



DDMA Whitepaper

The Brilliant Basics of Social Media Advertising

The Ultimate Guide to Engaging Campaigns Across the Major Social Media Platforms



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Introduction

In today’s digital environment, social media platforms are central to reaching and engaging with all kinds of audiences. From the visual storytelling on Instagram to viral trends on TikTok, there are different opportunities for advertisers in every platform. This white paper will guide you through the best practices—the Brilliant Basics—for advertising across the major social platforms, including Meta (Facebook and Instagram), TikTok, Snapchat, Reddit, Pinterest, YouTube Shorts and LinkedIn.

By understanding the nature and nuances of each platform, marketers are able to create and execute effective campaigns that deliver engaging content and resonate with users. Whether it’s from tapping into the creative potential of reels on Meta, or leveraging the interactive features of Snapchat, this guide will provide the knowledge needed to navigate the ever-evolving world of social media advertising.

The chapters in this white paper will each delve into the Brilliant Basics of a specific platform, giving you a deeper understanding and overview of the ad formats you can use, including creative recommendations, and technical specifications you’ll need to set your campaigns up for success. Equipped with this end-to-end overview, you will be able to create compelling campaigns tailored to the unique dynamics of each social media channel.

Background and purpose

This white paper is written by the DDMA Committee Social Media. Each chapter draws on their expertise, offering valuable insights. It contains essential information into a single overview, filling a knowledge gap that previously existed. Until now, an overview like this has been missing. This document was created to provide practical tools to enhance briefings and bridge the gap between clients and agencies. Additionally, it includes tips and tricks from the DDMA Committee Social Media to further support your advertising strategies.



Meta

(Facebook, Instagram & Threads)

Navigating Facebook, Instagram and Threads's advertising landscape offers vast opportunities for engagement. Facebook's broad feature set caters to diverse content needs, while Instagram excels in visual storytelling and Threads brings the focus back to the conversation. This chapter will guide you through optimizing ads across these platforms, focusing on effective placements, mobile-first design, and leveraging video to enhance your campaign's impact.



Facebook



Facebook is one of the largest and most well-known social media platforms globally. It allows users to create profiles, share updates, photos, and videos, join groups, and connect with friends and family. What makes Facebook unique is its versatility and breadth of features, catering to a wide range of content types and user demographics. Users can share text updates, photos, videos, links, and live streams. Its integration of Groups and Pages allows for niche communities and business marketing, while Facebook Stories and Reels provide additional avenues for creative expression through short-lived or short-form content. Facebook's comprehensive advertising tools also allow for highly targeted and creative marketing campaigns.

Threads



Threads is a text-based conversation app designed for sharing updates and engaging in public conversations, built by Meta's Instagram team. It allows users to post messages, links, photos, and videos, similar to Twitter/X. There is a 500 word count for each post and allows for replies that create a thread. What makes Threads stand out is its focus on real-time conversations and its ability to create an account using your Instagram account. It gives users and brands the possibility to seamlessly share content between the two platforms.

Instagram



Instagram is a photo and video-sharing platform that emphasizes visual content. Users can post images, short videos, and stories. Instagram stands out with its strong emphasis on visual storytelling. Users create and share high-quality photos and videos, using filters and editing tools to enhance their content. Instagram Stories offer ephemeral content that encourages creativity with stickers, gifs, and interactive elements like polls and questions. The platform's aesthetic focus has cultivated a culture of visual sophistication, making it a go-to for influencers, artists, and brands looking to showcase their creativity in a visually compelling way. Instagram also supports IGTV, which allows for longer videos, catering to content creators and brands looking to engage their audience with extended video content.

Reels

Reels is a feature within Facebook and Instagram that allows users to create and share short, engaging videos set to music or audio clips, similar to TikTok. Reels differentiates itself by focusing on short-form, engaging videos. The feature integrates creative tools such as audio tracks, effects, and AR filters, allowing users to produce dynamic and entertaining content. Reels emphasizes trends and challenges, making it a space for spontaneous and viral creativity within the broader Instagram ecosystem. Its placement within the Explore tab also provides significant visibility, encouraging users to innovate and participate in popular trends.



Ad formats and Specs

Because there are so many options on Meta, we made a split in the placements based on the different creative ratios they have. This split includes Feeds, Stories & Reels, and In-Stream Ads. After that, we zoom in on which ad formats are supported for each of these placements.

Feeds

When you select the feed placement, you can run ads both on Facebook and on Instagram. This supports the 1:1 ratio on statics and 1:1 or 4:5 for video. There are a different ad formats that you can select for the feed placement:

- ▼ **Single image or video:** this format will show a still image, a video or a slideshow with multiple images. Only the video can be 4:5 ratio. Currently, single image or video is the only advertising option for Threads. The recommended aspect ratio for that channel is 1:1
- ▼ **Carousel:** this format gives you the opportunity to showcase two or more images and videos, each with its own headline, description, link and call to action.
- ▼ **Collection:** this format will show a video or image with a row of product images below it. The collection format enables you to use Instant Experience, which is a full-screen landing page that loads instantly when someone taps on the ad on Facebook or Instagram.
- ▼ **Advantage+ Catalog ads:** these ads, formally known as dynamic ads, automatically deliver relevant product recommendations to people based on their interests, intent and actions based on the products in your catalog.

Stories & Reels

For both stories and reels the creative ratio is 9:16. However, they do have different safe zones that need to be taken into account. For Stories and Reels we have to make sure they do not overlap with the user interface. This can help you avoid the key elements of your ad being cropped out or covered by the profile icon or a call to action. The ad formats that can be used on Stories and Reels are:

- ▼ **Single image or video:** this format will show a still image, a video or a slideshow with multiple images. On Stories the ads will not contain any copy, just a CTA button that will redirect to the landing page after a click. Also beware that if your video is longer than 15 seconds the video will be stopped when users do not click on the keep watching.
- ▼ **Carousel:** these ads gives you the opportunity to showcase two or more images and videos, each with its link and call to action. When using more than three slides, the carousel will turn into a short video that's expendable.
- ▼ **Collection:** this format will show a video or image with a row of product images below it. The collection format enables you to use Instant Experience, which is a full-screen landing page that loads instantly when someone taps on the ad on Facebook or Instagram. Only available on stories.
- ▼ **Advantage+ Catalog ads:** these ads, formally known as dynamic ads, automatically deliver relevant product recommendations to people based on their interests, intent and actions based on the products in your catalog. Only available on stories.

Since recommended specifications for Facebook's and Instagram's ad formats and their safe zones can change from time to time, we have not included them in this white paper. Instead, we refer you directly to Meta for the most up-to-date information.

>> More about Stories / Reels safe zones - [Click here](#)

In-stream ads

Facebook in-stream video is an ad placement where you can deliver 5- to 15-second ads to people watching videos. This includes videos on Facebook from familiar publishers and digital-first creators that tailor their content to Facebook audiences and live videos from a selected group of approved partners. Your ads can appear before, during or after these videos. Most users watch this placement with their phone turned horizontal, that is why 16:9 ratio is recommended.

Explore more/all available ads placements on Meta - [Click here](#)
Explore more ad formats on Meta here - [Click here](#)

#1 COMMITTEE TIP

“Videos are native to Reels, while static images are not organically pushed and can feel out of place when scrolling through this placement. Therefore, we recommend using only videos here. However, if you still prefer to showcase static products, you can include them in your videos using Advantage+ catalog ads. Advantage+ catalog ads.”

#2 COMMITTEE TIP

“Use the Reels placement as the master template (9:16). Keep the bottom 35% free of text, logos, and other key elements. What is safe for Reels is safe for Stories. Search for @thesafezonechecker on Instagram to access a page where you can check if your messages are within safe zones. Scroll to the effects icon, click ‘Try it’ and upload your 9:16 video.”





Brilliant Basics

- ▼ Use multiple ad placements and ad formats
- ▼ Think mobile-first and frame for mobile
- ▼ Build for context
- ▼ Capture attention quickly
- ▼ Brand early and often
- ▼ Highlight what matters
- ▼ Think sound off and sound on
- ▼ Always build for sound on for Reels
- ▼ Follow the Three Reels principles for Reels

We take a closer look at each of these fundamental brilliant basics below.

Looking at the specifications mentioned above, Meta offers a broad range of **ad formats** and **ad placements**. By using 6+ placements (or Advantage+ Placements) the system can access a broader pool of opportunities. Using a mix of ad formats helps you increase campaign effect as well because mixed-asset ideas connect deeper.

Although Meta's format and placement opportunities are almost endless, always think **mobile-first** and frame for mobile because most users are mobile-only. By **building for context**, you create ads that fit into the context of where they are seen, making your ads more native. Although not being a video-only platform: don't rule out the importance of video for Meta. Videos offer you the best and easiest opportunities to excel in brilliant basics like **capturing attention**, branding and highlighting what matters. On average meta users watch videos for a duration of 2 seconds, so it's important that you include your **brand early on** and **highlight what matters**. On Facebook and Instagram users consume content both with and without sound on, so you must ensure your ads are understandable without sound but also include sound for the users that have their sound on.

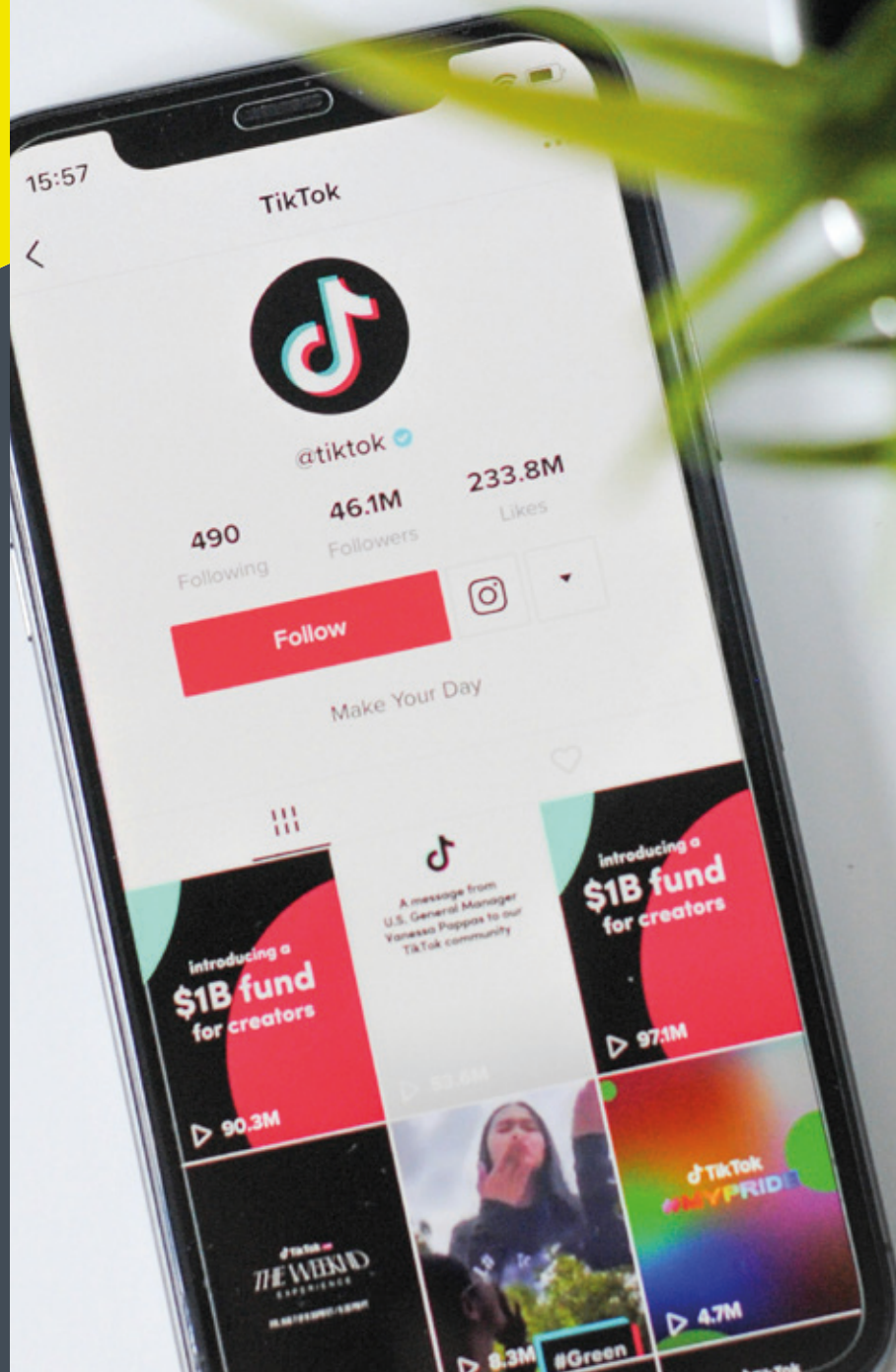
#3 COMMITTEE TIP

"Invite a connection by casting real people in your reel to make it relatable. Tell stories people recognize, feature people who feel "like us" and use a visual tone and set of codes that people know. You can work with creators as well or use user-generated content to be more native on Instagram."

Moreover, Reels – a full-screen, immersive video format – is gaining popularity. Always build for **sound on for Reels** to make your video entertaining: audio – whether that's music, voiceover or sound effects – is a key driver of engagement and entertainment. Use the beginning of your reel to capture attention – "nail the hook" with thumb-stopping techniques in the first few seconds, the middle to maintain attention – deliver something relevant or valuable, and the conclusion to reward attention – close with a payoff, call to action or invitation to participate. Once you've mastered the creative essentials, try exploring different ways to make your reel even more entertaining, relatable and digestible: **the Three Reels principles**. But just like with any other social platform: a one-size-fits-all approach does not exist. These brilliant basics may be a starting point to refine existing learnings. Continue to test and learn based on your brand and business objectives to further optimize outcomes.

Brilliant Basics for Threads

- ▼ Less is more, even with a 500 characters limit and five-minute video length limit
- ▼ Make it feel native and engaging since ads will appear in user feeds
- ▼ Take a cross-channel approach by for example use Instagram Stories to direct users to specific posts on Threads
- ▼ Use words often used and searched for by your target audience since Threads offers keyword search



TikTok

TikTok is a social media app focused on short-form video content. It quickly became popular for its engaging and easily consumable content. TikTok is renowned for its highly engaging and creative short-form videos. The platform's sophisticated algorithm ensures that content reaches a broad audience, fostering a culture of viral trends and challenges. TikTok's built-in editing tools, music library, and effects enable users to create polished videos with ease. This chapter will guide you through optimizing ads across this platform.



On TikTok everything is vertical. Some basic recommendations are:

- ▼ not using white backgrounds
- ▼ using high resolution videos
- ▼ create for sound on
- ▼ localizing creatives (different languages might get rejected by the ad policy team)
- ▼ no watermarks
- ▼ videos can't be longer than 60 seconds

These recommendations apply to all the TikTok ad formats listed below.

Ad formats and Specs

The ad formats that can be used on TikTok are:

- ▼ **Image / Video ads:** TikTok offers the possibility for both video and image ads, however, video is highly recommended as it's more native to the platform.
- ▼ **Spark Ads:** This is a native ad format that allows you to leverage organic TikTok posts in your advertising. Spark Ads use posts from real TikTok accounts and are great for collaborations with creators.
- ▼ **Carousel Ads:** This format is image-based, allowing advertisers to upload 2-35 images in sequence. Users can swipe between different images, great for when you have multiple products / USP's or elements you would like to show within an ad.
- ▼ **Video Shopping Ads:** This format is used for the Product Sales objective. They use product catalog images and show up to 20 products in one ad.

On TikTok, everything is vertical, so a 9:16 aspect ratio applies to all formats.

Since recommended specifications for TikTok's ad formats and their safe zones can change from time to time, we have not included them in this whitepaper. Instead, we refer you directly to TikTok for the most up-to-date information.

Explore all available ad formats on TikTok - [Click Here](#)

Always make sure to keep the platforms safe zones in mind, as copy and buttons may be overlapping your video. Depending on phone model and operating system, the maximum number of characters differs. You can use the [TikTok preview tool](#) to see how your ad looks like on different devices. TikTok suggests keeping the ad captions within 100 characters to avoid being covered by 'See more.'

#4 COMMITTEE TIP

"Don't take the safe zones too literally, making sure that the most important information / product or brand placements are in the green zone. If you add in any text, make sure it's in the green zone. But your video overall should be full size."



Brilliant Basics

- ▼ Make sure your assets are TikTok **native**
- ▼ Try to incorporate **trends**, memes, or challenges on TikTok
- ▼ Take the **production principles** in consideration when creating assets
- ▼ **Structure** your videos to get attention and provoke action
- ▼ Grab attention with **editing techniques**
- ▼ Use **sound** to engage with your audience

We take a closer look at these fundamental brilliant basics below.

The first thing that TikTok is advising, is making sure your ads are **native** to the platform. But what does that mean for TikTok? To make assets native, it's good to include specific TikTok features like text overlays, voiceovers, green screen and duets. Including these elements will make sure ads catch attention and do not feel like polished ads.

Another way to make engaging ads on TikTok is to make sure you incorporate **trends** in your campaign creation. 77% of TikTok users say they like it when brands use trends, memes or challenges. **Production principles** are not complicated but it's important to get the basics right. Making sure content is vertical, high-resolution and considering the safe zones.

Next to that it's also important to refresh creatives frequently to prevent creative fatigue. How to **structure** your ads to hook viewers? TikTok recommends using a three-part structure consisting of a hook, body, and close. Where the hook consists of communicating the value proposition and keeping attention with hooks that include suspense, surprise, and emotion. The body consisting of the product or service and the close should include a clear CTA, recommended to do this with a CTA card.

Editing techniques like music, transitions, movement, text overlay and branding work best to capture attention, TikTok says that faster scene changes typically draw viewers in. Lastly **sound** is important, according to 88% of TikTok users, sound is vital to the TikTok experience. To find the right tune for your ad, you can use TikTok's Commercial Music Library for songs that are available to use or create original sounds that put you in the conductor's seat.

#5 COMMITTEE TIP

"To make sure creatives are native, you can work with TikTok creators. You can look for trending topics and content at the Discover part."



Snapchat

Snapchat is a multimedia messaging app known for its disappearing messages, real-time sharing, and creative AR features. The temporary nature of Snaps promotes spontaneous, authentic interactions, while AR lenses and filters let users enhance their photos and videos with animations. The Discover section showcases content from publishers and influencers, and Snap Map adds a geographic layer to content sharing, creating a uniquely immersive experience. This chapter will guide you through the advertising possibilities on Snapchat, helping you harness the full potential of the platform.



Ad formats and Specs

On Snapchat there are a few different ad formats available. All formats are vertical, so the **9:16 aspect ratio** is used, and both video and image ads are supported. For all ads that support copy, the headline can be up to 34 characters. We will zoom in further on the different recommendations per ad format:

- ▶ **Single image or video ads** can show up in the Stories and Spotlight ad placements. Recommended is to limit the amount of text used within the video or image, making sure your proposition is clear within second 0, adding a clear CTA.
- ▶ **Story ads** are different from the single ads because you can tap through a series of video / images. Making them more suitable for driving deeper engagement and displaying multiple storylines or product USP's for example.
- ▶ **Collection ads** have the possibility to link your products in the ad, driving the user directly to the shop or website. They are advised for conversion objectives and can be easily used in always on campaigns.
- ▶ **Commercials** are the only ad format that is non-skippable on Snapchat. Only the first 6 seconds of your video are non-skippable, even though the video can be up to 3 minutes. The minimum length of the video is 3 seconds, and these ads are most relevant for brand awareness objectives.
- ▶ **Dynamic ads** can be used when you have a catalogue and a snap pixel. Mostly bigger e-com clients will use this format to dynamically show their range of products. This could be based on their actions taken on your site or in your app or to find prospective customers by serving them relevant products built directly from your product catalog.
- ▶ **AR Lenses and Filters** are a way to really engage with users. The difference between the two is that a lens has more complex animations with AR and occurs when a user opens the camera. The filter comes closer to static images that are put over a picture or video and occurs after Snapchatters take a photo or video using the Camera.

Since recommended specifications for Snapchat's ad formats and their safe zones can change from time to time, we have not included them in this whitepaper. Instead, we refer you directly to Snapchat for the most up-to-date information.

Explore more ad formats and specs on Snapchat - [Click here](#)
Find out more about safe zones per ad format - [Click here](#)

#6 COMMITTEE TIP

“When you are just starting out with Snapchat you can start with using short Single Video ads as well as the commercial ads, since it might not always be feasible to create a lens or filter. When you are looking to build a bigger presence on Snapchat, working with AR/VR filters really increases visibility. Since the app opens on the lens, we see that it's a great way to reach a bigger audience on Snapchat.”

Brilliant Basics

- ▼ Choose the **right format** for your campaign objective
- ▼ Put your product/message **front and center** within the first seconds
- ▼ Make ads feel **native** with a UGC-like, vertical style
- ▼ **Entertain first**, use humour, surprise or real emotion
- ▼ Design for **sound on**, music, VO or effects add impact
- ▼ **Test** different creatives and tones consistently
- ▼ Use **Snapchat-native features** like Bitmoji, AR or AI stickers

Choosing the **right format** is the first step toward strong performance on Snapchat, whether you aim for awareness, consideration or conversion. Make sure your message or product is shown **front and center** within the first two seconds to grab attention quickly.

Ads should feel **native** to Snapchat and resemble **UGC**: vertical, mobile-shot, unpolished and spontaneous. This style resonates most with Gen Z and Millennials. It's important to **entertain first**, open with humor, emotion or a surprising visual to stand out in a fast-paced feed.

Since the majority of Snapchatters (around 65%) watch with **sound on**, audio should be part of the concept, use music, voice-over or sound effects that enhance your message. Continue to **test** creatives over time to learn what works best for your audience.

Lastly, tap into **Snapchat-native features** like Bitmoji, AR Lenses or AI stickers. These elements increase engagement and help your ad blend into the platform experience naturally.

#7 COMMITTEE TIP

“Snapchat is mostly used by Gen-Z and millennials to engage with lenses and communicate with their friends. So, try to make your ads as engaging as possible.”





Active Era



Reddit

Reddit

Reddit is a social news aggregation and discussion site where users submit text, links, and images that can be upvoted or downvoted. Its creativity stems from user-driven content and diverse subreddits, each acting as a unique community with tailored discussions, memes, AMAs (Ask Me Anything), and more. Anonymity on the platform encourages candid, in-depth conversations, fostering creative freedom without the pressure of personal branding. This chapter will explore the advertising possibilities on Reddit, showing you how to effectively engage with its diverse communities.



Ad Formats and Specs

The ad formats that can be used on Reddit are:

- ▶ **Single image or video ads:** Add an image to your ads with Image Ads—because redditors love a good visual, too. Video Ads autoplay in redditor’s feed and are a great way to capture attention at all funnel stages.
- ▶ **Carousel ads:** Showcase multiple images or videos within a single, swipeable ad unit with Carousel Ads.
- ▶ **Conversation ads:** An ad within a conversation thread, beneath the post and before the comments. This placement helps advertisers scale their reach to an audience beyond Reddit feeds and engage users while they’re the most leaned in, having authentic interactions and compelling discussions.
- ▶ **Product ads:** Drive product discovery directly by highlighting individual items with images, prices, and links, helping redditors seamlessly move from browsing to buying. Perfect for showcasing your catalog and converting intent into action.
- ▶ **AMA ads:** Host a branded Ask Me Anything (AMA) session to connect authentically with redditors. AMA Ads spotlight your live Q&A event, driving awareness and participation. A powerful way to humanize your brand, answer questions in real time, and spark conversations that build trust and community.
- ▶ **Free-form ads:** The most Reddit-unique format that allows you to get creative with a combination of text, image, video, and GIFs all in one ad. Craft a concise Too Long; Didn’t Read (TL; DR) section to summarize key points. A TL;DR offers a quick overview, catering to those who prefer a brief preview before diving into the full megapost. Organize your free-form ad with clear headings and breaks. Structuring content improves readability and guides redditors through your narrative. A well-organized ad ensures readers can easily absorb information.

#8 COMMITTEE TIP

“Turn off comments and avoid trolls and spammers who actively respond off-topic to ads on Reddit.”

Since recommended specifications for Reddit’s ad formats and their safe zones can change from time to time, we have not included them in this **whitepaper**. Instead, we refer you directly to Reddit for the most up-to-date information.

Explore all available ad formats on reddit and their specs - [Click here](#)

Brilliant Basics

- ▶ **Text** is important
- ▶ Content is **scanned from the top left**
- ▶ Get to know a **subreddit**
- ▶ Create ads specifically for **interests**
- ▶ Add **real value** to them

We take a closer look at these fundamental brilliant basics below.

Text is important on the platform, due to the central role of topics and comments. That’s why you need to pay attention to the copy of the ad. Especially the headline, as Redditors like to scan from the **top left** to the bottom right of a post. That’s why placing your brand logo on the top left of your image is recommended, as it increases brand awareness.

Additionally, it’s recommended to speak the language of Reddit in your copy. Even better is to **learn the culture** of a specific subreddit you’re targeting. Use their textual expressions and imagery in your own ads and mention them in your headline for an even better performance.

Add real value with your ads to the subcommunity. Redditors don’t follow users on the platform, they follow interests. Use ads that provide them with useful information or relevant products and services.



Pinterest

Pinterest is a visual discovery and bookmarking platform where users save (pin) images and links to themed virtual boards. Known for organizing visual inspiration, Pinterest excels in helping users discover and curate content related to their interests, such as DIY projects, recipes, fashion, and home decor. Its visual search technology enhances creativity by finding similar images and ideas. Positioned as a tool for planning and aspiration, Pinterest allows users to collect and organize ideas in a visually appealing way. This chapter will explore the advertising opportunities on Pinterest, showing you how to tap into its unique blend of inspiration and shopping convenience.





Ad Formats and Specs

The ad formats that can be used on Pinterest are:

- ▼ **Standard image or video ads** feature only one image or video. Use high-quality, vertical images and videos that will stand out in people's feeds. Lead with a clear hook within the first few seconds to capture people's attention.
- ▼ **Carousel ads** feature multiple images for people to swipe through.
- ▼ **Shopping ads** feature one image at a time and allow people to purchase products they find on Pinterest. Shopping ads follow the same specs as standard image ads.
- ▼ **Collection ads** appear as one main image above three smaller images, in feeds on mobile devices.
- ▼ **Idea ads** appear as a set of multiple videos, images, lists and custom text in a single Pin. Start with a video and build around it with original content. Share the right details about your product in the additional text.
- ▼ **Showcase ad** is a multi-layered ad format featuring multiple cards. Within each swipeable card, advertisers can add up to three features with outbound links to more content, products and more.
- ▼ **Quiz ad** is an ad format with multiple choice questions and answers. Within each quiz result, advertisers can add outbound links to more content, products and more.

Since recommended specifications for Pinterest's ad formats and their safe zones can change from time to time, we have not included them in this whitepaper. Instead, we refer you directly to Pinterest for the most up-to-date information.

Check out all ad formats on Pinterest and their ad specifications - [Click here](#)

Brilliant Basics

- ▼ Think **vertically** for the content
- ▼ Use branding **tastefully**
- ▼ Make products **stand out**
- ▼ Add a **human touch**
- ▼ Align to **moments**
- ▼ **Description copy** drives search

We take a closer look at these fundamental brilliant basics below.

Build your content using a **vertical structure**: start from the top and work downwards. This applies to both the image and the copy overlay. **Including your brand logo** is crucial as it drives higher performance. Ensure it's done tastefully, perhaps on a product or small in the top half of the Pin. Avoid placing the logo in the top right corner because the Save button will hide it. Most importantly, your content should have a **strong product focus**. Good product placement is more likely to lift conversions. Adding a **human touch** helps the audience visualize the product in their daily lives, making it more relatable and engaging. To further boost awareness, align your content with **life, seasonal, and everyday moments** throughout the year. People are constantly searching for inspiration, such as for holidays or birthdays. Tailoring your content to these specific searches will enhance its reach.

#8 COMMITTEE TIP

"Use trends.pinterest.com to follow the latest trends on the platform and to align your content accordingly."

#9 COMMITTEE TIP

"Among the many images on the platform, video content stands out more easily."



LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional networking platform where users connect, share, and explore job opportunities. It focuses on career growth and industry knowledge, allowing users to publish articles, share insights, and engage in professional discussions. The platform supports creative expression through long-form content and posts about career achievements, company updates, and industry trends. LinkedIn also encourages innovative presentations of resumes, portfolios, and business ideas. This chapter will explore LinkedIn's advertising options and how to leverage them effectively.



Ad Formats and Specs

- ▶ **Image Ads:** Use a powerful visual to capture your audience's attention. Utilize compelling images that stand out in the LinkedIn feed. Communicate value or encourage conversation with your ad copy. Customize your Call To Action (CTA) to achieve your campaign objective.
- ▶ **Video Ads:** Use sight, sound and motion to captivate a professional audience. Use all types of video in your creative library, include square and vertical. Drive more video views with auto-play video to instantly capture attention. Generate conversions by driving members to your website or a Lead Gen Form.
- ▶ **Carousel Ads:** Use a swipeable series of cards in a single ad to tell a deeper story. Use rich media from your creative library. Ability to use between 2 and 10 image cards. Customize the text for each of your image cards and maximize your message. Feature a call-to-action on each individual card, and direct your audience to fill in a Lead Gen Form, or visit your website.
- ▶ **Document Ads:** Promote documents directly in the LinkedIn feed, where members can read and download content without having to leave the platform.
- ▶ **Thought Leader Ads:** Build brand equity by sponsoring your thought leader's content. Creates content that feels more native and believable to the platform, cause it's directly from a user.
- ▶ **Messages Ads:** Start quality conversations with professionals in the LinkedIn inbox.
- ▶ **Job Ads:** Showcase job opportunities directly in the feed. Allows companies to promote open roles in a familiar feed format. Amplify reach - harness the power of Sponsored Content to reach and audience beyond your network. Only pay for interested job candidates; only clicks to the job are chargeable.
- ▶ **Article/Newsletter Ads:** Share long-form content or recurring newsletters directly in the LinkedIn feed. Position your brand as a trusted source by promoting in-depth insights, updates, or industry knowledge.
- ▶ **Event Ads:** Promote events natively on LinkedIn and drive registrations directly from the feed. Highlight key details like date, speakers, and agenda to capture interest.

Since recommended specifications for LinkedIn's ad formats and their safe zones can change from time to time, we have not included them in this whitepaper. Instead, we refer you directly to [Reddit](#) for the most up-to-date information.

Check out all Ad specifications on LinkedIn - [Click here](#)

Brilliant Basics

- ▼ Add **business associated value**
- ▼ Use a slight **negative framing**
- ▼ Applicate a **mix of content assets**
- ▼ Present **real employees**
- ▼ Address the audience with **'you'**

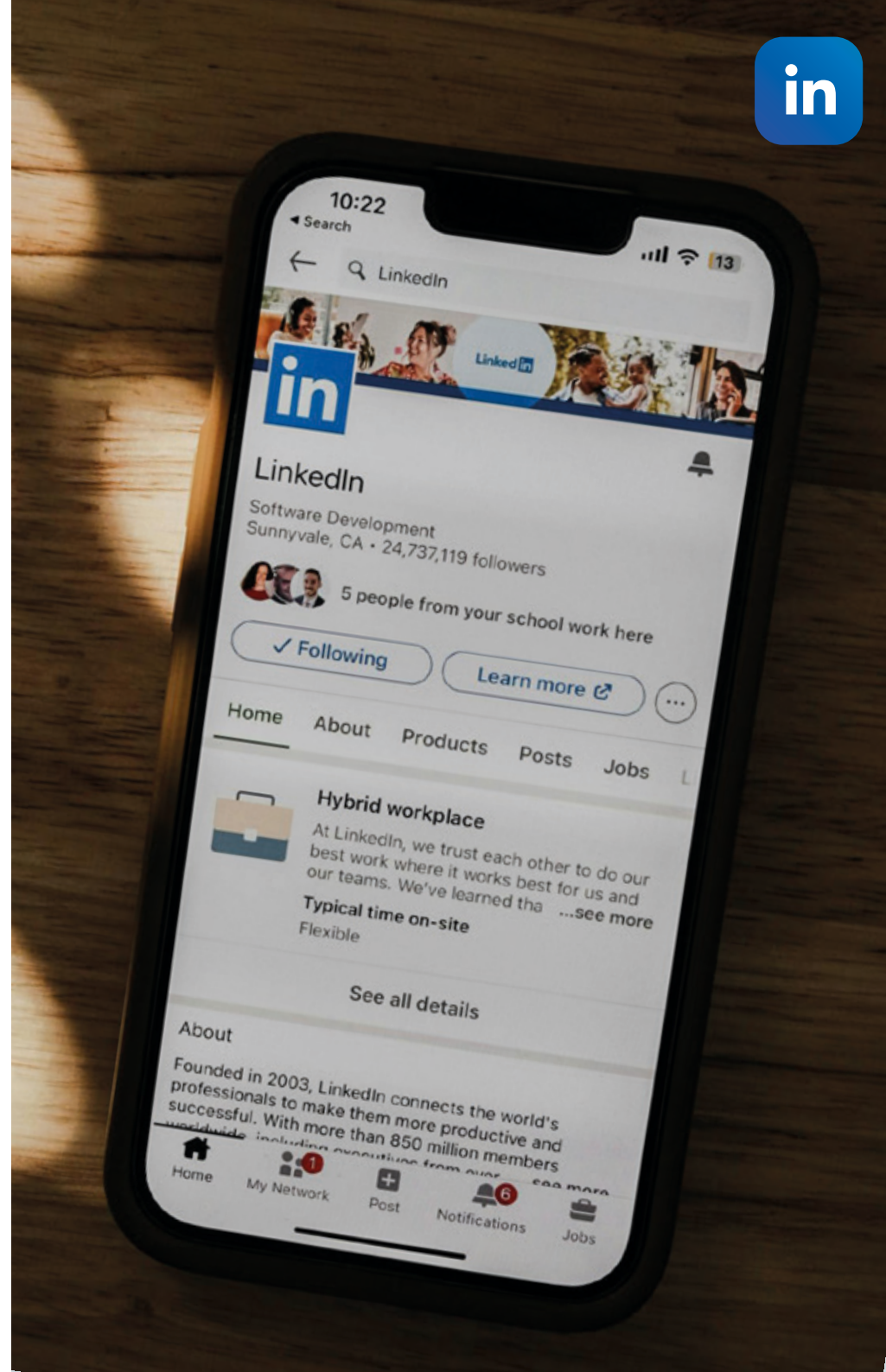
We take a closer look at these fundamental brilliant basics below.

Add value to the platform by advertising products or services which are **business associated**, like knowledge sharing or corporate social subjects. Offer your audience solutions to top-of-mind problems that are work related.

Use a slight negative framing, for example minimizing losses can sound more believable and motivating than increasing winnings. An underdog is more likeable than a show-off. Deliver your message with **a mix** of graphics, people and text overlay to extend the viewer's attention span. Especially the **use of real employees**, and not corporate stock images, drives a higher performance. Combine that with highlighting details like statistics or a thought-provoking quote, and you'll create the most platform fitting content. Finally, **using 'you'** in your copy makes the member feel like you're speaking to them one on one, rather than making a public corporate announcement.

#10 COMMITTEE TIP

"Talk to your audience directly by using function titles. If you're, for example, targeting account managers, mention them in the copy. This will increase performance."





YouTube

YouTube is the world's largest video platform, allowing billions of people to upload, watch, share, comment on, and subscribe to a vast array of video content. Its versatility supports a wide range of formats, including long-form & short-form content, like tutorials, documentaries, and vlogs, as well as live streaming for real-time events and video podcasts - on multiple screens. With the rise of YouTube Shorts, the social side of the platform offers a strategic marketing opportunity to advertisers.



YouTube Shorts

YouTube Shorts caters to the rising popularity of short-form, vertical video content on YouTube - now averaging over 200 billion daily views. This allows 2B viewers to create and watch videos up to 180 seconds in length that are designed for mobile and TV experiences. Shorts are characterized by their fast-paced, engaging, and often entertaining nature, catering to viewers' desires for quick content consumption - while every so often being part of a broader story. The YouTube Shorts feed has its own dedicated tab on the YouTube app, where viewers can find an endless feed of videos. This creates a highly discoverable environment where advertisers can reach (new) audiences and participate in viral trends, challenges, and creative storytelling.

Ad formats and Specs

Advertising on YouTube Shorts offers a variety of ad formats designed to meet different marketing objectives. Ads are integrated into the Shorts feed, appearing between organic videos as viewers scroll.

Key Technical Ad Specifications (Apply to all video formats):

- ▶ **Aspect Ratio:** 9:16 (vertical) is strongly recommended for a native, full-screen experience. 1:1 (square) and 16:9 (horizontal) are also supported but will appear with a blurred background.
- ▶ **Resolution:** 1080x1920 pixels is recommended for high-quality video.
- ▶ **Ad Length:** Ad length can range from 6 to 60 seconds.

How to leverage YouTube ad formats

Advertisers can leverage YouTube Shorts ad formats in three primary ways: 1) Obtain your marketing goals with Google AI, 2) Amplify your creator strategy across the funnel, and 3) Drive discovery for your content. Below are the key ad formats available for each approach.

▶ Obtain your marketing goals on YouTube Shorts with Google's AI ad formats

These marketing objective based AI-campaigns use Google's AI to optimize for the right moment in the consumer journey. For all three Shorts ad formats, advertisers can choose to run their campaigns exclusively on Shorts or across a mix of YouTube surfaces (in-stream, in-feed, and Shorts):

- **Video Reach Campaigns (VRC):** Designed to maximize unique reach efficiently. This format is ideal for top-of-funnel awareness goals.
- **Video View Campaigns (VVC):** Optimized to get the most views and drive consideration. A paid "view" on Shorts is counted after 10 seconds of watch time or a click. This is the primary way to buy on a cost-per-view (CPV) basis and is effective for mid-funnel engagement.
- **Demand Gen Campaigns:** Focused on generating consumer demand that drive leads, online conversions and/or online sales. If desired, these campaigns can be run on Shorts only and can leverage shopping features like product listings through the Google Merchant Center.

▶ Amplify your Creator collaboration with Partnership Ads

YouTube's new Partnership Ads format allows advertisers to boost & amplify organic content made by a YouTube Creator, often in collaboration with a brand. The video asset is hosted on the creator's channel, lending authenticity and credibility to the brand message. This is an effective way to amplify reach beyond the YouTube Creator's organic following. This "boost format" optimizes for results across the full funnel, using Google's AI formats: Video Reach Campaigns (Reach), Video View Campaigns (Engagement/Consideration), or Demand Gen campaigns (Leads/Conversions).



▼ **Drive Discovery for your content with Shorts**

YouTube Shorts ads can also serve as powerful teasers for your full ad creative, long-form content or livestreams. By presenting a captivating, bite-sized preview in the Shorts feed, advertisers can spark curiosity and engage viewers to click through with the new “watch now” or “subscribe now” call-to-action button appearing at the bottom of the Shorts ad. This creates a direct path for interested viewers to discover and watch the complete story on your channel.

As the worlds of paid and organic short-form video continue to merge, it's essential to understand brilliant basics for creating Shorts ads. This section outlines the brilliant basics to create engaging and effective Shorts ads.

Brilliant Basics

To build effective Shorts ads, follow YouTube Short's ABCD framework. These are not rigid rules, but foundational principles designed to improve ad performance and drive results.

- ▼ **Attract:** Hook the viewer in the first few seconds.
- ▼ **Brand:** Integrate your brand naturally and early.
- ▼ **Connect:** Resonate with the viewer through emotion and storytelling.
- ▼ **Direct:** Prompt a clear and simple call to action.

We take a closer look at each of these fundamental brilliant basics below.

Attract: In the fast-paced Shorts feed, you only have a brief moment to capture attention. **Hook the viewer immediately** with compelling visuals, surprising moments, or by opening with a question or hook. The most successful Shorts ads get straight to the point, avoiding slow build-ups. Use fast pacing, quick cuts, and eye-catching text overlays to stop the scroll and draw the viewer in.

Brand: Introduce your brand or product within the first five seconds. However, it's crucial to **integrate your brand naturally** rather than forcing a logo at the beginning. Feature your product in use, use brand colours and fonts, or include sonic branding cues. The goal is for viewers to associate the engaging content with your brand, making it memorable long after the ad is over.

Connect: Go beyond just showing your product; **resonate with the viewer through emotion and storytelling**. Use humour, relatable scenarios, or authentic testimonials to build a connection. Leaning into the native feel of the platform is key. Use first-person perspectives, tap into trends, and feature real people or creators to make your ad feel less like an interruption and more like a part of the Shorts experience.

Direct: Tell your audience what you want them to consider or do next with a **clear and simple call to action**. Whether it's “Shop Now,” “Learn More,” or “Subscribe,” your CTA should be direct and easy to follow. Reinforce the action with voice-overs or on-screen text that appears alongside the clickable CTA button. Making your desired action explicit removes friction and significantly increases the likelihood of conversion.

#11 COMMITTEE TIP

Connect Shorts to your wider channel strategy by viewing them as an entry point into your multi-format content ecosystem. Last but not least, don't treat Shorts in isolation. The most successful YouTube channels use a mix of content lengths and formats. Consider using YouTube Shorts to tease longer videos, highlight key moments from your long-form content, or share behind-the-scenes glimpses that encourage viewers to explore the rest of your channel. This creates a powerful flywheel where short-form content drives discovery, while long-form content builds deeper communities and loyalty with the viewer.



Conclusion

Social media platforms offer different opportunities for reaching and engaging an audience. Success lies in tailoring your approach to each platform's strengths while maintaining a cohesive brand message across all channels. The overall conclusion we can take from this is that customization is key—make sure your ads resonate with each platform's unique environment. However, also keep in mind that integrating your campaigns across platforms can enhance your reach and impact.

One final note: as the social media landscape evolves, stay informed and adaptive. By mastering and maintaining the Brilliant Basics in this whitepaper, you can drive meaningful engagement, conversions, and sustained brand growth in the dynamic world of social media advertising.



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ABOUT DDMA

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