

You must discover through trial and error whether vertical or horizontal layout works best for you. Consensus is evenly divided on the matter. Design considerations play a part in the decision; if you don't have free sidebar space for a tower above the fold, you might feel forced into a leaderboard or banner. The rectangular inline layouts work well in wide blocks of text; the text flows around the ads. (See Figure 13-8.)

The two button options provided by Google are new layout choices, and interesting ones. (By publication time, these single-ad buttons were not in wide use.) Their advantage is clear: Such a small layout footprint is easy to position all over the page. Their disadvantage is likewise obvious: With only one ad to click, you reduce clickthrough opportunities. On the other hand, people don't always respond well to multiple choices, so a single, pointed advertisement might work well in your user demographic. Are you getting the idea that AdSense success is more art than science? Actually, in the true spirit of science, AdSense responds to experimentation.



In the quest to reduce ad blindness, variety is key. Run different layouts on different pages, and change each page's layout from time to time. Track performance in your AdSense account, and shake things up when your CTR drops.

Figure 13-8: Wide text wraps around inline rectangles.