



IAB EUROPE'S FLEXIBLE AD SIZE STANDARDS FOR RETAIL MEDIA NETWORKS

Introduction

Traditional standard ad formats struggle to integrate seamlessly with retail sites, resulting in the rise of custom ad formats by retailers and ad tech companies. Although these bespoke solutions enhance consumer engagement, they complicate the buying, managing, and reporting of retail media campaigns. The increase in non-standard ad specifications adds complexity and strains advertiser resources, and hinders retailer revenues.

Notes:

- *While this proposal focuses on standardising static display formats, it's important to acknowledge that video is an increasingly vital format in retail media—particularly for brand storytelling, product demonstrations, and immersive experiences.*
- *The recommendation to adopt "Standard Display" formats is not intended to limit retailer creativity or brand expression. Instead, it aims to streamline the majority of ad delivery while preserving space for differentiation.*
- *IAB Europe encourages feedback from a range of stakeholders on its proposal for a set of flexi ad formats for Retail Media.*

Recommended Solution

Where possible, existing IAB standard ad formats should be considered. Based on a solution developed by Tesco Media and a discussion in IAB Europe's most recent standards workshop, IAB Europe is proposing a set of flexible (flexi) ad sizes for static display (out of grid) ads on retail media networks. The flexi sizes proposed include four core aspect ratios which cover all types of devices.

The benefits of a standardised set of sizes include:

1. Gain broader access to brand programmatic budgets
2. Improve operational efficiency by reducing format proliferation
3. Enhance customer experience through consistent, viewable placements

Standard Flexi Ad Sizes

A simple set of four flexible ad sizes is recommended as a standard set for static on-site display ads on retailer websites:

| Device | Aspect Ratio | Viewport Width Range | Static Image Size (px) |
|------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mobile | 3 : 1 | ≤ 538 px | 360 × 120 (min) to 960 × 320 |
| Tablet | 6 : 1 | 539 px – 984 px | 720 × 120 (min) to 1920 × 320 |
| Desktop | 8 : 1 | ≥ 985 px | 960 × 120 (min) to 2560 × 320 |
| Mobile App | 2: 1 | N/A | 300 × 150 |

Implementation Guidelines

1. Ad Request Setup

Retailer's ad server must send a single request for the "flexi" slot, without specifying fixed dimensions.

2. Responsive Asset Definition

Provide source images—mobile, tablet, desktop—optimised for the core aspect ratios (2:1, 3:1, 6:1, 8:1). Reference them in a `<picture>` element so the browser selects and downloads only the asset matching the user's viewport.

Example Code:

```
<!-- FLEXI TEMPLATE
It can be served in an iframe or natively, including server-to-server.
Use the html <picture> API to show the image that best fits the current viewport.
The API only makes a network request for one image. It doesn't request all 3 at once.
Work out the viewport break sizes of your site (or app).
Set the media attribute of <source> elements or use the default ones below.
Do not delete width value in srcset attribute (e.g. 1280w).
Use meta tag if served in an iframe.
-->
<meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width" />
```

```
<style>
/* optional body tag if template served in an iframe */
body{
  margin: 0; padding: 0;
}

.flexi-img-container {
  width: 100%; margin: 0 auto;
}

.flexi-img-container img {
  width: 100%; height: auto; display: block; margin: 0 auto; max-width: 1280px;
}

</style>
<!-- replace [%] with template macros -->
<div class="flexi-wrapper">
  <div class="flexi-img-container">
    <a href="[%DESTINATION_URL%]" target="_top">
      <picture>
        <source
          media="(min-width: 981px)"
          srcset="[%PATH_TO_FLEXI_DESKTOP_LEADERBOARD%] 1280w"
        />
        <source
          media="(min-width: 481px)"
          srcset="[%PATH_TO_FLEXI_TABLET_LEADERBOARD_IMAGE%] 980w"
        />
        <source
          media="(min-width: 200px)"
          srcset="[%PATH_TO_FLEXI_MOBILE_LEADERBOARD_IMAGE%] 480w"
        />
        
      </picture>
    </a>
  </div>
</div>
```

Implementation Guidelines

3. Cross-Device Compatibility

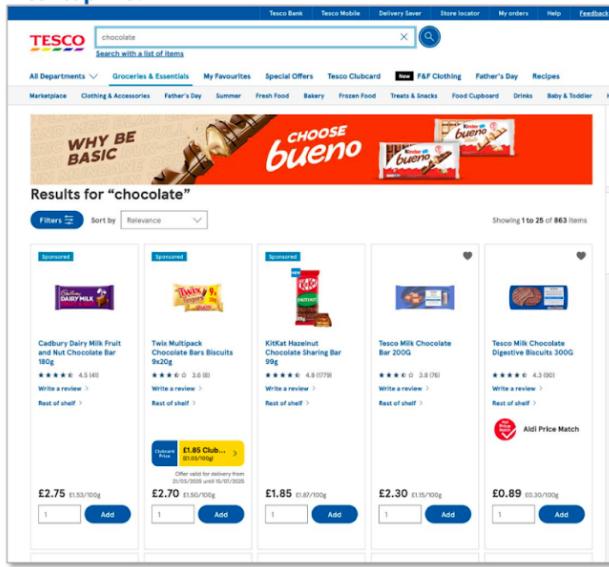
Because the template relies solely on viewport-based media queries and fluid CSS, no further breakpoints or custom scripts are required. Test across devices—including obscure or legacy browsers—to confirm graceful degradation (fallback to the `` element).

Examples of the Flexi Ad Sizes In Situ

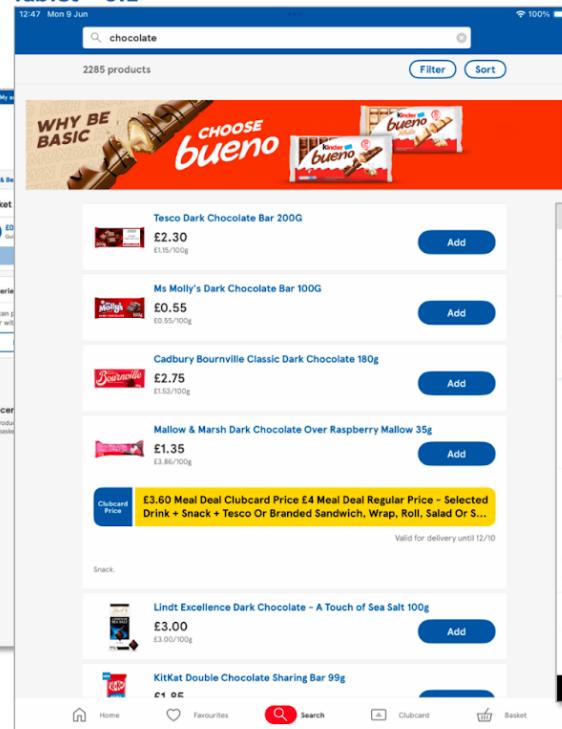
The following examples have been mocked up by the Tesco Media team. Retailers are welcome to use the code and mock up their own examples.

Flexi served.

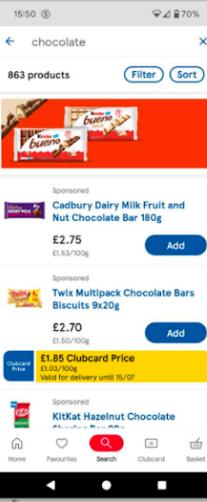
Desktop – 8:1



Tablet – 6:1



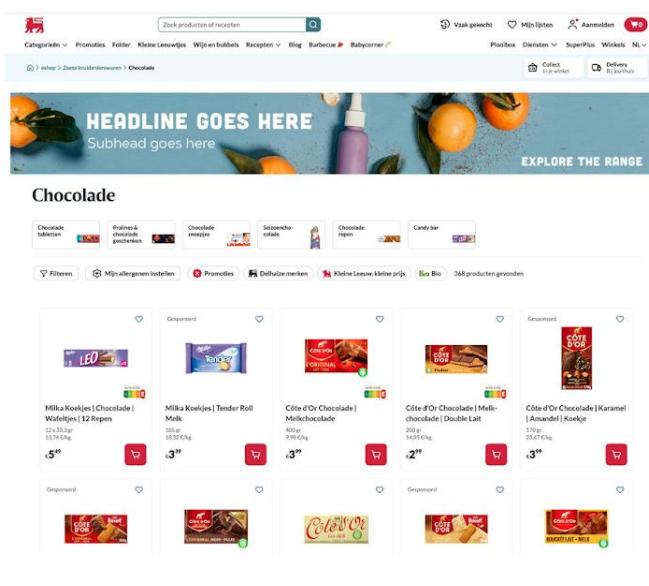
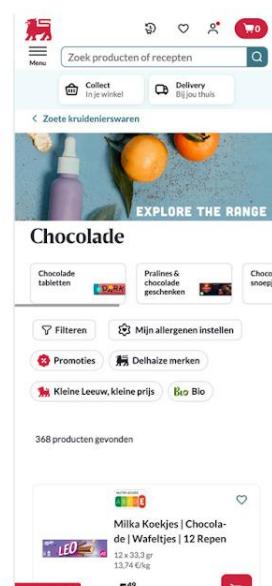
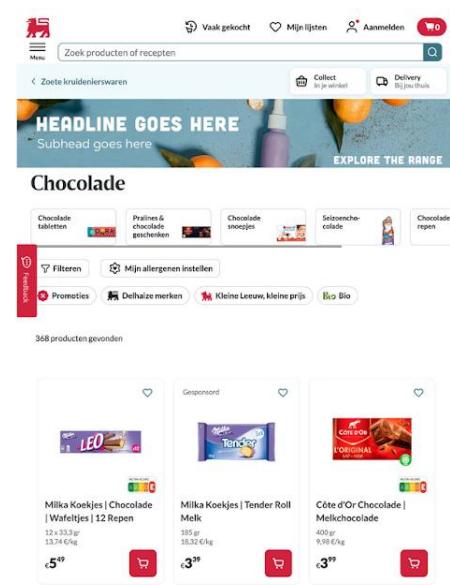
Mobile – 3:1



Tesco Media and Insight Platform.

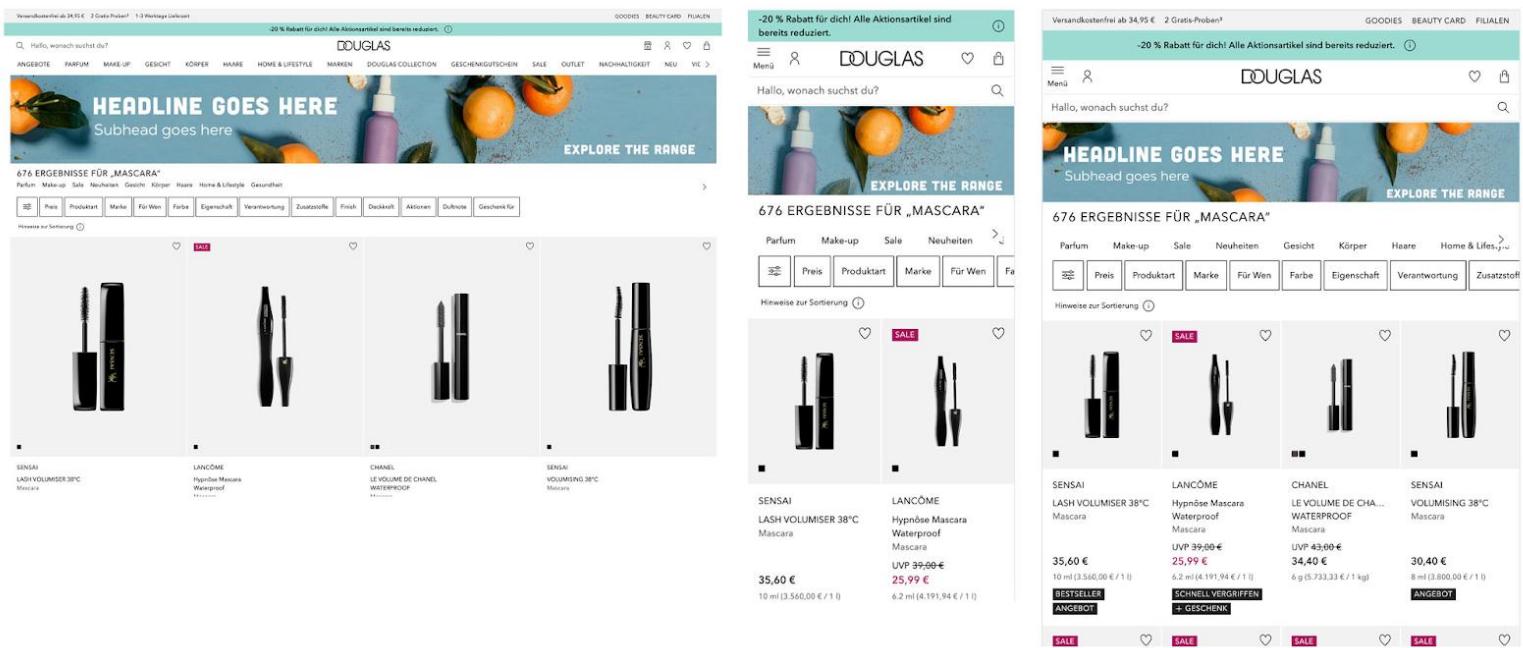
» Powered by dunnhumby

Delhaize.be

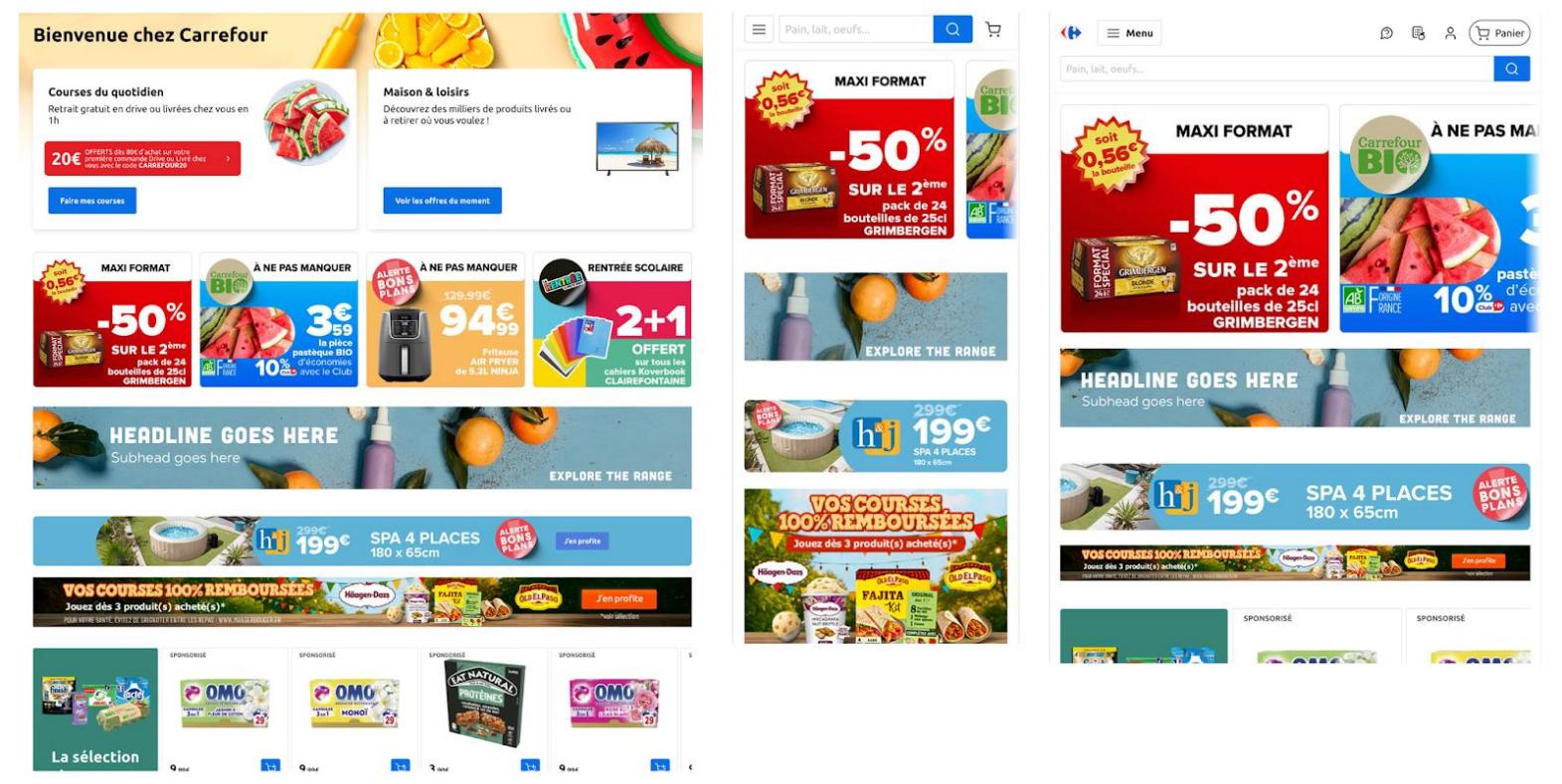




Examples of the Flexi Ad Sizes In Situ

Douglas.de



Carrefour.fr



Examples of the Flexi Ad Sizes In Situ

Rewe.de

Lidl.de



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