

STRATEGIC
SPOTLIGHT

PROGRAMMATIC: A PARTNERSHIP MAKES A BETTER JOURNEY

MARCH 2019



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TO IN-HOUSE OR NOT?

Programmatic advertising is no longer new; it is now a must-have in all media strategies. It offers an automated way of buying ads using multiple data sources and sophisticated ad tech platforms. Historically, these buys have been handled by media agencies, but more and more advertisers are looking at moving this service in-house.





THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO IN-HOUSE

A complete in-house solution is far from easy. It requires a centralized data infrastructure, connected ad tech setup, managing contracts and getting the right expertise in-place. The ideal in-house solution takes an estimated 12-18 months to set up and sustaining the process puts a high level of ongoing (and extra) pressure on a company's internal structure. According to the IAB, 13% of the brands surveyed pulled out of in-housing initiatives after testing.

So perhaps it's unsurprising that at Wavemaker, we see ourselves as tech consultants in the programmatic sphere through our recommendations on new media approaches. Instead of clients taking on everything themselves, they are more informed when working with ad tech companies such as Google, Oracle, Adobe and others to build the most **connected *technology* ecosystem** based on their business IT infrastructure. This guarantees a centralized contract, standardized data infrastructure, scalability across multiple markets and a specialized account servicing team to maximize usage.

This setup also enables them to build a **connected *data* ecosystem** which empowers them to work in partnership with agencies & publishers to build a powerful data strategy based on brand objectives and campaign KPIs.

THE HYBRID MODEL

As more brand marketers shift towards programmatic buying, they are being pushed to gain more knowledge and understanding of different technologies. Technology is now firmly a top-table issue and is closer to CMO today than ever before. Over the last few years, our conversations have started shifting towards the right platforms to use, integration of offline or research data with online platforms, and educating local markets on the process of programmatic buying.

So, given the complexity of programmatic buying, the fast-moving technology that powers it, the legislative changes in data governance, and the ongoing concerns over transparency, customer data and brand safety, how do we recommend our clients approach Programmatic?

At Wavemaker our first condition is that every solution is a client-centric solution. We understand that every organization is set up differently, each category has its own unique requirements and there is no single tech set-up that fits all advertisers. It's much more than a service we sell, it is a pivotal part of our clients' brand comms strategy, and it's our job to help each one deploy it in the way that it is right for their business. *Programmatic is a strategic journey we take with each of our clients.*

This journey includes basic-to-advanced training for brand and agency client teams in all markets, a technology audit, platform evaluation, and identifying the right expertise for the job. These programmatic journeys are a real collaboration with our clients. A collaboration which includes brand teams, tech partners and agency partners. Wavemaker believes in having a centralized technology stack (exceptions do apply to markets such as mainland China).



A PROGRAMMATIC CASE STUDY

We'll like to share an example of this bespoke approach to programmatic in action. With one of our global clients, we have built a technology maturity scorecard and a programmatic workflow to track how we are progressing in our shared journey. As KPIs were set centrally, we set up a centre for excellence to accelerate programmatic adoption, including:

Centralized reporting

Constant adoption & execution across markets

Audience segmentation & insights

Build used-case framework

Advanced analytics

Best in-class activation with constant governance

Our collaboration has been a success. Not only did the business outcome thrive, but we built great chemistry between brand team and agency team that has made us so much more agile. And with an ever-changing market & tech landscape, you want your partners to be swift in execution.

In our experience, the execution of programmatic buying is most successful within an agency. We have the cutting-edge expertise, always-on training development, cross-brand learnings and infrastructure to mobilize programmatic teams based on the needs of each individual client – an example of a great collaboration between Wavemaker and a client that is keen to approach strategic paths.



CONCLUSION

To address clients' concern on better governance, we also have very transparent models in place to give them 100% visibility at every stage. At Wavemaker we have worked together with multiple businesses, adapted a strategic approach, and transformed our programmatic activities over time. These years of partnership have taught us how to collaborate successfully through the ever-changing opportunities and challenges of programmatic – and turn both into growth for our clients.

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