important part of a campaign — after all, even great-looking display ads won't be effective if the right people don't see them.

Here's how to figure out exactly who you're targeting:

Check out your current customer base.

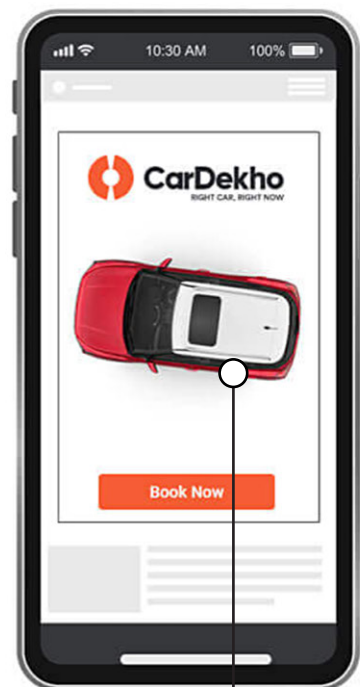Want to find new customers? Start with the ones you already have. Use Google Analytics, sales data, market research, email data and any other information you can access to home in on your typical customer.

Create a persona.

An audience persona is a detailed profile of a single, fictional person that acts as a stand-in for your target audience. If you're keen to expand your current audience, build your persona based on insights from your customer research. If you're launching a campaign to reach out to a new audience, create a persona based on potential customers.

The more information, the better, including:
• Age
• Gender
• Location
• Preferences and interests
• Demographics – income, education, employment, household size, etc.
• Life stage

Get to know your customer.

The more fleshed-out you can make your persona, the more valuable it will be when creating content. Make it realistic by including not just dry demographic details but a name, age, hobbies, feelings and motivations – anything that will help you get inside your customer's head.

That understanding can help you create targeted, relevant content for your digital campaigns. For example, if your persona is a health-conscious mother of young children, you can create display ads with messaging around quick, easy, healthy food options. Essentially, the more you understand your customer, the easier it will be to understand their motivations and provide solutions to their problems.

Targeting: right ad, right place, right time.

Creating content to suit your audience is one thing, making sure that content reaches the right people is another. This is where targeting comes in.

Your display ad provider will have targeting tools available to help you reach the right people based on interest, demographics or keywords.

You can target by:

Interests.

This lets you place ads based on audience interests – for example if you're selling workout gear, you might target people interested in fitness or weight loss.

Keywords.

This approach uses keywords to place ads alongside relevant content. For example, if you're running a campaign to promote your meal delivery service, you might set keywords like 'dinner recipes' or 'meal ideas'.

Placement/site.

With this approach, you choose specific sites or categories that fit your content – like recipe or cooking blogs if you're selling kitchen gadgets, or parenting advice sites if you're promoting baby gear.

Demographics.

This involves targeting based on age, gender, location, marital status or a combination of several demographic factors. For example, if you're selling a moisturising cream for mature skin, you could target women aged 45-65 in a higher income bracket.

Remarketing.

Also known as retargeting, this approach uses past browsing data to inform current targeting. For example, if a customer visits your site and looks at a pair of shoes, you can target them with display ads for that specific item to push them toward a purchase.

Need help getting on target?

Targeting can be complex, particularly if you're new to the digital display game. That's why working with an expert provider – like Yellow Pages – is invaluable. Our in-depth understanding of the local market and the latest digital display advertising practices makes us the ideal partner for Australian SMBs.

Check out our Digital Display service to find out how we can help.[1]

Keeping tabs on your results.

There's no point investing time and money into display advertising if it doesn't deliver.

That's why tracking and measuring your work is so crucial – it helps you understand the results of your work, gives you important information for next time, and ensures that you're not wasting your ad budget.

Goal setting.

Every campaign should start with specific goals. These help you stay focused on what you're trying to achieve and help you accurately measure outcomes. Campaign goals can be as broad as raising brand awareness, or as specific as increasing email list sign-ups by 100 people per week.

Measuring success.

Once you have your campaign goals, you can set key metrics or KPIs that help you define success. These metrics should match your goals – if awareness is the goal, a KPI based on sales numbers doesn't make sense. Your display provider will have a range of metrics and reporting tools to help you assess your performance during your campaign.

Performance metrics can include:

- New site visitors – the number of unique visitors to your site during the campaign. This is a strong measure of increasing brand awareness.

- Engagement – this is measured in click-throughs, time spent on your site, number of pages viewed or interaction with your ads.

- Conversions – a conversion is a concrete action that moves a customer further along the sales journey. While you can define a conversion for yourself, they generally include things like email sign-ups, account creation or filling in an enquiry form on your site.

- Cost-per-acquisition – this measure helps you understand the ROI for a campaign by dividing the total amount spent by the number of new customers or conversions you achieve.

Related: How to measure the success of your small business digital marketing.[1]

Adjust as you go.

The best thing about digital? Its immediacy. All that tracking and analysis isn't just useful as a post-campaign exercise – it can be used to tweak and adjust your campaign settings in real-time. If you find certain ad placements or keywords aren't working, change them.

If some of your display ads seem to outperform others, shift your campaign to focus on that content. It's about using real-time information to maximise performance in the moment.

Help and support for digital newbies.

If you're new to digital display, using this tactic for your small business might feel overwhelming.

You need to pick a provider, set goals and a budget, set a target audience, create ads to fit layout options, and then measure your success. We wouldn't blame you for putting it into the too-hard basket.

The good news? Display is simpler than you think – and expert support is at hand. The Yellow Pages team has been helping small to medium Australian businesses manage their digital display advertising for years.

We know all the ins and outs, all the best practices and must-haves.

We handle the whole process for you – from goals, to targeting, to ad creation and measurement – and ensure that you maximise the value of your ad budget.

Want to get your message to the right customer, at the right time, in the right place? Make it happen now with Yellow Pages.

Digital display ads – actual sizes.

MREC: 300 x 250 pixels

Half page: 300 x 600 pixels

Large rectangle: 336 x 280 pixels

Leaderboard: 728 x 90 pixels

Large mobile banner: 320 x 100 pixels