

General Overview

What is a Refcard?

Refcards are quick-reference, technical resources that range in scope from the foundations of a particular language, process, or technology to detailed guides for getting started.

What do Refcard Sponsors receive?

The Refcard sponsorship package includes:

- Six-month exclusive branding on Refcard and landing page.
- List of contacts who downloaded the Refcard.
**Geo-targeting, job function/role, and company size filters are available for a reduced volume of contacts.*
- Promotion in relevant Zone and in DZone member emails.

What are the Refcard types?

Our Refcard types are based on the target audience. Please review the five types below and their correlating audience:

Getting Started

- Purpose – Introduce the DZone Community to a topic, technology, approach, etc.
- Target audience – Those considering adoption or who are in the early stages of adoption.

Essentials

Sub-types: Languages and Universal, Open-Source Tools | Technologies and Methodologies

- Purpose – Cover need-to-know approaches to get the most out of a language, tool, technology, process, etc.
- Target audience – Those who have adopted a technology and want to learn the fundamentals.

Patterns and Anti-Patterns

Sub-type: Core Practices

- Purpose – Provide patterns and anti-patterns (or core practices) for successfully implementing a technology, process, approach, etc.
- Target audience – BDM/ITDMs (higher-level decision makers) considering new technologies. Job titles include, but are not limited to, manager, director, and C-Suite.

How long is the Refcard publishing cycle once purchased?

Currently, Refcards are subject to two different timelines: Sponsor-written and DZone-sourced author timelines. Any Refcard for which the sponsor provides the author can be published in as few as **10** weeks. If DZone sources the author, the estimated time until publish is **12** weeks.

What makes a good Refcard topic?

When reviewing data on our highest performing Refcards, we found that all topics were associated with industry-recognizable terms, such as Kubernetes, Git, CI/CD, etc. Sticking to these broader software topics will result in higher audience engagement and thus more successful campaigns.

Identify what space the product or solution you are promoting aligns with and select a Refcard type based on your target audience. This allows greater reach to your intended audience. Positioning your brand alongside technical content that covers an industry-recognized topic will help build audience confidence in your offerings and multiply your brand equity.

Can we change the topic after signing the IO?

Yes. The newly proposed topic will need to be approved by the DZone Publications Team. DZone *strongly discourages* topic changes after signing the IO as it will delay the target publish date and lead delivery.

What happens when the Refcard goes live?

The Sponsor's six-month campaign begins. Sponsor logos are added to the Refcard landing page and email promotions are sent. DZone Campaign Managers will share the asset license link for promotional use (to place behind a gated landing page — must be logged into DZone for initial link download) and deliver leads weekly until all leads are fulfilled.

Can we promote and/or use the Refcard asset or content after the six-month campaign ends?

No. DZone owns all rights to the content. Once the license expires, all logos will be removed from the Refcard PDF and landing page. Further promotion on the Sponsor's website or elsewhere after the campaign ends is prohibited.

Refcard Development

AUTHORSHIP

Can a member of my team write the Refcard?

Yes. All authors must follow our Refcard authoring guidelines as well as sign a Statement of Work, acknowledging that DZone owns all Refcard content. The author must be identified **eight** weeks prior to the target publish date.

Whether the author works directly with the DZone Publications Team or through the Sponsor during the content development process, author materials must be submitted **four** weeks prior to the target publish date.

Can DZone source the author?

Yes. When DZone provides a Refcard author, they will likely source a notable and reputable DZone contributor, not an internal DZone team member.

If DZone sources the author, can we preview the final content? What if we have objections?

The Sponsor will review an outline from the author and must include *detailed* feedback and/or content requests via comments directly in the outline document. DZone reserves the right to approve/reject any outline feedback and content requests. The Sponsor will receive outline revisions, if applicable, for final sign-off.

The Sponsor may review the final content draft for technical accuracy and will receive a preview of the designed Refcard. Additional feedback or requests from the Sponsor must only relate to typographical or code errors and/or branding.

CONTENT

What are the Refcard requirements?

Authors must meet a minimum of 2,500 and **no more than** 3,000 words total, which should include a mix of **text, tables, diagrams, and code** as required by the Refcard content (images count toward total words at 100 words per image).

**Please exclude any product or brand promotion and marketing messaging or jargon in the Refcard body text. All brand and product messaging is reserved for the DZone Refcard Sponsorship package, which includes a full-page ad, box ad, and logo.*

Can we include product demos or links?

No. We ask that all brand and product messaging be reserved for the DZone Refcard Sponsorship package, as noted above. Including in-text promotional content will deter our readers. We have found supporting data that shows our audience has stronger engagement with vendor-neutral content.

Can we include links?

Yes. You may add links as long as they provide vendor-agnostic information relevant to the contents of the Refcard.

MATERIALS

What happens if we miss our assets deadline?

DZone Campaign Managers will accept assets up to **two** days before the target publish date. If Sponsor ads and logo are not received by two days prior, DZone reserves the right to publish the final Refcard with DZone house ads as placeholders for Sponsor assets until the Sponsor provides correct materials according to spec.

What happens if we miss our first draft deadline?

As long as author submission materials are received within **two to three** business days of the missed deadline, the Refcard should be able to publish on time. However, if numerous deadlines are missed and/or deadlines are over three days late, the target publish date will need to be moved, thus delaying the campaign start date.