

Why Ubisoft Is Moving to Self-Service Ad Buying

Marketers are taking steps to reduce tech fees

INTERVIEW | **AUGUST 2018**

Ross Benes



An interview with:

Ken Tran

Director, Performance Media
Ubisoft

Advertisers' demands for more transparency and lower tech fees has **given rise to self-service** ad buying. Ken Tran, director of performance media at **Ubisoft**, spoke with eMarketer's Ross Benes about how the video game company grew its programmatic operation and took more control over the way it purchases ad inventory.

eMarketer:

Has your programmatic operation grown in recent years?

Ken Tran:

Yes, it has. We had two people on programmatic in 2016. Now we have about 18. It's considerable growth, considering how short the amount of time it has been.

Important Factors When Evaluating Building Their Own Programmatic Buying Technology* According to Media Agencies Worldwide, by Programmatic Buying Technology Ownership, June 2018

% of respondents

	Programmatic buying tech owners	Non-owners
Cost of set up	72%	67%
Cost of maintenance	50%	71%
Ease of installation	50%	43%
Complexity of platform	39%	47%
Publisher reach of platform	35%	41%
Reporting capabilities	28%	45%
Troubleshooting capabilities	15%	43%
Other	0%	10%

*Note: *vs. working with a third party*

Source: ExchangeWire, "Agents of Change: The Rise of the Programmatic Media Agency" in association with Iponweb, July 12, 2018

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eMarketer:

How has your approach to programmatic ad buying changed as you've grown your team?

Ken Tran:

We essentially buy through demand-side platforms' [DSPs] self-service capabilities. In-housing the tech stack involves moving away from a managed model to a self-service model.

eMarketer:

Is reducing tech fees the main incentive to moving to self-service buying?

Ken Tran:

That's part of it. It's the ability to be more efficient and cost effective. But another key component is to enhance collaboration between [different company departments], especially between the marketing team and the media team.

eMarketer:

Do you still work with an ad agency to buy inventory?

Ken Tran:

In some digital buys, we do rely on our agency partners. With endemic and direct buys that we are not able to self-service, we do work with an agency partner and leverage the buying power that they have.

Interview conducted on August 8, 2018