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Are Publishers Becoming More Like Tech Vendors?

Media companies need new sources of revenue

INTERVIEW | **JULY 2018**

Ross Benes

An interview with:
Trei Brundrett

COO
Vox Media

With media companies frequently laying people off, digital publishers are finding that they need to find new sources of revenue. For some publishers, this involves building technology so that they can sell it to other publishers. Trei Brundrett, COO of Vox Media, spoke with eMarketer's Ross Benes about why licensing software makes sense for some publishers.

eMarketer:

Vox Media recently began selling its publishing software Chorus to other publishers. Is there a specific type of client it is targeting?

Trei Brundrett:

We didn't go out looking for specific types of customers. But I do think that there are like-minded premium publishers that are a good fit.

eMarketer:

Selling software is a lot different than selling inventory. Have you had to hire people for this initiative?

Trei Brundrett:

We've hired a few folks for partner management and business development. From a product perspective, we plan to add staff to work on Chorus as we grow and add new publishers.

But we already have a large product and design team of about 120 people. About 40 of them are focused on Chorus alone.

eMarketer:

Do you ever worry that you will help your competitors out if you sell software to them?

Trei Brundrett:

We haven't run into that. You know, I don't think we have identified anybody that is off-limits from this.

Are there other ways that the company is working toward having more of a tech focus?

Trei Brundrett:

We also have a publisher-led advertising marketplace where we're already working with other publishers. I think we've found that there's a lot of mutual benefits to working together in these ways.

Interview conducted on July 31, 2018