TRENDING Technology
Success in Programmatic Marketing for Mobile Ads

By JT Ripton

Today’s digital marketplace is full of thousands of sellers and it’s not possible to know each one of them. Digital ad networks make it easier for brands and all advertisers to buy and sell ads. Businesses are able to distribute marketing messages across many thousands of publishers with a handful of purchases and the networks are able to optimize to the individual campaign success metrics. In the recent past, before programmatic, there was little transparency for who the ad was actually reaching and how much was being paid for that ad.

Advertisers became increasingly agitated at the lack of transparency in placement, pricing and targeting. Ad Tech companies sought ways to alleviate advertisers’ concerns about transparency. Programmatic buying has helped mobile marketers buy the right audience in the right place at the right time.

Comparison to Airlines Industry and Stock Markets

Consider the airline industry and how you now book a trip. That same opportunity has been delivered to the mobile advertiser, where you can “Priceline” your ad dollars. You select the audience you want to reach and submit an electronic bid and wait for results.

Programmatic resembles the stock market in that the exchanges are the places where the transactions occur. With those exchanges, there is more stability, transparency and oversight. Buyers and sellers get their transactions processed in a fraction of a second. Picture a human trader at the terminals of all the stock exchanges all at the same time, processing NYSE, NASDAQ, and all stock exchanges. In the media business, the buyer has a chance to trade across multiple Demand Side Platforms (DSP’s), to access the whole market, buying ad units or inventory in a programmatic way.

Understanding the Process

For Real Time Bidding (RTB), the bid request gets presented by the publisher into an exchange, and specific information about that user is shared to help advertisers determine the value of that given impression — information such as what site that person is on, what device they are using, where that person is located, etc. With pre-set values on different audience types having already been set by all participants in the auction, the buyer who ends up winning the bid can feel confident that they are paying the market rate and that they are getting what they actually paid for. An additional consideration of purchasing media this way is that advertisers can now buy audiences directly without having to use historical ad networks.

Technology Trends for 2016

Where Silicon Valley Goes, Business Follows

Not only are the tools changing, so are the business processes as a result of new technology such as mobile, cloud computing and wearables.

Technology Trends

Ever-evolving and adaptive technology is driving and transforming business every day. Businesses that want to thrive are in a constant race to adapt and take advantage of these technologies while they’re still relevant and useful, or otherwise these businesses eventually will fall by the wayside. Here are six technology trends that businesses will have to embrace to stay ahead of the game.

Payments get Even Easier

While every business today accepts credit cards, and even Grandma is getting savvy about transferring money via PayPal, the friction of making payments is going to be reduced even further in 2016. With Apple Pay, Google Pay and a litany of mobile payment solutions flooding the market, the trend is toward making payments as easy as a click of a smartphone button, reversing transactions just as easy and sending automatic invoices by email a snap.

Apple Pay, which the company says currently accounts for two out of every three dollars spent using contactless payments.

In terms of merchant adoption, almost every day a new major retailer adds the likes of Target and Best Buy announce it’s now supporting one new payment system or another.

Security becomes Nonnegotiable

No business leaves its doors unlocked at night, but the dirty little secret is that most businesses and their cloud service providers have been playing loose and fast with digital security.

Email is not usually secure, employee mobile devices are unprotected in many cases. VoIP phone systems are not always fully encrypted, and web sites have gaping holes. In the mad dash to embrace the latest technology, security often is an afterthought — and both consumers and businesses are starting to wake up to the liability.

Nearly 5,000 company data breaches have compromised more than $815 million records containing information about medical histories, Social Security numbers or bank data since 2005. Which lead the U.S. House Financial Services Committee to overwhelmingly approve legislation that would force companies that lose control of customers’ sensitive personal data to notify both customers and law enforcement.

Business leaders also are sounding the alarm. In October, T-Mobile CEO John Legere publicly ripped into credit monitoring firm, Experian, when the company exposed the private data of roughly 15 million T-Mobile’s customers.

White Hat Security statistics show that 86 percent of all websites tested had at least one serious vulnerability, often more. The biggest culprit is at the transport layer, according to White Hat, with a likelihood for security breaches as high as 75 percent for many businesses.

Security concerns have reached a critical mass, and one of the biggest technology trends in business right now is ensuring that those holes are closed and all systems are adequately protected. This is taking the form of encryption during both data transport and at rest, enterprise mobility management for mobile devices, containerization so hacks don’t infect entire systems and adoption of cloud solutions that take security as a fundamental priority.

Communications get Embedded

Along with easy, embedded payments, communications are embedded directly into apps and web sites. While currently Skype and WhatsApp are the darlings for talk, chat, video and file sharing, they still require users to open a dedicated app. Real-time communications (RTC) and the emerging embeddable communications standard, WebRTC, are changing that.

According to ComScore 11.3 percent (and growing) of all internet users rely solely on their mobile devices to get online, and this year you’ll start to see more click-to-call buttons embedded directly into apps to cater directly to this quickly growing mobile minority.
Programmatic
continued from page B44

We know that females make up nearly half of the mobile video games viewing audience. If you wanted to target the male demographic and you purchased ads in mobile video games, you wasted half of your budget. 

Programmatic, has been created to help buyers target, place and price their ads better.

RTB, you can target just the males in a given content category, such as mobile video games. If you wanted to target the male demographic and you purchased ads in mobile video games, you wasted half of your budget. With RTB, you can target just the males in a given content category, such as mobile video games. 

Difference between Programmatic and RTB

“Programmatic simply means automated. A lot of people confuse it with buying ads through computer-run auctions — known as real-time bidding — but that’s just one way to buy ads programmatically. At its core, programmatic buying is any ad buy that gets processed through machines.” (Ad Age, 2013) So, in essence, RTB is a subset of programmatic buying.

Real Time Bidding (RTB), a subset of Programmatic, has been created to help buyers target, place and price their ads better.

Three Methods to Buy Programmatically

Today and Benefits of Each

- RTB - scale, individual bid transparency, confidence in ad placement and pricing
- Private exchange - confidence in ad placement
- Programmatic guaranteed - confidence in ad placement and relative confidence in ad delivery

Questions to Ask Potential Technology Partners when Evaluating Solutions

Before choosing a programmatic partner, you should consider some of the following questions:

- What does transparency mean to you? Will we see bid level information? Targeting? Pricing / actual CPM paid? Can we see this buy exchange?
- What tools do you have to handle attribution? Fraud?
- Do you provide support for my buying team? If so, how much?

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KEEP RANSOMWARE UNDER WRAPS

Security software should be properly configured, automated for updates and centrally managed. “Too often we see a company network get infected because either a server was not being scanned for malware or an endpoint was sitting on the network with antimalware turned off,” says Cobb.

Top notch security is just one part of keeping your systems under lock. Educating users on cyber safety is crucial. Employees should be trained to not open any suspicious emails or attachments. If anything unexpected or unusual is sitting in your inbox, simply put—don’t open it.

But above all else, ransomware can be avoided by backing up your systems. “If you have current backup copies of your files that can be easily restored, then getting hit by ransomware is not the end of the world,” says Cobb. Restoring files can be timely, but ultimately is better than paying a ransom.

Cobb also mentions that if businesses have been infected with ransomware, be sure to report it to local authorities. Every report helps build a case for more resources to fight cybercrimes. “Contact your government representatives if you’ve been impacted by cybercrime,” says Cobb. “Government needs to play its part in protecting companies and consumers from cybercrimes.”

Total Tech is a proud ESET partner and cloud-based service provider. Contact us for a security risk assessment or for information about ESET’s proactive malware defense.

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Chief Business Officer at Elite IT Service Provider Outlines Critical Success Factors to Consider When Working with Cloud or Managed Service Providers

Few people in Information Technology understand the new, complex challenges businesses face every day in pursuit of servicing clients, employees and shareholders more than Ford Winslow. As Chief Business Officer of centrexIT, Ford must stay on top of the latest technologies, threats and vulnerabilities in order to advise companies on how to enable and protect their business. Helping companies leverage secure Cloud and IT Managed Services is an important part of centrexIT’s mission.

Mr. Winslow shared with us some important success factors when working with a cloud or managed services provider.

Trusting your data, systems and operations to a Cloud or Managed Services Provider (MSP) can be a very profitable, successful proposition or it can lead to unexpected risks. What are the key actions companies take to give them the best chance of success with a Cloud or Managed Services Provider?

It’s About the People, not the Technology

Most hardware and software will eventually break. When that happens, people working with people get the problem fixed. Selecting the team you will work with is vitally important. Do they understand what you do for a living? Do they care? Will they work with you? Are they in the same time zone? Can you drive down the street and work with them? These are all great questions to ask.

Know your Business Objectives

So often I see companies wanting to work with cloud or other IT service providers and don’t know what they really expect to get from it. Like any other business investment, cloud or IT services should enable profits, reduce risk or meet a requirement. Clearly understanding and talking with your provider about your business outcomes will yield positive results. If your provider doesn’t care about your business outcomes, walk away.

Broad Range of Services

The only thing constant in IT is change. Selecting a provider that can adapt with you AND the technology industry can provide great benefit. Too often providers are narrow in focus due to either a specific technical or industry focus. This can be good if you need a specialist, but if you need to empower and secure multiple aspects of your business, a broader approach often pays dividends. When your provider can react and evolve with your business, you spend more time talking about your business, less time negotiating.

Depth of Skills and Reputation

This may sound obvious, but I see many companies who have bad experiences complaining about lack of team depth or breadth. Many times, inexpensive solutions are backed by uncertified or less experienced engineers. On the other hand, everyone wants certified, experienced veterans performing any IT task (but don’t want to afford it). The reality is that a mix of experience levels and breadth of skills is vitally important for your success. You don’t want expensive engineers doing routine maintenance, but when that routine maintenance goes wrong (and it does sometimes), you want the best, most experienced people available. Check references and meet your provider. Nothing replaces old-fashioned diligence.

When anticipating any changes in IT, ensure you have reliable backups and TEST THEM. If you do, and even follow some of the advice above, you will be on the path to a high quality, profitable Cloud and Managed Services Experience.

Submitted by centrexIT
Time to Shout About Our Talent!

Often we focus on the business of cyber and why our community needs to take a serious look at how to protect themselves. Instead, gather ‘round the watercooler and just consider the top talent coming up in San Diego. Out of a field of 71 schools, 125 teams, let’s CONGRATULATE the top ten finalist teams of the San Diego Mayor’s Cyber Cup. This comprised approximately 74 Middle and High School students, and the finalist were: Castle Park High School, Eastlake High School, Eastlake Middle School, Fremont High School, Grossmont High School, La Jolla Country Day, Oak Valley Middle School, Ramona High School, Robert F. Kennedy Community School, and Westview High School.

We should be in awe of these teens who took their own time to learn and hone their skills that will protect our business and community in the future. A let’s give a special shout out to the top three teams: Westview High School – 1st place; Ramona High School – 2nd place; and Oak Valley Middle School, (yes, a middle school!) 3rd place.

Because organizations and individuals like: SOeC, Atkins Global, ESET NA, SDG&E, NDIA, Andrew Lee, Cubic, and Northrup Grumman, all believe in helping to foster the growth of our future cyber defenders a scholarship purse of $15,000 was shared between the ten finalist teams to further their cyber studies.

As a follow on activity, Securing Our eCity Foundation have invited the finalist schools to an exclusive Cyber Boot Camp. This year General Atomics will host the Camp and ESET NA research team will lead the learning experiences that include defense of Linux and Windows systems.

We are offering a unique opportunity for the local business community to provide summer internships or shadow opportunities to the students. The possibilities are endless and can benefit your business and the students. If you are interested please send an email with Intern Fair in the subject line to: lfraumann@securingourecity.org.

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Technology

continued from page B44

When a customer has a question while shopping within an app, they can just press a button and connect instantly to a customer service rep. When they have trouble setting up a product, a simple press of a button and they're immediately connected to a trouble-shooting video session.

A few, but not many, companies are already getting on board. The best known example of this is Amazon’s “Mayday.” The button on its kindle devices allow for an almost instant communication with a customer service representative, any time of the day. And Bank of America has started to embed its click-to-call “Teller Assist” service into their ATM machines, allowing bank goers to connect to a live teller, via video chat, if they’re having issues at an ATM. This technology has been by and large reserved for the few big companies that could afford it. However new technology companies like Agora.io are making this embeddable communications possible for almost any business with an app. With an easy to implement SDK, click to call voice and video chat can be seamlessly integrated into any business’s app — making this embedded communication feature something that will be proliferating the market in 2016 and beyond.

Connected Devices Bring Real-time Updates

Inventory that self-reports when it is low. Field equipment that signals when something is wrong. Trucks that self-track. Products that notify a company when a refill is needed or a malfunction may occur.

Rolls Royce and other aircraft manufacturers are building their aircraft with sensors embedded within them. By using these sensors to collect and send real-time data to stations on the ground, they can detect if anything may start to break down – and gives them the ability to avoid potential calamities. This is the realization of the Internet of Things revolution, and 2016 is the year that the promise of connected devices gets real.

There is an estimated $19 trillion of value at stake for companies and industries as a result of the Internet of Things, and every business needs to figure out how it can take advantage of devices that can report and communicate with each other.

Wearables Reach Employees

With self-reporting devices comes the ability to avoid potential calamities. This is the realization of the Internet of Things revolution, and 2016 is the year that the promise of connected devices gets real.

Some companies are giving wearables to their employees on the ground for second-by-second inventory updates. Others are using them internally to see how their corporate employees interact.

Companies like the Tokyo-based electronics manufacturer Hitachi have developed a proprietary wearable called “Hitachi Business Microscope” which comes in the form of an ID name tag card that hangs around an employee’s neck. These ID cards have several sensors within them – everything from infrared sensors, a microphone, accelerometer and more.

When an ID card comes within a certain distance of another, the card starts to record body behavior rhythm data and face time and sends this data to an internal server. The ID card measures how long you talk to specific people, how far away you stand from them and more. Hitachi is using this data to better understand how their employees interact and collaborate with each other.

Just like the introduction of tablets a few years ago, businesses are still figuring out how wearables can integrate into business processes. But companies such as Salesforce clearly see the direction of things, which is why it’s already launched 20 Apple Watch apps for business use. For quick and constant feedback, wearables are going to start playing a noticeable role in business this year.

The Cloud Envelops Everything

Nearly every business uses the cloud for all or some of its business software. Roughly 93 percent to be exact. The cloud enables connectivity with other systems and reduced maintenance and mobility among other benefits.

The past few years have seen widespread adoption of cloud computing, but 2016 is the year that businesses will start to complete the process and move the remains of their systems to hosted solutions.

Currently 68 percent of enterprises run less than a fifth of their application portfolios online, an unsustainably low figure given the necessity for connected systems and interaction with connected devices, APIs from other businesses and mobile workers. Unsurprisingly, startups in Silicon Valley like Coupa — which provide online procurement software and services to other businesses — are already showing the way by relying entirely on cloud solutions to run their businesses.

There are other business technology trends, of course, but these six represent the largest changes. Businesses would be wise to take note, make improvements and advance toward the future.