

FLASH-TO-HTML5 CONVERSION.

A Sizmek guide to making smart decisions.

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Chrome's latest update is going to disrupt users' online experience, especially when it comes to Flash content. You'll likely want to consider converting your Flash ads to HTML5. This raises some questions: Because not all features in Flash translate directly to HTML5, what ads should be considered for converting? How easy is the conversion to HTML5? What factors do you need to take into account when deciding? This Sizmek guide answers these questions and more so you make the best decisions for your campaigns.

Timing

If your ads are already running, but the campaign is scheduled to end before the Chrome update (currently slated for September), you may want to hold off on any conversion planning for those units. Instead, you will likely want to focus your attention on upcoming ad units so you spend your time on the ads that will be running when the update occurs.

Standard banners

In general, standard Flash ads are relatively easy to convert. Tools such as Flash's HTML5 Canvas tool, Swiffy, or even porting content over to Adobe Edge can help with the conversion of standard Flash ads to HTML5. These tools can usually handle converting most standard banners, including static and animated, with some caveats.

Caveats and considerations

Animation and positioning: If your ads have animation that is coded (either with simple X/Y Coding or using Tween Classes), these coded animations will likely not translate using a conversion tool. Even Flash's HTML5 Canvas conversion tool will not be able to handle/convert any ActionScript used to control the position of elements within the creative.

Consider having a creative team member convert those animations into timeline-driven (keyframes and timeline tweens) movement before using any conversion tools.

Blend modes and filters: Flash offers a wide array of blend modes and filters—almost to the point of being an image editing tool as much as a rich media authoring tool. Unfortunately these nondestructive filters and blend modes may not convert well with the available conversion tools. An alternate option: Take any elements that have filters, and see how well they do when converted to a rasterized image within Flash.

Blend modes are a different matter. While blend modes are available in HTML5 Canvas, most converters don't properly interpret those blend modes, so it's hit or miss whether they work or not. Find out upfront if your creative uses blend modes, so that you can be prepared for the potential differences in the final result.

Fonts: While Flash is excellent for its ability to extract exactly the characters you need from a font set and embed them within the swf, HTML5 generally requires the use of a full font file for it to be used in creative. Some swf-to-HTML5 converters will actually render out any text as a base64 encoded image so that it can

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be displayed correctly in creative, so usually it's a good idea render text as an image—it can be a big space saver if only a few characters from the set are required for the creative.

Dynamic creative: If your ads are using dynamic creative to generate any part of the creative elements within the ad, these features won't be easily converted using any tool. These ads will need to be handcoded using Sizmek's HTML5 Dynamic Creative solution so that they will be able to read the variables from our system accurately.

Rich media without video

If your rich media ad without video has images, animations, shapes, and text, refer to the caveats for standard banners as well as the considerations below.

Caveats and considerations

Features: Code-heavy creative isn't easily converted to HTML5. What qualifies as "code-heavy?" Code-heavy includes when code is used to execute certain features, such as when data loading and parsing plays a factor in what the ad is doing or displaying, if there is a game involved, or if there is a social aspect to your creative. Code-heavy creative will need to be handcoded

to HTML5. However, barring any of the caveats from standard banners that you need to consider here, rich ads without video shouldn't be problematic to convert.

Formats: Not all formats that are available in Flash are readily available in HTML5. Check with your Sizmek representative to confirm that the format your Flash ad is running is also available in HTML5, and if so, if links to the templates for those formats can be provided.

Rich media with video

Rich media ads with video will need to be hand converted so that the video player can be recoded to HTML5 technology. Review the caveats in the previous two sections for standard banners and rich media without video plus the caveats below to confirm that your ad can be successfully converted with or without adjustments.

Caveats and considerations

Controls: Controls for video are harder to customize but doable. There are several online resources available to assist with customizing controls available online, such as [this customizable coding solution](#) or try [this prepackaged JS video player solution](#).

Autoplay: The Flash ads you're switching to HTML5 were originally meant to be seen on desktop browsers, (not mobile). Autoplay in HTML5 is available on desktop browsers, but on mobile, often autoplay is blocked. However, Sizmek's Ad Builder for HTML5 offers autoplay animation on ad load for mobile. If using another tool, any ads with autoplay video should either be targeted away from mobile devices or the creative adjusted to handle circumstances where the video will either not autoplay or will break out of the ad experience some other way.

Video with transparency: Currently HTML5 Video does not support transparency or "alpha" channel. Any effects obtained with this effect in Flash will need to have an alternate solution before conversion.

When evaluating the creative you're currently running in Flash and thinking about converting to HTML5, your Sizmek representative will be glad to discuss your best options and solutions—give them a call today before your Flash ads stop being "flashy."