

How Advertisers Are Reorganizing Around Programmatic

Technology is bringing media buying and planning strategies closer together

INTERVIEW | **APRIL 2018**

Ross Benes



An interview with:

Chris Wexler

Executive Director, Media and Analytics
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Now that more than **80% of digital display ads are being bought programmatically**, some media companies are **eliminating the silos** between their direct and automated advertising departments. Chris Wexler, executive director of media and analytics at ad agency **Cramer-Krasselt**, spoke with eMarketer's Ross Benes about how the growth in automated advertising is leading companies to reorganize themselves.

eMarketer:

Do you think the programmatic silos are all coming down?

Chris Wexler:

We're in a hybrid situation right now because the technical and financial control aspects of programmatic are vital to us to have people fully trained on those systems. Do people need to understand how [programmatic] works strategically? Absolutely. Everybody needs to know that.

But we haven't moved everybody to buying programmatic, for frankly, the financial control side of it. We don't want anyone to "fat finger" a \$100,000 buy to a \$1 million buy. So we have tighter controls there. That said, we fully expect 90% to 95% of our buying to be programmatic in the next 10 years.

eMarketer:

Why do you expect programmatic to keep growing so much?

Chris Wexler:

It's a more efficient way to transact media. For the publisher, they eliminate rep commissions and as they're less disaggregated by middlemen, they're going to get a bigger piece of that pie. We're doing the same thing as an agency and cutting out middlemen wherever we can for cost and control efficiencies.

“We're pulling buying and planning closer together. We have the technical experts handling keyboards, but everyone has to understand the strategic implications.”

eMarketer:

How do you think programmatic advertising will evolve in the next few years?

Chris Wexler:

I think we're growing into an era where programmatic is not, by definition, a short-term cost per action at every point. It's evolving into branding, and everything else, because it's a flexible tool that can be used. We built an analytical structure on top of our training operation that allows us to do testing on 12 or 13 different metrics, from awareness through surveys, down to cost per acquisition. Having that full analytical stack tied into it is also pretty critical.

eMarketer:

As programmatic makes headway into branding budgets, how are you reorienting your approach?

Chris Wexler:

Initially with programmatic, you'd write a buying brief just like you would for your TV buyers, and they'd go get their spots and ads for you. I think what we've found, that what works best, is co-working sessions between the media strategy teams and the programmatic experts.

Unless you have a deep understanding of objectives and of the client, you're not really unlocking the full complexity and nuance of programmatic. It's not just something where you can go, "Buy me adults ages 25 to 54." You have to go, "Find me someone who is showing signs of nervousness about their financial situation." It's a very different ask, and it's not something that works on a one-page buying brief. So, what we're seeing is we're pulling buying and planning closer together. We have the technical experts handling keyboards, but everyone has to understand the strategic implications.

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