As you know, advertising on the Web has been through many changes, from static images to animated GIFs to rich media with Flash to present day HTML5. It’s fair to say this was fueled by the dawn of affordable, web-centric mobile devices and tablets—but what’s to come? What other platforms will take advantage of the new open web standard? This chapter will demonstrate the possibilities. HTML5 will eventually be everywhere a browser is: televisions, appliances, game consoles, vehicles, set-top boxes, outdoor displays, billboards, screens in elevators and even in the back of taxicabs—basically, every screen both indoors and out! Have you ever seen that movie *Minority Report*? Yeah, like that! Anywhere there’s a browser and network access you’ll see HTML5 and most certainly advertising.

HTML5 adoption is already omnipresent in our industry; soon every device and appliance will work on the same technology as our desktop computers and mobile devices. This will be a huge paradigm shift in traditional media buying because everything will become a “digital buy”. The walls between traditional and digital you currently see in agencies will crumble, and you’ll be able to gain the reach of broadcast with the measurement of digital. This will be a huge disruption in the advertising industry; many new companies will emerge, and there will be many casualties. Through user adoption, HTML5 will quickly bring ubiquity and continuity across all screens, allowing marketers to develop a unified marketing message and measure ad campaigns much more effectively across channels. With this knowledge, ad servers and data providers will soon be able to have a viewer/user fingerprinted (or tied) to a few TVs, a game console, a tablet, a phone, and a desktop computer. With this sort of information, it’s certain that privacy concerns will arise because users’ data will need to become much more protected. With all that said, let’s look at HTML5 advertising today and more importantly, going forward.

**HTML5 Advertising Circa 2012**

In 2012, HTML5 had a pretty big year. It has been through many changes, including a separation of specifications from working groups (http://w3.org/QA/2012/07/html5_and_htmlnext.html), additional features added to the specification, removed features, and new browsers supporting various levels of compliance. However, you and I both know that this is just the beginning because HTML5 has been a long time in the making.

Specifically, the developments of 2012 have brought much confusion to the advertising industry regarding how to efficiently bring scale with this new way of ad development. Between businesses small and large, we as an industry have a lot of improvements to make; in fact, don’t think for a minute that just because a company is a Fortune 500 that it knows what it’s doing in this realm. HTML5 is a huge, game-changing shift, and everyone both big and small needs to adapt! Advertisers and marketers either are clueless on how to target users on the growing mobile landscape or are just unsure that HTML5 (which is now more than a buzzword) is going to drastically impact their businesses now and in the years to come. To better illustrate this, I’ve been compiling a list of questions I’ve heard in the past year regarding HTML5 and advertising. Here are a few (and note that most of these questions came from director and chief-level executives of huge web properties):

- “What is HTML5?”
- “How much does HTML5 cost?”
“Can Flash run on my iPad?”
“Can you help me install HTML5?”
“The client needs this to be in HTML5.” —Me: “None of the features in the ad requires it to be HTML5.” —Client: “It just needs to be HTML5.” —Me: “Oh, OK, that makes sense now.”
And my all-time favorite, “I can’t see my HTML5 ad!” —Me: “What browser are you using?” —Client: “Internet Explorer 8.” —Me: “Thank you.”

While some of these are comical, as you can see, we are still at the infancy of this technology, especially in the digital advertising business. This presents great opportunity, but we as an industry still have much to learn, build, adopt, and fix with HTML5 and, much more so, in the way advertising is bought, sold, developed, and measured using the new open web standard.

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**Note**  You can find a few very good articles on this topic at [http://bit.ly/Nuc1tv](http://bit.ly/Nuc1tv) and [http://rww.to/SOxQr3](http://rww.to/SOxQr3).

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### HTML5 Platforms

HTML5 platforms are becoming more and more abundant, and it’s much more than the traditional Web that people are used to interacting with every day. With the latest operating systems and devices doing away with the plug-in model, more browser vendors and platform developers are relying solely on the open Web to power their application and advertising experiences. Two examples of this are Microsoft’s new platform, Windows 8 and Microsoft’s new tablet, the Surface. The new user interface within the Windows 8 OS, provides an HTML, CSS, and JavaScript front end, which means so does its advertising model. Platforms like Windows 8 will become the norm as more and more people understand that there are limitless possibilities with HTML5 (once adoption occurs). This can even be said for web editor tools because they’re being built inside the browser now. In other words, you don’t need to install a special application on your computer to write and design for the Web. Take the Adobe project Brackets, for example ([http://github.com/adobe/brackets](http://github.com/adobe/brackets)). This showcases a great web-editing tool that is built right inside your browser.

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**Note**  Plug-ins are supported in Windows 8; however, they need special privileges to run. For more information, visit [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ie/hh968248(v=vs.85).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ie/hh968248(v=vs.85).aspx).

Platforms like Windows 8 resemble a similar environment to in-application mobile apps, where you get your applications from an online shop or storefront and view ads through an instance of the browser or web view within the downloaded app. With that said, it’s safe to assume that these advertising models will need to rely on web standards for creating interactive and emerging experiences within those environments.

Speaking of phone applications, some are even being built on HTML5 using frameworks like PhoneGap ([http://phonegap.com](http://phonegap.com)) to compile down to native code for the app stores to accept. This again demonstrates the true power (as well as the flexibility) of HTML5 because it can be used in almost any digital environment.

Publishers are even taking advantage of the new open standard, by offering progressive enhancement approaches to their web design, by using the power of HTML5 to provide richer experiences to users whose browsers support them, and by maintaining basic support for legacy browsers. In fact, I am sure you’ll see many publishers in the coming year implement HTML5-only solutions to both web content and advertising. This chapter focuses on new implementations of HTML5 and where you’ll see browsers and advertising moving toward very soon.

Think of this as the new frontier of digital advertising powered by HTML5, and you are the pioneer!