



# Designing for InGamePlay Brand Ads

Integration Guide V3.0

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# Introduction



In-game advertising offers the most authentic experience for players, while also delivering incremental monetization for developers. These are authentic ads that don't disrupt the player (and in some cases even *add* to their enjoyment of the game) and provide an average ARPDAU uplift of 10%; a win-win for players and developers alike.

InGamePlay brand ads are seamlessly integrated into your game like any other game object, and, crucially, these ads do not have a click-through, meaning they won't take players out of your game.

This guide takes a deep dive into the best practices of in-game advertising and walks you through how you as a developer can start monetizing with InGamePlay brand ads.

# AdInMo

InGamePlay™ Brand Ads



# 1. // Getting Started

## 1.1 // Ad Placements

**Ad Placements** are unique game objects, which you can add into your game in-engine like any other game object.

Today, they are blank surfaces with a rectangular in shape and come in 13 different **aspect ratios**, shown on the next page.

You can place them anywhere in your game, and when the game runs, brand ads will be programmatically served into your game, filling the space where the placement is. By default these will be static ads, but you can also set up your placements to allow brand Video Ads to be delivered as well. The range of ad placement shapes and objects supported will continue to expand as the technology evolves.

All Ad Placements have a 100% fill rate, ensuring that an ad will always appear. When placed well, InGamePlay ads blend in seamlessly with the game world, generating revenue without compromising the look and feel of your game.



Figure 1: Some InGamePlay ads on the side of a building in Leo Games' Crazy Drift.



Figure 2: An InGamePlay ad on the wall in DEUL Reloaded by Greenlight Games.

## 1.1 // Ad Placements – Priority Ratios

There are currently thirteen available aspect ratios for placing InGamePlay ads in your games. They map to official IAB ad placement sizes, and are divided into three tiers based on monetization potential:

- **Priority**
- **Additional**
- **Unsupported**

You can see a placement's tier when selecting the aspect ratio on the Developer Portal. This determines the likelihood that a placement will deliver a monetizable ad impression based on our demand partners.

**Priority** ratios have the highest chance of delivering paid impressions, and you should always aim to include them in your game.

**4:3** and **2:3** in particular are notable aspect ratios, since they match up perfectly with two of our supported Video Ad sizes, making them the ideal choice for consistent video delivery.



**1:1 aspect ratio**  
(min 250 x 250 pixels)



**4:3 aspect ratio**  
(min 256 x 192 pixels)



**2:3 aspect ratio**  
(min 256 x 384 pixels)



**3:4 aspect ratio**  
(min 192 x 256 pixels)



**5:4 aspect ratio**  
(min 320 x 256 pixels)



**6:1 aspect ratio**  
(min 1536 x 256 pixels)

## 1.1 // Ad Placements – Additional Ratios



Ad monetization should always strike a balance between potential income and the player experience. That's why AdInMo offers **Additional** aspect ratios.

You may wish to use one more of these ratios when the Priority aspect ratios don't fit your game design well size-wise. They map to less popular IAB placements and so while Additional ratios will deliver paid impressions, the monetization potential is less likely than with Priority ratios.



**1:2 aspect ratio**  
(min 250 x 500 pixels)



**3:1 aspect ratio**  
(min 750 x 250 pixels)



**3:2 aspect ratio**  
(min 384 x 256 pixels)



**8:1 aspect ratio**  
(min 2048 x 256 pixels)

## 1.1 // Ad Placements – Unsupported Ratios



Finally, we have some **Unsupported** aspect ratios, shown here on the right. You can use them for house ads if the ratio fits best for your game, but there is a low chance of paid impressions being delivered, and as such you should try to avoid using them if possible.



**2.35:1 aspect ratio**  
(min 588 x 250 pixels)



**2:1 aspect ratio**  
(min 500 x 250 pixels)



**16:9 aspect ratio**  
(min 400 x 225 pixels)

It's extremely simple to start monetizing with AdInMo. Simply download the latest version of AdInMo's **SDK** and integration just takes a few minutes to have it working in your game project.

From there, it's easy to add your Ad Placements creating placement keys in the AdInMo portal and bringing them over to your game engine to hook them up in your game.

Once the placements are set up, you can run your game as you normally would and start testing how the InGamePlay ads fit in with the rest of your game visually.

The development effort you put in to get things set up will be repaid many times over by the improved presentation and coherence of your game.

Once you're up and running then you can check monetization performance and get notifications on optimization and SDK updates via the **developer portal**.

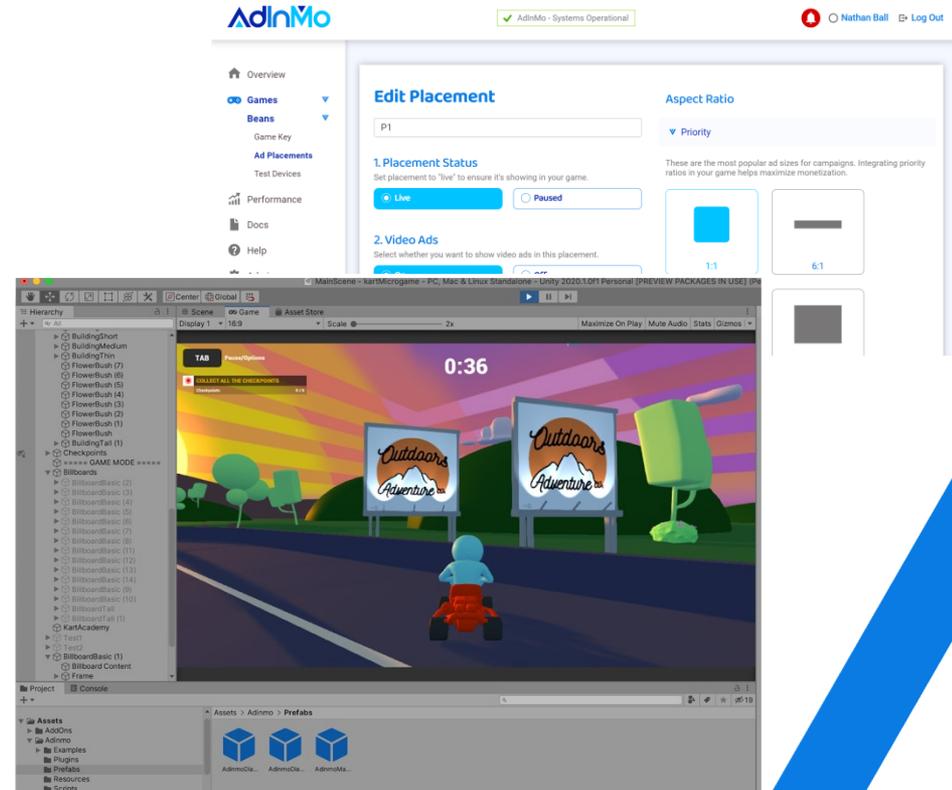


Figure 3: AdInMo SDK in action in the Unity game engine.

## 2. // Best Practices

Where's the best place to integrate InGamePlay brand ads in your own games? This is a multi-layered issue, and the answer will vary greatly based on your specific game.

There are however several key principles behind generating valid ad impressions which will improve the effectiveness of the InGamePlay ads in your games as well as general best practices to help you rack up as many impressions as possible.

### 2.1 // Core Principles

When it comes to placing Ad Placements in your game, there are four key factors to bear in mind:

- **Size:**  
The percentage of the screen that your ad will take up when seen in game.
- **Time:**  
The length of time your ad remains on screen for, measured in seconds. This is higher for Video Ads than for static ads.
- **Angle:**  
The angle your ad is presented at, relative to the player's view. This factor tends only to come into play in 3D games, but some 2D games may need to consider it also.
- **Visibility:**  
The opacity value of your ad. This must be at least 80% for a valid impression, allowing you up to 20% transparency on your ads.

These core principles are also the basis of what makes a valid impression. Industry guidelines led by IAB in UK and US set minimum guidelines. See our [technical documentation](#) site for further details and latest updates. If your ads don't meet these measurement thresholds for a viewable impression, then your ads won't generate any revenue.

## 2.2 // Technical Tips For Better Ad Placement

### 2.2.1 // Place ads where your players spend the most time

If there are key screens in your game where the player spends a lot of time, such as shop screens, equipment management screens or central hubs, then take advantage of this fact and place your in-game ads here.

Which screens these are varies from game to game. If you have access to analytics data for your game, you can check which screens players visit most, and how long they spend there, and use this information to identify the best screens to place your InGamePlay ads on.

Of course, be careful not to place too many ads on these screens, as this may negatively impact functionality and player experience.



Figure 4: An InGamePlay ad on the main menu screen of Pixel Strike 3D by Vulcron.

## 2.2 // Technical Tips For Better Ad Placement

### 2.2.2 // Re-use Placement Keys to extend the screen time of an ad

Giving different ad placements the same placement key guarantees two things: Each placement with the same key will show they same ad when encountered by the player; and each of these placements can contribute to a single impression, if each isn't on screen long enough to make an impression individually. This can be an essential technique for generating impressions in fast-paced games such as racing games or endless runners, where single placements don't stay on screen for long.

This technique also has aesthetic applications as well: if you want all the ads in a level or area to be the same, for consistency or coherence reasons, then giving them the same placement key will let you achieve this as well.



Figure 5: A series of Ad Placements using the same placement key in Drift and Race Mania, from WB Games.

## 2.2 // Technical Tips For Better Ad Placement

### 2.2.3 // Consider the angle the player will be approaching from

It's important to consider the angle the player will approach from in games with dynamic cameras, particularly player-controlled cameras.

As previously mentioned, ads are only valid if seen within a particular range of angles, which can easily change depending on how your player moves through your game.

The varying angles from which the player can approach your ads may also nullify one of the other requirements, the size and screen time of the ad, as well.

So be mindful of the different ways the player could encounter your ad placements, and design them accordingly; this may mean increasing the size, changing the shape, or moving it to another location entirely. Areas in which the player is unlikely to be looking around much, such as enclosed rooms or corridors, make great options for this.



Figure 6: Ads placed at strategic angles in Toymmandooo, by Futuresalt.

## 2.2 // Technical Tips For Better Ad Placement

### 2.2.4 // Take advantage of static screens

Since screen time is a key metric for generating valid impressions, sections of your game where the camera remains fixed and the same objects remain on screen for a long time, make ideal locations for ad placements.

This is particularly relevant for Video Ads, which need more time on screen to fully deliver their impressions than their static counterparts.

Examples of such sections include single-screen puzzles in a puzzle game, combat screens in an auto-battler, or character customization screens in a shooter game.

When placing your InGamePlay ads, be on the lookout for screens like this in your game and prioritise them; they'll likely be some of your best impression generators if you do.



Figure 7: Ads placed on a static screen in Tennis Bouncing Master 3D, by Maysalward.

# 3. // Maintaining Player Immersion

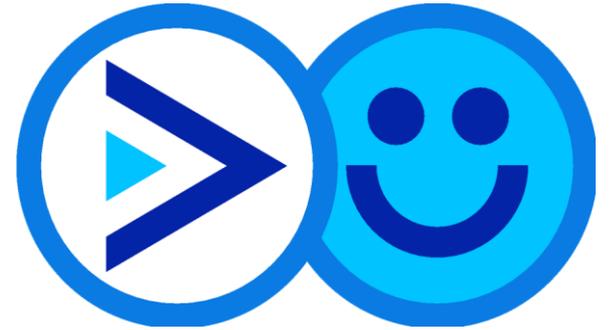


In-game ads are, of course, a necessity of business rather than design, but they can still be implemented with a level of artistry that maintains your creative vision. Games are more than just technical objects; they're also cohesive experiences and the introduction of ads needs to be handled with care.

In this next section we explore how you use AdInMo in a way that allows you to preserve your game vision while still maximising your potential ad revenue

**Player Immersion** is one of the most important concepts in game design, and its one that traditional mobile advertising formats are by default designed to disrupt. Immersion is the way that your game convinces the player they're part of the world you've created, and keeps them engaged through consistent, believable visual design, and multi-sensory stimulation. Video reward ads that completely interrupt your game or banner ads that clash with your game's visual style, are natural enemies of immersion.

This is where InGamePlay brand ads come in. As they are built directly into the main world of your game, they do not interrupt the tone and flow of your game. It's the best of both worlds: incremental monetization and a strong, consistent player experience. Here are four key tips for keeping the player immersed in your game, which in turn will help grow your valid impressions.



## 3.1 // InGamePlay Design Tips

### 3.1.1 // Consider your Game World

This is one of the most important things to think about before you start placing your InGamePlay ads: what kind of world does your game take place in? And where would it make sense for ads to appear in that world?

Take urban settings like cities for example; posters and billboards are common sights in real-world cities, so adding them to your game to host InGamePlay ads will make sense to the player, and not take them out of the experience.

Other settings may be less obvious and can require more creative solutions; ads on the sides of barrels in a pirate-themed game, on the sides of cars in a racing game, etc.

This is particularly important when placing Video Ads, since there are many settings where they simply won't make sense. Consider things carefully before switching them on for a given placement.



Figure 8: An InGamePlay ad on a billboard from H.I.D.E., by GS Game Studios.

## 3.1 // InGamePlay Design Tips

### 3.1.2 // Use Background layers

In many games, the background layers are used for world-building detail, but don't serve any important gameplay function. These kinds of spaces are ideal for InGamePlay ads; you can place them there without obscuring the play space or getting in the way of the action.

For example, many games take place in an urban setting, with rows of tall buildings in the background. You can easily add billboards to the side of these buildings which can host ads. These ads will make sense in the game world, and more importantly will have no impact on the core game, leaving the player free to carry on as normal in the foreground.



Figure 9: Ads placed in the background in Umpire's Call, by Impact Unified.

## 3.1 // InGamePlay Design Tips

### 3.1.3 // Add New Game Objects

Some games have settings that don't lend themselves naturally to ads or have visual styles that could make ads too visually obtrusive for the player.

In situations like this, you can create locations for ads yourself by adding new objects to the game.

For example, in games with open water you can add a small boat, with an ad on the sails. This allows for interesting creative solutions, such as small planes trailing ad banners in games with open sky sections, or small boats with ads on the sails in games set in or near water.

These additions don't need to be massive, either; simply adding a crate or two to a standard street scene will give you a strong new location for InGamePlay ads, with little effort required.

Adding new objects like these is a great way to include Video Ads in your game, since they only make sense in specific contexts. Add a TV or monitor to a desk, and suddenly you have a viable spot for valuable Video Ads, that fits neatly into your game's world.



Figure 10 An ad on a banner trailing on a plane, both added to support ads, in Road Puzzles by Buildstep.

## 3.1 // InGamePlay Design Tips

### 3.1.4 // Apply Effects to Match your game's Visual Style

A game's visual style is arguably its most important asset; most players decide whether or not to continue with a game within the first 30 seconds of playing it, and that decision, made within such short time constraints, can only be based on how the game looks, and whether it holds any appeal for them aesthetically.

It's extremely important, then, that the InGamePlay ads you put in your game don't detract from its visual style. While it may seem unavoidable that they will, since you can't control which ads will be programmatically inserted each time, there are steps you can take to make your placements blend in as best they can.

These include tweaking the lighting effects and transparency values on your Ad Placement objects, and their surrounding areas, to create a consistent game feel and visual tone even where ads are present. It's worth getting your artists to spend some time optimising these effects for each of your ad placements; the result will be ads that fit your game world perfectly, and don't create jarring contrasts that will discourage your players.



Figure 11: An example of a well-blended InGamePlay ad, from Fashion All Stars by 1555 Games.

## 3.1 // InGamePlay Design Tips

### 3.1.5 // Use Video Ads Tactically for Dynamic Revenue Boosts

On the AdInMo Portal, you have the option to allow Video Ads to be delivered to specific ad placements in your game. This is a big decision, as the impact of video ads, both positive and negative, can be massive depending on the placement in question.

The most important thing to consider when deciding whether to allow Video Ads on a placement is how that placement is framed in the game. If it's a TV screen or large billboard, then video ads will make sense there; if it's a poster on a wall or an ad on a t-shirt, not so much. Think carefully about how each of your placements are presented, and how the player would react to seeing video ads appear there.

Since they have longer time-on-screen requirements than static ads for generating impressions, Video Ads perform best when they're on screen for long stretches of time, so avoid using them on screens the player will rush through. Reserve them for static screens, or sections of gameplay that require the player to move slowly or stay in one place; that way you'll get the most out of the extra revenue that in-game Video Ads can provide, and give players the best possible video experience as well.

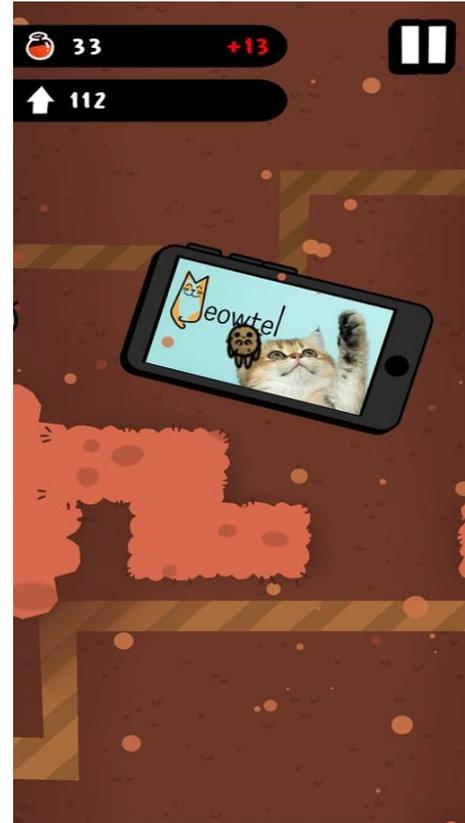


Figure 12: A great location for Video Ads in Flea Jump!, by Lowtek Games.

## 3.1 // InGamePlay Design Tips

### 3.1.6 // Adjust Placement Fit Settings

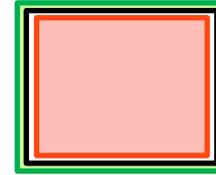
On the AdInMo Portal, you can adjust the **Placement Fit** setting for each of your ad placements. The looser the fit setting, the more ad sizes it will accept.

Placements with looser settings will always monetise better, but this does come with a visual trade-off; if ads bigger than your placement are delivered, this can cause unintended obstructions, and cover up key parts of the screen.

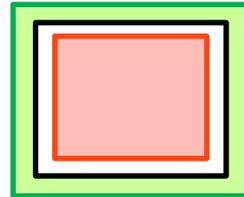
To combat this, carefully choose your Placement Fit settings based on the location of each placement. If an ad placement is on a flat surface with plenty of free space around it, you can give it a Very Loose fit setting with no negative impact. If an ad placement is on a small surface, or surrounded by important objects, stick to Exact or Tight fit to avoid any issues.



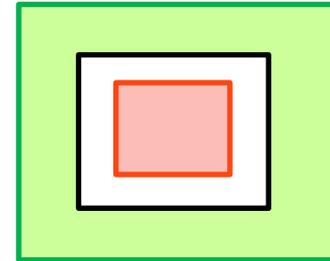
**Exact Fit**  
(100%)



**Tight Fit**  
(90% - 110%)



**Loose Fit**  
(80% - 125%)



**Very Loose Fit**  
(60% - 167%)

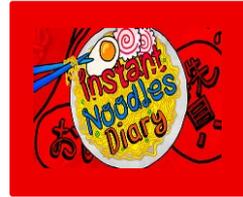
## 3.1 // InGamePlay Design Tips

### 3.1.7 // Tweak your Background Settings

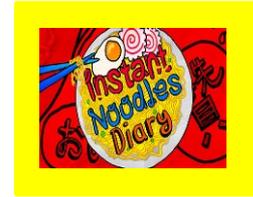
If you use a Placement Fit setting of Tight or looser, you can also adjust the **Background Settings** of the placement. This determines the colour that will be added to the empty space around the ad if the delivered ad is smaller than the original placement.

**Calculated Colour** chooses this colour dynamically based on the average RGB colour of the delivered ad itself; **Fixed Colour** uses the same colour every time, chosen by you on the Portal; and **Shrink to Fit** removes the excess space altogether, simply reducing the placement down to the size of the smaller delivered ad.

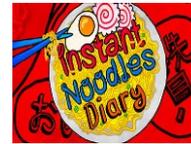
Shrink to Fit also applies to the parent object of the placement as well, which can create placements that are dynamic and make sense no matter what size ad is delivered.



**Calculated Colour**



**Fixed Colour  
(Yellow)**



**Shrink to Fit**

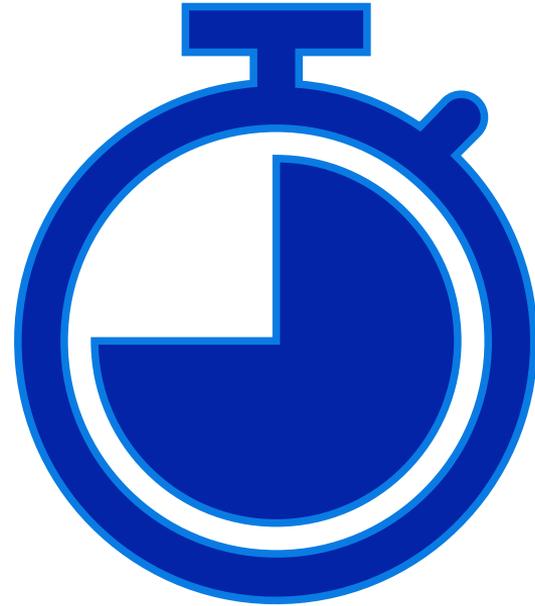
## 3.1 // InGamePlay Design Tips

### 3.1.8 // Customize your Cycle Extension Times

**Cycle Extension Time** is the length of time it takes for an ad placement to switch to a new ad after a valid impression is made. The lower this value is, the more ads will be delivered to that placement, and the more impressions will be generated.

You can adjust this setting for each of your ad placements on the AdInMo Portal. The default, and minimum, Cycle Extension Time value is 4 seconds, but you can increase it up to 30 seconds if you want. This gives you a lot of flexibility in terms of the speed each placement changes at.

You'll want to change this setting based on the framing of each placement; ads on digital screens make sense to change frequently, so you can keep those down at the minimum 4 seconds, whereas ads on posters will look more effective if they stay constant, so increasing the Cycle Extension Time will help in that regard. This is a tool that lets you control the delicate balance of revenue and authenticity.



## 4. // Tools & Resources

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Our global mobile reach and InGamePlay inventory enables advertisers to target premium audiences and developers to generate additional revenue without impacting the player experience.

We have lots of resources available to watch or download to help you start monetizing with InGamePlay brand advertising.

Of course, you can't get started without our SDK itself! This can be downloaded without any sign-up required [here](#)

Integration is easy and you'll be up and running in your game project in a few minutes and ready to use the available tools & resources for optimizing ad placements and revenues from InGamePlay brand advertising

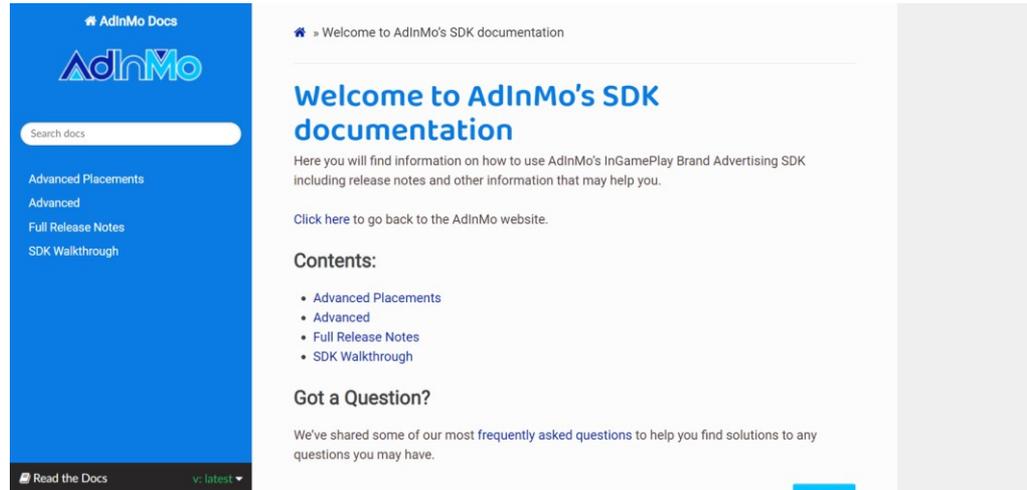


## 4.1 // Technical Documentation

Our website has a range of useful documentation for all users of our SDK, covering everything from the basics and getting started, to more advanced concepts.

When starting out, our [QuickStartGuide](#) walks you through the process step by step.

The dedicated [documentation site](#) includes full release notes and advanced tips for your technical team.



AdInMo Docs

AdInMo

Search docs

Advanced Placements  
Advanced  
Full Release Notes  
SDK Walkthrough

Read the Docs v: latest

» Welcome to AdInMo's SDK documentation

### Welcome to AdInMo's SDK documentation

Here you will find information on how to use AdInMo's InGamePlay Brand Advertising SDK including release notes and other information that may help you.

[Click here to go back to the AdInMo website.](#)

**Contents:**

- Advanced Placements
- Advanced
- Full Release Notes
- SDK Walkthrough

**Got a Question?**

We've shared some of our most frequently asked questions to help you find solutions to any questions you may have.

## 4.2 // Debugging Tools

### // Use our SDK's Debugging Tools

AdInMo's SDK has a suite of comprehensive debugging tools which you can use to evaluate the effectiveness of your ad placements once you're finished placing them.

You can access this in-engine by clicking on the 'AdInMo' tab, then clicking **'Manager'**. This will provide you with a range of useful information about your ad placements while your game is running.

Most crucially, this tool will tell you if your ad placement is generating impressions or not, and at which times. This will allow you to identify problems with your placements and fix them, ensuring that you're generating as many impressions as possible.

This information is shown in the Manager window, and also reflected in the colour of the bar above your placement in game; green means its generating impressions, red means it isn't.

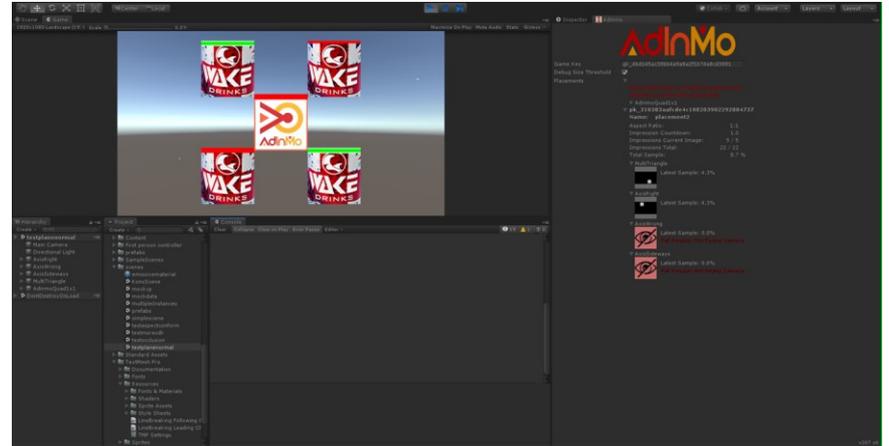


Figure 12: Our Debugging Tools in action in the Unity game engine.

## 4.3 // Video Tutorials

### // Subscribe to AdInMo on YouTube

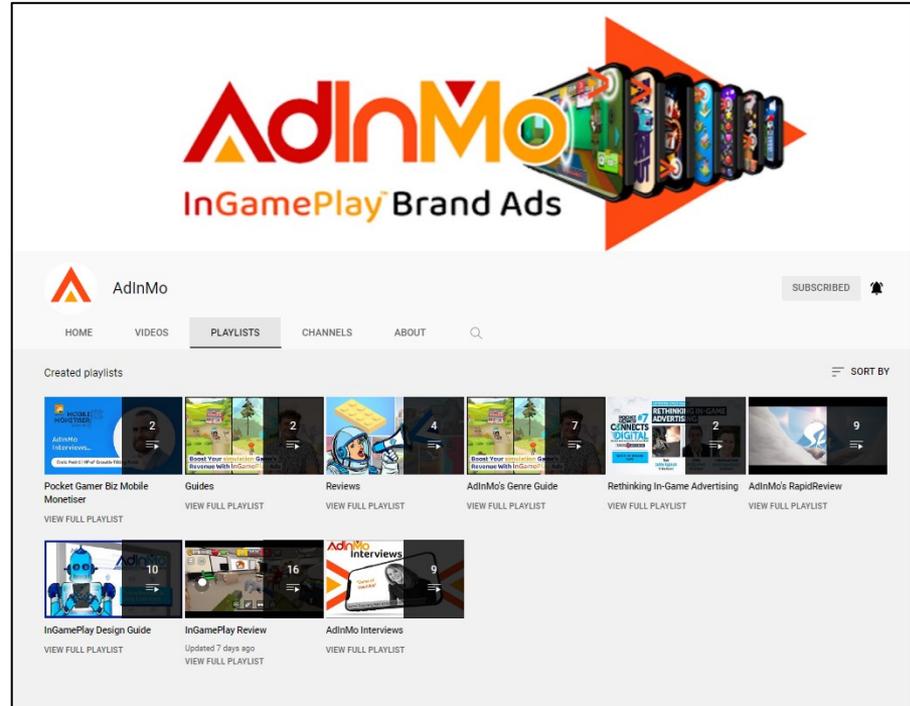
AdInMo's [YouTube channel](#) features a wide range of video content on InGamePlay advertising with useful hints and tips for placing ads.

**InGamePlay Review** – A monthly series that looks at the best InGamePlay ad integrations in mobile games today. Great for inspiration!

**InGamePlay Design Guide** – Video tutorials with technical and artistic tips.

**Genre Guide** – A series of videos discussing how InGamePlay ads can fit into different popular mobile game genres.

**AdInMo Interviews** – A series of interviews with various industry figures, discussing InGamePlay advertising opportunities.



## 4.4 // Design Clinic



### // Submit your Game to our Design Clinic

We offer a **free** Design Clinic Service for any interested game developers.

If you're not sure whether InGamePlay ads would be a good fit in your game, or you're struggling to think of good locations for them, we're here to help!

Just submit a link to your game (App Store or Play Store) in an email to the following address:

[designclinic@adinmo.com](mailto:designclinic@adinmo.com)

And we'll get back to you with an Integration Document, full of ideas on where to place your ads, and how to make the most of them in your particular game.



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