

# About Rich Media

## What is rich media

*“Rich Media is the buzzword of the moment, but many are still in the dark about what 'Rich Media' really is. This BoldFish Note will give you an overview of a few different types of Rich Media available today that can be applied to the opt-in environment. Keep in mind, though, that the type of Rich Media you choose, if any, can affect the response rates you receive, as well as the way your recipients perceive your organization -- both good AND bad. ”*

### -----an Overview of Rich Media

[http://www.boldfish.com/BF\\_emguide/Notes/richmedia.html](http://www.boldfish.com/BF_emguide/Notes/richmedia.html)

Rich Media refers to the utilization of various technologies to enhance a recipient's experience. It uses advanced technology such as streaming video, flash to interact instantly with the user. Also the term of rich media is not easy to define, all the rich media technologies generally exhibit at least some of the following characteristics: They allow for advanced animations; They support audio/radio in the advertisements and they make possible the instant user interactions. The defining characteristic of rich media is that the media element exhibits dynamic motion. This motion can occur over time or in response to an interaction with the user.

## Why talking about it

In the previous years, via creating the eyes-catching effects, associating with proper sounds and providing user-participating, rich media has proven itself as the very popular and efficient tool for enhances user's on-line experience. According to the data from *Jupiter Research*, over 60 percent of on-line advertisers have used rich media elements to attract users before 2002. More and more attention has been paid to rich media.

This paper is trying to give out a summary about different rich media types and their specified authoring tools as well as basic technology used, in order to provide those who are interested in this field a jump-start.

## Examples of rich media

Following gives some examples of rich media:

- An ad for a new delivered Hollywood movie that includes a streaming video sample of a few scenes from the movie
- A mouse cursor that is changed to a particular image on a particular Web site if the user requests it
- A standard-size banner ad that includes an inquiry form about free magazine subscription, capturing the user's filled-in personal information, and telling the user they will be contacted by a company representative - all simply by interacting with an ad on an online publisher's Web page

- An animated flashed played in website.

### Common rich-media types and most-used technology behind them

**Banners and badges:** Rich media banners and badges provide webowners with a way to present additional content. With several different technologies available, rich media banners and badges offer a great deal of flexibility. And they can also lead to significant increases in both branding and direct response metrics.

There are three types of rich media banners and badges: HTML, plug-in and Java.

Type	Futures and Characteristics	Authoring tool and technology
HTML	Make use of existing browser technology, such as HTML, CGI and JavaScript, and can therefore be viewed within any browser.	
Plug-in	Require users to have downloaded a special browser plug-in to view the creative. Users who have the plug-in are treated to a rich visual experience, whereas users who don't have the plug-in automatically receive a backup GIF.	<a href="#">Flash</a> and <a href="#">Shockwave</a>
Java	Provide advanced functionality without requiring a plug-in; although not every browser has Java installed, and it is possible to turn Java off, around 99% of users are able to view Java ads.	<a href="#">Enliven</a> and <a href="#">Blue Streak</a>

**Interstitials:** Interstitials are playing between pages on a website. Their interstitial model varies according to the special needs. For online ads, advertisers can choose to play their ads in the main browser window or in a smaller new window; set them to be pre-cached or using streaming technique; focus on the rich contents or concern more about the downloading speed.

Different types of interstitial rich media are shown in the following table:

Type	Futures and Characteristics	Authoring tool	Technology
Transitional/Inline	Play in the main browser window between two pages of a website. When a user clicks on a link, they are taken to the advertising page, instead of the page they requested. They usually have small file size and are not pre-cached	Text editors and standard image editing software	HTML, GIF and other standard web formats
Pop-up Windows	Launched into a new, smaller browser window when a page is loading. It's very easy to build and implement and tend to be accepted by nearly every site, but not as large or rich as other types of interstitials	Text editors	HTML, GIF, other standard web formats (launched by JavaScript)
Unicast Superstitials	The richest advertising available online. Can be quite large (up to 550x480 pixels, and up to 100k), and play for a long period of time (up to 20 seconds).	Macromedia Flash, Adobe LiveMotion	Flash delivered through Java

**In-stream medias:** Audio and video provide users rich and alive information about what they are viewing. But the big size of audio/video files is always a headache to web writers. Nowadays, these files are often viewed online using a technology called "streaming media." "Streaming Media refers content that is downloaded to the user's computer while they are viewing it. Typically, the user will wait for a certain amount of the content to cache before it begins playing; this pre-caching creates a "buffer" which reduces the chance of the audio or video playing faster than it can download."

There are three formats into which in-stream advertising is typically served:

- ? [Windows Media Player](#)
- ? [RealPlayer](#)
- ? [Apple QuickTime](#)

**Floating medias:** It's moving across the web page that hosts it. Floating media provides great flexibility, while proper balance should be obtained when creating this type of rich media files---long time flying could invoke negative user feedbacks.

We have the following types of floating ads:

Type	Futures and Characteristics	Authoring tool	Technology
DHTML Flying Ads	Allow advertisements to "fly around" the. It involves attention-grabbing creative and excellent at attracting users' attention. There is risk towards negative feedbacks if use	Standard image editing software	<a href="#">GIF</a> , <a href="#">JPEG</a> or <a href="#">Flash</a> delivered through <a href="#">DHTML</a>
DHTML Cursors	Allow an image "attaches" itself to the cursor and follows the cursor around the page and viewable by the vast majority of web browsers. Also excellent at attracting users' attention to accompanying banner or badge	Standard image editing software	GIF, <a href="#">JavaScript</a> or Flash delivered through <a href="#">DHTML</a>
Scrolling	Make use of DHTML technology to follow the user as they scroll down a web page. They are always within the view of the user but can only be implemented on a handful of pages and sites	Standard image editing software	GIF, JPEG, Flash or Java delivered through DHTML
<a href="#">Eyeblaster</a>	A productive version of DHTML Flying Ads. To get the user's attention enough to make them click on either the flying object itself or the badge that's left over when the flying object disappears.	Macromedia Flash, Adobe LiveMotion	Flash delivered through Java

## Conclusion

Generally, rich media is used advanced technologies to exhibit dynamic motion. So that it can make deep impression and interaction to the users. In the above lines, we also talked about different types of rich media and the special authoring tools they are created from. Almost all types of rich media files have their own futures and technique requires.

It's smart to choose proper type of on-line rich media styles according to the essential authoring tools available and special concerning in different case. You also need to make decision based on the amount of attention you want to draw and the risk of negative feedback you could get from users.

## Reference:

**Rich Media, Poor Democracy:** Robert W. McChesney / Paperback / New Press / October 2000

**Rich Media StudioLab:** friends of Ed; ISBN: 1903450640; 1st edition (September 2001)

**An overview of rich media**

[http://www.boldfish.com/BF\\_emguide/Notes/richmedia.html](http://www.boldfish.com/BF_emguide/Notes/richmedia.html)

**What is rich media and where can I learn more about its accessibility?**

<http://www.washington.edu/accessit/articles?146>

**Rich Media Trends:**

[http://www.clickz.com/tech/ad\\_tech/article.php/985481](http://www.clickz.com/tech/ad_tech/article.php/985481)

**Creating a rich media standard**

<http://www.nwfusion.com/news/2001/1010richmedia.html?net>

**Rich Media Entices a Wealth of Customers**

<http://www.webtechniques.com/archives/2000/06/dwyer/>

### Other places to visit online about rich media:

**A Resource Center for Developers of Rich Media:**

<http://ncam.wgbh.org/richmedia/>

**Rich Media Advertising Resource Center**

<http://www.macromedia.com/resources/richmedia/tracking/>

This paper is written by Jie Wu for the course EDC385G

Multimedia Authoring at the University of Texas-Austin