

Rewarded Video

Rewarded Video isn't just for gaming anymore. Learn how this innovative ad format can help marketers and publishers reap their own rewards.



What is rewarded video?

Rewarded Video ads, or “incentivized video ads,” are 15-30 second, non-skippable video interstitials which give users in-app rewards upon completion.

Rewards can reach beyond in-app content. For example, for mobile-web and desktop, rewarded video ads can offer users a stretch of ad-free content.

At Smaato, publishers also get complete control over rewards, including reward size and frequency.

What are the benefits of rewarded video ads?

Users tend to pay more attention to rewarded video ads, since they gain in-app currency or other rewards for watching. This creates a better experience for users, while giving marketers access to a more engaged audience.

Reach attentive audiences

Unskippable, eye-catching ads reach audiences who opt in.

Improve user retention

For gaming, rewarded ads enable longer play at no cost.

Get stronger engagement

Rewarded ads tend to come with higher CTRs and installs.

See better eCPMs

Stronger engagement = higher eCPMs.

Give users more control

Many rewarded video ads let users choose when to watch them.

Because users must opt-in to rewarded video ads, they are more open and receptive to the content, and view both the advertiser's brand and the publisher's content more favorably. They also tend to consider the ad content to be less disruptive than other types of ad creative.

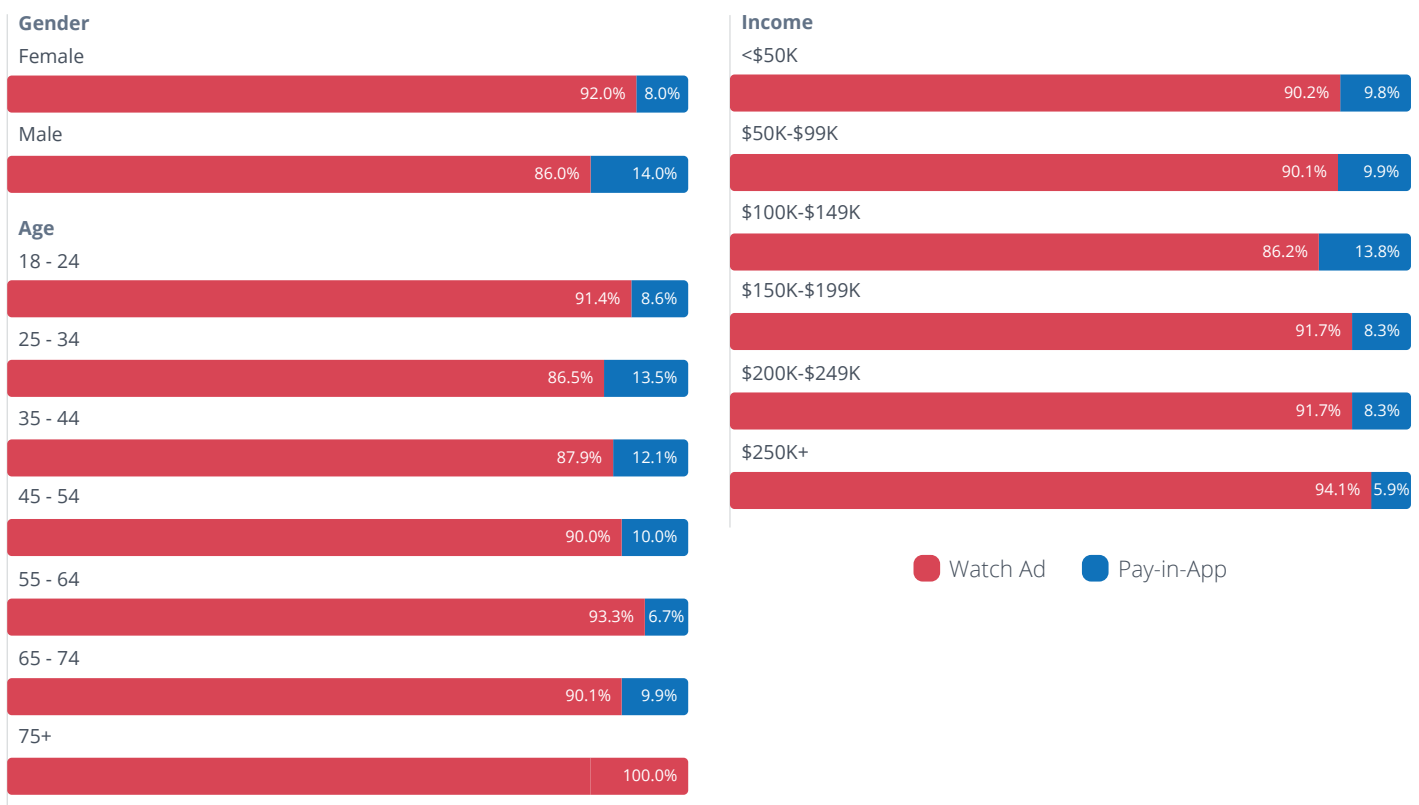
Rewarded video & gaming apps...

Rewarded video offers a free alternative to in-app purchases for gamers. This means they can continue to play, reach new levels, unlock new features, or gain in-game actions or upgrades for free. When given the choice between paying for in-app purchases or watching a rewarded video ad, the ads win by a landslide.

Of those surveyed, eMarketer found that rewarded video ads were universally preferred over making in-app purchases.

Would US mobile gamers prefer to watch rewarded video ads or pay for in-app purchases?

% Of respondents, by demographic, Q2 2020



Source: DISQO, September 10, 2020

...And beyond

The many benefits of rewarded video ad creative can extend beyond the gaming world, and even beyond mobile.

eCommerce poses a major opportunity for incentivized video content. Instead of unlocking levels for gamers, these ads can reveal coupon/promo codes for shoppers. In 2017, ecomm giant Amazon secured a patent for reducing prices in exchange for completing a rewarded video ad. Some shops may choose to have users gather points though ad completion, which can be redeemed for discounts.



Ad-supported content like music apps and video streaming platforms can leverage rewarded video ads to grant listeners, viewers, and users a stretch of ad-free content. For those who prefer not to pay for subscriptions, watching a single longer video ad offers a powerful and attractive alternative to shorter but more frequent ad interruptions.

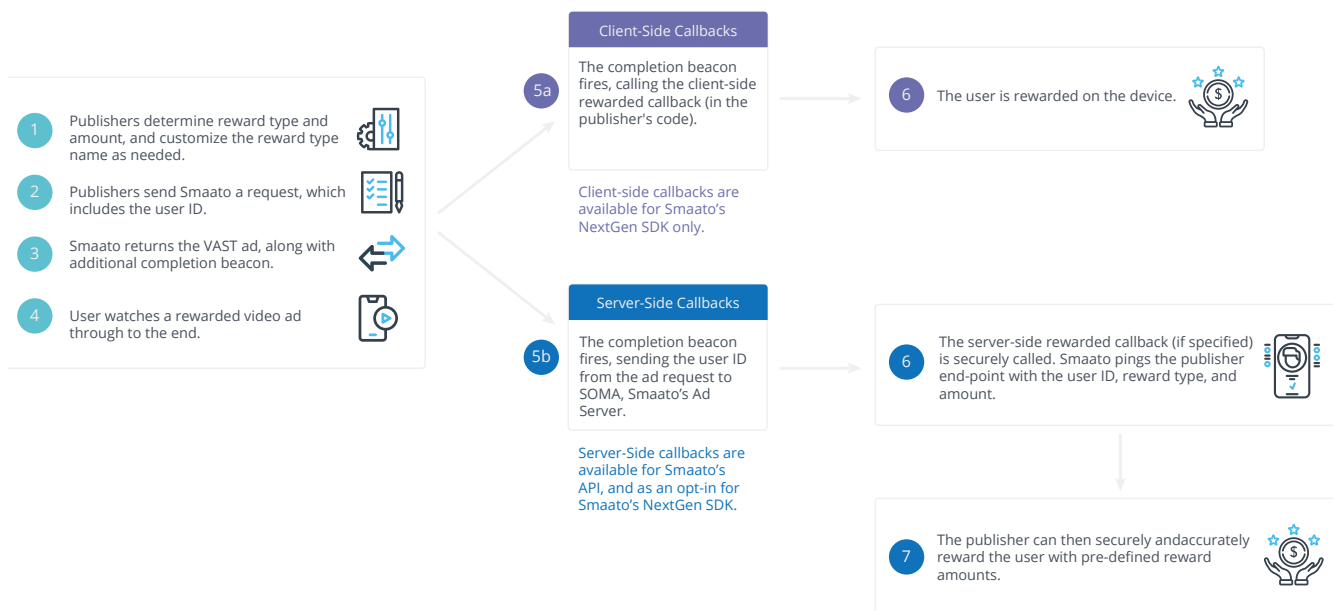
Similarly, news and article publishers who rely on paywalls can offer rewarded video as an alternative way for readers to reach content. As users look to find information or insights and click through to a paywall, frustration mounts. Those who wish to skip the subscription fee leave the site, driving up bounce rates, and the frustration can sometimes translate to a negative brand association. Instead, publishers can offer rewarded video to keep users engaged, grant access to select articles, and improve the experience, while still monetizing their inventory.



Apps outside the gaming world can also help users enjoy additional features, like unlocking replays for OTT sports apps, accessing exclusive filters for photo editing tools, or gaining additional workout content for fitness apps. There are endless ways to add value for users while improving engagement and retention.

How does rewarded video work? Smaato's innovative rewarded video solution.

How will a publisher know that a user completed a video, and has earned their reward?



For our NextGen SDK, we make it simple. As soon as the rewarded video is completed, our built-in callback signal fires, which will then trigger the predetermined reward. With a client-side callback, publishers can simply and directly reward users in-app (for example, increasing coins).

For an added level of security, we also give publishers the option to opt in to using a server-to-server connection, to prevent reward spoofing.

User IDs that are passed are only used for rewarded functionality. We don't share these IDs with marketers. Because they are not being used for advertising purposes, we are able to ensure complete compliance with iOS 14.5 and Apple Privacy Guidelines.

For publishers who don't use our NextGen SDK, we offer other options. With integrations like API, exchange to exchange, PreBid, and more, we also offer a server-to-server callback system. How does this work? Rather than happening on a user's device, the callback happens on the server to prevent client-server reward spoofing.

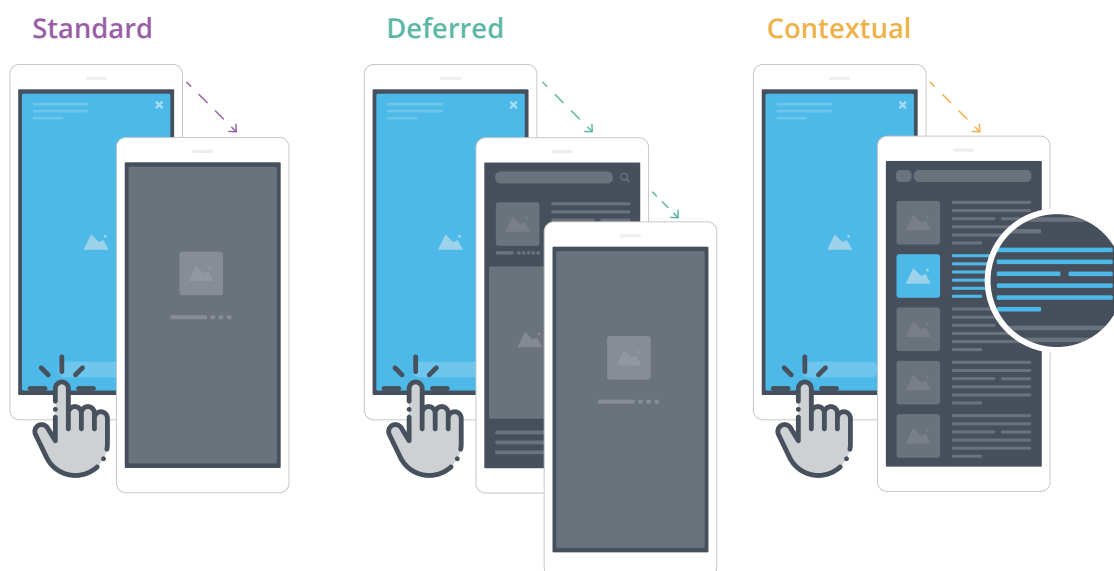
Within the VAST tag we return, we include a beacon with a tracking event. This node can include URLs that call our server with the User ID (which is passed by the publisher in the ad request). Then, depending on what was shared in the ad request, and what is specified in SPX, we can appropriately reward the user.

For a given ad session, we include an Ad Source ID. This allows only one reward trigger per session, to prevent multiple-reward fraud and abuse.

Smaato's deep linking support

For app install attribution, Smaato offers deep linking support for rewarded video (and for all of our ad formats across every integration). This helps improve user experience, as our deep linking support includes a mechanism that brings users directly to the relevant content. Rather than forcing clumsy redirects, deep linking gets users directly where they need to go.

Standard and deferred deep links can bring a user to an installed app (or first to the App Store or Google Play to download the app). Contextual deep links, however, can deliver users to a specific piece of content, including preloaded searches. For example, with rewarded video for ecommerce, users might get access to a special sale price or coupon code for watching the content. Deep links can bring them directly to a specific item of clothing, where they can immediately check out with a discounted price on the item. This helps streamline the shopping experience, and increases the likelihood of a purchase/conversion.



As rewarded video evolves outside of gaming, deep link support has many uses, including to help measure campaign successes, such as:

- Ecommerce purchase attribution
- App-install campaign attribution via SKAdNetwork
- And, future opportunities for install tracking (including added install rate information in bid requests, increased visibility in reporting dashboards, and more)

[To learn more](#) about deep linking, check out our Deep Linking overview.

Getting started

API integrations

Simply request `&format=video` and `&videotype=rewarded` with your publisher ID and rewarded video adspace ID.

NextGen SDK: iOS integrations

1. Adopt your `ViewController` to `SMARewardedInterstitialDelegate` protocol. Implement at least the required `SMARewardedInterstitialDelegate` methods.
2. Create a method in `ViewController` class in order to load a Rewarded Video and call it when you need. Then call this method.
3. Lastly, build and run the app in the Simulator. The video should then appear on the screen.

For more information, visit our [developer docs](#).

NextGen SDK: Android integrations

1. Call `RewardedInterstitial.loadAd()` with `adspaceId` and `eventListener` in order to start loading the rewarded interstitial. The `eventListener` will be used to deliver events describing the ad's lifecycle.
2. When the ad is loaded and available for presentation, call `show()` on a received `RewardedInterstitialAd` object to show it to the user.

For more information, visit our [developer docs](#).

Marketers, are you ready to reap the rewards of rewarded video? Publishers, want to monetize your inventory while keeping content free for users?

Smaato can help. [Learn more](#).