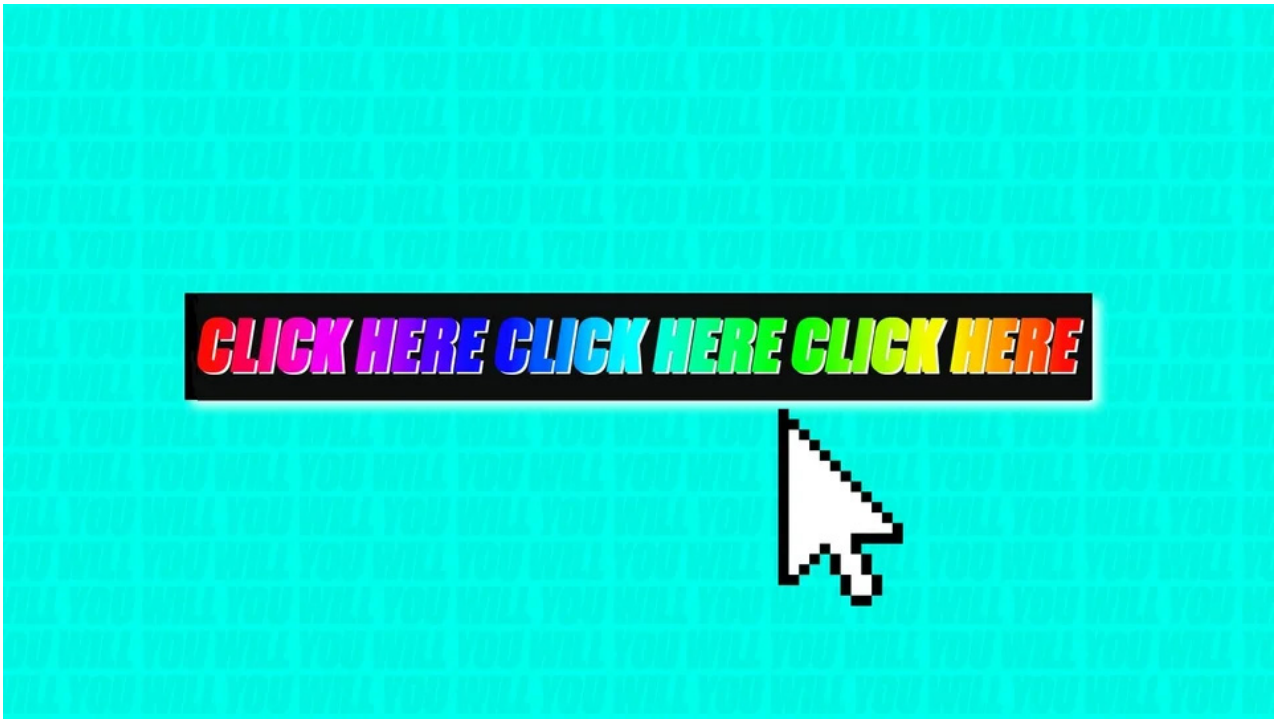
The First-Ever Banner Ad on the Web

Adrienne LaFrance

It was an advertisement for AT&T in 1994, and people clicked on it like crazy.



Katie Martin / The Atlantic

People don't often click on banner ads these days—at least not on purpose, anyway. In fact, many internet users actively go out of their way to never see advertisements.

Ad blockers create all kinds of problems for companies that rely on ad dollars to pay their workers (cough cough like journalists cough), but it's understandable why ad blockers appeal to people. Display ads are too often clunky, ugly, and intrusive—all kinds of ad trackers collect and sell data about people.

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All this is part of why reports that Google will make ad blocking part of its Chrome web browser are so ominous: Google, the largest beneficiary of web advertising on the planet, wants to block ads that help

Meta EX1035
IPR2024-00612
U.S. Patent No. 8,249,932

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Adrienne LaFrance is the executive editor of The Atlantic. She was previously a senior editor and staff writer at The Atlantic, and the editor of TheAtlantic.com.