

Whitepages Improves Both User Experience and Revenue by Moving Header Bidding to the Cloud

Whitepages increased the win rate of its bidders by 65% in 3 months, lifting revenues 38% with Transparent Ad Marketplace.

With 40 to 50 million unique users per month, Whitepages is the premier source of business addresses and contact information in the United States. Two years ago, the company changed its monetization strategy to be programmatic only and embraced header bidding. We interviewed Eric Meixner, VP of Advertising Operations at Whitepages, to learn how a programmatic-first publisher sees the world.

Why did you decide to try Transparent Ad Marketplace (TAM) for ad monetization?

Since we no longer have a direct sales function, I'm primarily focused on scalable ways to grow ad revenue while keeping the page clean and user friendly. I found header bidding very attractive from a yield perspective, but the solutions we tried were extremely intrusive. We wanted a server-side solution that would increase competition among buyers without impacting latency. With other tags and wrappers we saw no revenue lift and users' computers slowed down by multiple bid requests, because the last mile pipes are always the slowest. It's a horrible, grinding snooze-fest our users don't deserve. TAM had a great impact on fill, and was easy to work with, especially considering we have more than 400 line items in the ad server.

How do you currently use TAM?

It's the technology we use to manage all our header bidders, before the inventory goes to the open auction.

We have now six bidders integrated. The value is the diversification of demand, and the amplification of our inventory, which drives up CPMs. I welcome any new demand partner as long as they are not bad actors, and we are now figuring out how to expand the integration to our mobile app.

38% lift in revenues

What's the primary goal of your programmatic strategy?

Header bidding allows us to be less dependent on Google, and to substantially grow the business with minimal effort. After upgrading to TAM's multi-slot integration, we saw a 20% increase in revenue without having to compromise our user experience.

What else do you like about the TAM service?

I really like that Amazon [Publisher Services] takes care of ad verification and malware scanning for us. Publishers need to maintain a high bar around ad quality if they care about establishing a trusted brand. With less fraud in the industry, everyone wins: quality publishers will get better value for their inventory, advertiser will trust them more, and users will have a better experience.