

DIGITAL ADVERTISING PRINT DIAL TONE

WHAT IS DIGITAL ADVERTISING?

Digital advertising is the use of networks and computer-based processes to specify, create, place, and produce ads from many sources into many different vehicles for promotion using a complex web of business-to-business services.

Within 5 years, advertising workflow will become a *print dial-tone* service—simple, reliable, ubiquitous, fast, and relatively cheap.

The transition from analog to networked digital advertising workflow is a multi-billion dollar opportunity for publishers of magazines, catalogs, and directories as well as for direct-marketing businesses, as measured in reduced cycle time and cost savings.

DIGITAL ADVERTISING DIAL-TONE

Digital advertising content flows from many sources to many destinations, with numerous value-added processes in-between. Workflow is accomplished through an extended service infrastructure. All businesses involved will be interconnected across networks. Standards enable and orchestrate the web of services so that systems can interoperate.

As conceptualized here, the digital advertising service infrastructure has three layers:

Advertising life cycle—The outer layer depicts discrete stages of activity from media planning to ad distribution that fulfill demand for advertising.

Service cycle—The middle layer shows the cycle of steps that implement a business-to-business relationship across networks.

Standards—The inner-most hub focuses on the four levels of shared conventions that enable connectivity and orchestrate business, media, content, and communication processes across networks.



The digital advertising process takes place between many different kinds of businesses. Their interactions are organized into three layers of activity. The outermost layer shows the basic content and media process for digital advertisements. The next layer shows the cycle of events that implement the business-to-business relationship. The innermost layer(s) show the types of standards needed to enable advertising workflow across networks.

ADVERTISING LIFE CYCLE

Advertising has a life cycle—a recurring pattern of activities involving different groups of businesses that together fulfill demand for advertising. Eight stages are shown here:

1. PLAN MEDIA PROGRAM

The life cycle of an advertisement starts when the advertiser contacts the ad agency to develop a media advertising program.

SERVICE CYCLE

At each stage of the digital advertising life cycle, business-to-business relationships follow a fairly consistent pattern of events which we call the service cycle. Steps in the service cycle include:

1. DEMAND

At each stage of the digital advertising life cycle, demand drives the service cycle. It starts with a customer researching capabilities across the Internet.

STANDARDS

Digital advertising workflows take place across networks. Connectivity between originators and providers is based on standards for digital communications, business transactions, content, and media process control.

1. BUSINESS

Business-to-business standards establish how services will be conducted over networks, including specifications via job ticketing and service manifests, transaction processing via electronic data interchange (EDI), and financial services via electronic commerce (EC).

2. MEDIA

Media standards establish expectations and practices for controlling media processes across networks, including network color services based on US and international standards such as SWOP, SNAP, GRACOL, and EUROSCALE.

3. CONTENT

Content standards establish information structures and interchange packages for system-to-system and business-to-business transfer of content, such as portable document formats. The emerging standard is Adobe® PDF.

4. COMMUNICATION

Communication standards establish access to classes digital communications services, enabled through internet protocols (IP) and standard interfaces to value-added services such as remote proofing, and digital delivery of ads.

3. SETUP

Set-ups configure customer and supplier environments to the requirements of the service agreement. Business, media, content and communications procedures must be synchronized. Before the job begins, set-up and confirmation procedures demonstrate this. Later on, prior to individual tasks, set-up steps tailor the resources.

3. AD PRODUCTION

Ads approved by the advertiser are produced. The ad agency and creative services work with prepress services across networks to create digital masters. A digital master contains all of the content, design formatting, media process parameters needed to drive the range of intended ad placements. Digital ads are managed in digital libraries to facilitate their reuse or re-purposing. Color managed proofs are transmitted and printed digitally as needed.

4. AD PLACEMENT

Ad agencies place ads in multiple publications (as well as other venues). Digital ad masters are sent to publications via networks, bypassing analog film and proofs. Network distribution services may be used to facilitate ad placement in multiple publications.

4. PREFLIGHT

Preflights maintain the integrity of information and material flows between functions and organizations. A structural requirement for network printing, preflight is performed before and following transfer to ensure that agreed service parameters have been met.

5. PUBLICATION DEVELOPMENT

Publications accept digital ads from many sources, and manage them for placement in one or more issues. Publishers work with creative services—including writers, editors, illustrators, photographers, stock photo agencies, and designers—to develop the stories and layout of editorial and advertising copy.

7. ACCEPTANCE

Delivery of the final output fulfills the service agreement. It triggers final payments and disposition activities.

8. FULFILLMENT

Publication printers work with finishing and fulfillment services to distribute the published advertisements to end-consumers. Copies and distribution counts are sent to ad agencies and advertisers as final proof, triggering acceptance and completion of the cycle.

7. PUBLICATION PRINTING

Publications work with their production services to send digital masters to printers via networks, bypassing analog film and proofs. Network distribution services may be used to transmit digital masters to multiple printing sites. Color managed proofs are transmitted and printed digitally as needed.

6. VALIDATION

Validation establishes successful completion of a task or process. Across networks, validation becomes remote digital proofing—both soft proofing on screen and digital printing. Both underscore the need for network color management in which customer and provider adhere to standard set-ups that enable color expectations to be established and fulfilled unambiguously.

6. PUBLICATION PRODUCTION

The publication and creative services work with prepress services across networks to create digital masters for the issue. Digital copy and ads are managed in digital libraries to facilitate their reuse or re-purposing. Color managed proofs are transmitted and printed digitally as needed.

CALL TO ACTION

1. **Get digital.**
2. **Get networked.**
3. **Adopt industry standards.**
4. **Re-engineer your advertising related services for delivery across networks.**
5. **Align with technology partners you can trust and who will be there when you need them.**