



centre.

MEDIA BUYING BLUEPRINT

How to Build a Best-In-Class Digital Team



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GOAL SETTING

Digital media has gone through constant and dramatic change over the past decade as new media, targeting capabilities, and technologies have changed how brands reach consumers. Initially, a digital team was built around direct digital buying—with things like search, social, and programmatic buying tacked on over time, based on need. Due to drastic industry shifts in very short amounts of time, many agencies were forced to operate from this reactive place. In turn, they created more expensive and less functional silos - or channels.

Today, consumers expect consistent, high-quality buying experiences across multiple touchpoints—and sellers must respond with unified sales strategies and capabilities. That's what brings us here. We're advocating for the thoughtful integration of digital buying. Yes, it can be achieved, if and when it's powered by a unified media platform. We know it's a process—but we've never been one to shy away from a challenge.

75% of agencies have started on the path to media convergence, but only **17%** are fully there.

(Forrester Consulting, 2018)

Why converge direct and programmatic media into a single function within your organization?

Let's get down to brass *facts*. We're here to clear the air—and share a practical guide of tested methods to get you there.

GOAL SETTING

CONTINUED

CONGRATULATIONS

You're future-proofing your media buying businesses by merging the planning, capabilities, operations, and measurement of programmatic and direct media buying teams—but, how? For starters, convergence efforts require adequate planning and support.

Agencies must overcome several barriers to achieve converged media:

Data silos, or different data measurement schemes used to plan, execute and evaluate programmatic versus direct buying.

Change management challenges within the organization and operations.

A lack of talent and/or needed skillsets to buy programmatically across platforms.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

62%

would be better able to keep clients*

58%

would be better able to attract new clients*

55%

would see an improvement in media campaign performance*

48%

would be able to keep up with market innovations in media buying*

45%

would be more equipped to hire and retain quality talent*

*Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Centro
*Base: 104 media buying strategy decision-makers at US advertising and or marketing agencies

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

PEOPLE, PROCESSES, & KNOWLEDGE



PEOPLE

Your digital buyers will most likely need to learn an entirely new skill set. Create a “RACI” document to determine who is **Responsible** and **Accountable**, and also identify those that need to be **Consulted** and **Informed**, as you start building out your project plan.

Helpful Hint:

Name “internal champions” to test processes and new platforms first. Create a buddy system to foster ongoing learning and collaboration.



PROCESS

When converging your buying functions, build a master process playbook and assign an owner to update and maintain it as needed. Documentation of detailed process maps, roles, and responsibilities is crucial for onboarding new employees, and streamlining initial roll-out.

Helpful Hint:

Establish a timeline, and highlight key milestones. Cultivate an ongoing dialogue with your team to allow for a steady flow of feedback; keep a running log of general responses, reactions, and comments—they will assist with process refinement, once new changes have been rolled out.



KNOWLEDGE

It’s likely that most of the training you’ll facilitate will focus on incorporating programmatic buying into your existing direct buying practice, which is why a majority of the training content in this guide is programmatic focused.

Helpful Hint:

Assume one full time employee (at least) is dedicated to creating and implementing internal training and education. Don’t forget to take advantage of external partner resources; many vendors have fantastic training materials, and are willing to share or even deliver them to you in-person.

KEY PLAYERS

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities of your team will look different before and after convergence. Keep in mind that *pre-convergence*, your team roles may be broken out between direct and programmatic. Below, we broke out what the roles and responsibilities will look like *after* convergence, so you have this to look forward to (we're painting the picture, so to speak).



WHO'S WHO?

+ TEAM LEAD (Manager or Director)

Leads team, sets strategy, and aligns overarching objectives and KPIs. This person assists with pre-planning and campaign wrap-up, manages the client relationship, and ensures expectations are being exceeded.

+ MEDIA PLANNER/BUYER

Uses strategic insight and data to develop and execute media recommendations, including the negotiation of placements, post-launch optimizations, and client communication.

+ ASSISTANT PLANNER

Processes IOs, manages delivery, and works with the team to maintain and update internal campaign status.

+ AD OPERATIONS MANAGER

Manages campaign launch, QA's tags and creative, and aids in troubleshooting client or publisher issues.

+ ANALYST

Must love numbers. Tracks all performance analytics, provides insight and optimization recommendations throughout the campaign, and runs campaign wrap-up report.

CAMPAIGN WORKFLOW

OVERVIEW

Your campaign workflow shouldn't be overly complicated.

We broke it down for you—review the different stages and their associated tasks below.



PLANNING

Gather information, research, confirm creative and conversion strategy, provide KPI recommendations. Create strategic media plan, and budget allocations. Revise plan based on client feedback.



BUYING

Select inventory types and data sources, negotiate placements, create and sign IO.



LAUNCHING & MANAGING

Share details for launch including special creative/traffic needs.

QA and test creative, launch campaign, confirm delivery is tracking, and share screenshots. Monitor, troubleshoot, and optimize campaigns accordingly; manage pacing, and pull performance reporting. Deliver final wrap-up report to stakeholders at end of campaign.

MASTER TIPS

- ☆ Keep your KPIs in mind throughout the planning phase(s) of your campaigns.
- ☆ Think about all the different ways you consume media to gain inspiration on where and how to place your ads!

PROGRAMMATIC

OVERVIEW

THE BASICS

The programmatic industry is constantly evolving, and can be complex—but we're here to define the space. In its simplest form, programmatic buying sends the right message, to the right customer, at the right time. We've highlighted a few key terms below.

KEY TERMS

RTB

Real-time bidding; one of many media buying methods.

EXCHANGE

A digital marketplace that enables advertisers and publishers to buy and sell ad inventory.

SSP (Supply-Side Platform)

Selling platform that provides yield management capabilities to publishers, enabling them to sell their inventory via exchanges.

DSP (Demand-Side Platform)

Buying platform that enables advertisers to buy inventory from exchanges while integrating audience data via RTB.

TRADING DESK

A combined effort of computer automation/bidding and human touch.

DMP (Data Management Platform)

A unifying data platform that collects, organizes, and activates first-and third-party audience data from multiple sources.

84.8% of U.S. digital display ad dollars will transact programmatically by 2019.

(eMarketer, 2018)

CAMPAIGN PLANNING

INITIAL QUESTIONS

Establish the right KPIs up front by asking the right questions early on. In an effort to provide “raving fan service,” and create high-impact and efficient campaigns ask your client to answer the questions below.

- ✓ Who is your audience?
- ✓ What are your goals for this digital campaign?
- ✓ How will you measure success?
- ✓ What makes up your current media mix?
- ✓ What has/hasn't worked well in the past?
- ✓ What assets (creative units) are available?
Is there more than one version of creative for A/B testing?
- ✓ Are there any current pixels placed on the website?
- ✓ What geo is the campaign targeting?
- ✓ Do we have the freedom to test different audiences and tactics?

TACTICS

When it comes to programmatic buying, there are many different tactics available to you and your team. Here are the most commonly used.

>> RETARGETING

Allows you to track all users who visit your web page, and finds those users across almost any site.

>> CONTEXTUAL

Choose to have your ads served only on pages that match chosen topical categories, such as real estate, fashion, or food.

>> SITE LIST

Targets a list of individual websites; good for optimizations after you have a list of best performing websites

>> BEHAVIORAL

Targets pre-built audience groups by third-party data providers (such as BlueKai, Lotame, Datonics).

>> NATIVE

Use native to make your brand's message align itself with the look and feel of the webpage.

>> DESKTOP VIDEO

Video ads on a run of network (or a wide collection of websites); can be pre-roll, mid-roll, post-roll.

>> MOBILE VIDEO

Similar to video on desktop except on mobile devices, and served across apps and mobile sites.

>> HYPER-LOCAL VIDEO

The ability to target audience(s) based on their exact location using GPS coordinates.

>> MOBILE THIRD-PARTY AUDIENCES

Targets consumers on their mobile devices using third-party audience data.

>> CRM

Reaches existing customers using a client's first-party data, which can then be used to on-board and build custom audience segments (to target programmatically).

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Make your messages more personalized and relevant by understanding where your customers are in the decision-making process. While there are many variations of the conversion funnel, below is one example of how to utilize different tactics and apply them to corresponding areas of the funnel.



AWARENESS

Consumers are familiar with your brand before making a purchase. Achieve this with the right type of messaging, and ensure your ads are in the right place at the right time.

Tactics:

Prospecting, Hyper-local (large radius), Contextual, Behavioral, Private Marketplace (PMP), Custom Site Lists



FAMILIARITY AND RESEARCH

Consumers have decided to learn more about your product; they start researching different options and dig deeper into your brand.

Tactics:

Behavioral, Contextual, Click Retargeting, Lookalike Modeling



CONSIDERATION

Consumer begins to take steps to choose between the different products he/she is most likely to purchase (test drives or product samples, for example).

Tactics:

Behavioral, Hyper-local (small radius), Site Retargeting, Search Retargeting (1st and 3rd party), Mobile (location-based audiences)



PURCHASE

Consumer purchases the product.

Tactics:

Site Retargeting (Site and Cart Abandon), Lookalike Modeling



RETENTION AND LOYALTY

Keep the conversation going; build loyalty among consumer base to retain business and boost word-of-mouth referrals.

Tactics:

Retarget Converters, CRM Onboarding

FRAUD PREVENTION

Brand safety and fraud prevention measures should always be top of mind when selecting inventory and placement types for a media plan. There are two types of ad fraud:

HUMAN GENERATED

CLICK FARMS

Groups of humans intentionally generating traffic for the purpose of inflating clicks.

INVISIBLE ADS

An ad that is served to humans but can't be seen.

SPOOFING/ LAUNDERING

A shell site setup to host an ad, but the ad is actually displayed on a different, less desirable site.

UNINTENTIONAL NAVIGATION

Pop-ups, redirects from misspelled domains, pop-underers.

BOT GENERATED

SIMPLE BOTS

These are clearly robotic and the easiest to detect; they show unnatural patterns of behavior.

SOPHISTICATED BOTS

Harder to detect, these bots attempt to disguise themselves as humans.

BOTNET

A collection of computers running bot software.

What are some best practices to mitigate risk for ad fraud?

- 1 Buy selectively and avoid Run of Exchange (ROE)**
 - Apply whitelists and blacklists and consider PMPs, as well as direct buying
- 2 Layer on Targeting**
 - Include brand safety filters and exclude sensitive content
- 3 Monitor Performance**
 - Look for abnormally high CTR or low conversion rates
- 4 Leverage External Partners**
 - Include a viewability or verification service as part of your campaign

BUYING

DIGITAL DISPLAY INVENTORY OVERVIEW

Review and understand the digital display inventory options that are available to you and your team. In the midst of convergence, it's important to select inventory sources based upon your desired level of transparency as well as target CPM.

DIRECT BUYING

Occurs when a marketer purchases guaranteed impressions booked directly in a publisher's ad server; is generally purchased with an insertion order.

(Example: A direct order to Chicago Tribune for a specific number of impressions.)

OPEN RTB

One of many media buying methods. Also known as "real-time bidding," or a means by which advertising inventory is bought and sold on a per-impression basis (to the highest bidder), via programmatic instantaneous auction. Open RTB allows the buyer to place ads on multiple sites for specific demographics *(example: sports fans)*.

PRIVATE MARKETPLACE (PMP)

A customized, invitation-only marketplace where publishers make their inventory and audiences available to a select group of buyers at a pre-negotiated rate or floor price.

Inventory is bought programmatically.

PROGRAMMATIC NATIVE

Messages and assets inserted directly into a publisher's or platform's feed.

CONNECTED TV

A television set that is connected to the internet via built-in capabilities, a media streaming device, gaming console, or Blu-ray player, and facilitates the delivery of streaming video content.

PMP DEEP DIVE

USING PMPs

| OPEN | PRIVATE |
|---|--|
| Buying via real-time bidding so the inventory is not guaranteed | Buying via real-time bidding so the inventory is not guaranteed |
| Run across a wide range of publishers and sites | Target specific inventory, pages, or publishers via private deal |
| Equal access to exchanges and inventory | Access to more premium, ear-marked pages or placements |
| First- and second-price auction | Often less competition with other bidders |
| Open RTB auction | Floor rates |

PMP BENEFITS

UNIQUE INVENTORY

Publishers reserve specific inventory made exclusively available through a PMP, and not offered on open exchanges.

PERFORMANCE

While a PMP does not replace the need to optimize, performance tends to be higher on premium inventory.

VIEWABILITY

Some publishers reserve above-the-fold inventory exclusively for private deals.

PMP DEAL PROCESS

Work with publishers/vendors to discover what programmatic opportunities are available to you.

Then, create the strategy around private deal creation, and utilize your vendor or partner for ongoing support throughout this process.

Requesting PMP Deals

- 1 DEAL REQUEST/INQUIRY**
Send in deal or request to vendor in their preferred method of contact (usually, via email).
- 2 WAIT**
Allow some time for deal creation (7-10 business days) and typically 48 hours for general inquiries.
- 3 DATA DIG**
Find site lists, media kits, and and other media solutions/offerings.
- 4 FINAL DETAILS**
Include all pertinent data points in your email: advertiser name; publisher name; date needed; true launch date; budget allocations; desired package, platform, format, and ad sizes; landing page URL; KPIs/goals.

PMP TERMS

DEAL/OFFER

What is being negotiated between the buyer and seller.

DEAL ID

The final outcome of the deal and what will be used to identify what was negotiated.

FLOOR PRICE

The minimum you need to bid in order to enter into the auction.

“By 2019, the combined share of direct and PMP deals will make up **79.6%** of the total programmatic pie.”

(eMarketer, 2018)

PROGRAMMATIC PITFALLS

Programmatic buying can be intimidating.

We've summed up some of the common pitfalls to avoid when you're just getting started.



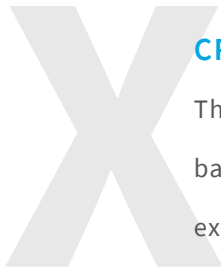
TACTIC OVERLOAD

Trying to squeeze as many tactics as possible into a plan limits the amount of data collected and actionable insights delivered post-campaign.



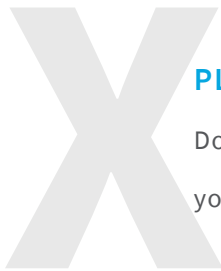
LIMITATION SITUATIONS

Common limitations include: small geos, extremely specific targeting requirements, and/or rigid plans that allow for little-to-no flexibility.



CREATIVE SCARCITY

Think outside the box! Instead of delivering an exact, prescriptive plan back to stakeholders, introduce new ideas that have the potential to expand the programmatic experience.



PLANNER PARANOIA

Don't be afraid to test new tactics during the launch and throughout your campaign. If something doesn't perform, you can always turn it off.

THE POWER OF DATA

TYPES OF DATA

Your campaign is only as good as the data behind it. Data insights can drive creative and will allow you to adjust along the way. Understand what types of data are available, and create more efficiencies within your media buying.

FIRST-PARTY DATA

The data you, as the advertiser or publisher, collect first-hand from your website visitors, web properties, and CRM systems. It's the highest quality data, and usually doesn't cost you anything (if it's yours).

SECOND-PARTY DATA

The next best thing to first-party data. This type of data belongs to someone else. For example, advertisers, any publisher-owned data that you leverage would qualify.

THIRD-PARTY DATA

Data that comes from an unknown party or origin. Typically comes from DMPs that aggregate audience data from multiple providers, publishers, and sources—it's sometimes hard to tell whether this data is high-quality or trusted.

DID YOU KNOW?

Audience data can come from a variety of sources, including: offline sources, online behavior, online search.

THE POWER OF DATA

CONTINUED

EXAMPLES OF TYPES OF THIRD-PARTY DATA



DEMOGRAPHIC

- Age
- Gender
- HH Income
- Education Level



INTEREST

- Sports
- Fashion & Beauty
- Politics
- Automotive
- Real Estate



INTENT

- In the market for a new house, car, or phone
- Ready to book travel

Three tips when choosing data partners

- 1 Relevance** goes hand-in-hand with transparency. If you use data to target individuals on a personal level and focus on creating value for them, then you can create meaningful connections and build a loyal customer base. Clients want to know how agencies are using their data, what tech is being used and why, and whether or not their ads are being seen.
- 2** Consider the **cost** of the type of targeting versus the number of data segments that are being pulled in. Be selective. Too many segments can cause *over-targeting*, and take more of your dollars away from working media. For example, contextual targeting is cheaper than behavioral, but can be just as effective in certain cases.
- 3 Customization and variety**—more segments aren't always better; a variety of data comes with a multitude of complexities, and the more diverse the data is, the more work is needed to protect it.

LAUNCHING & MANAGING

CAMPAIGN LOGISTICS

Today's best-performing digital media campaigns require appropriate tracking to ensure marketers hit their desired KPIs. Conversion tracking should be set up properly at the launch of the campaign, and followed by tight management of pacing and optimization throughout the rest of the campaign lifecycle. Here's how to get started.

CONVERSION TRACKING

What are the Benefits?

Measure an action, beyond eCPM or click/CTR to help determine the effectiveness of the digital campaign.

Popular Conversions

Review some of the most commonly tracked conversion types:

- 1 Contests
- 2 Form Fills
- 3 Online Shopping
- 4 Behavior Site

KEY TERMS

COOKIE CONVERSIONS

A short line of code that is used to track conversions.

POSTRACK CONVERSIONS

Also known as server-to-server tracking. Uses a unique identification number given to the user the moment the user clicks on creative. Most commonly used for mobile apps.

MOBILE OFFLINE ATTRIBUTION

Measures offline, location-based conversions using mobile data.

CONVERSION TRACKING

CONTINUED

5 STEPS TO PLACING CONVERSION PIXELS

Placing a pixel on an advertiser's website can be a challenge.

This step-by-step process will help you set pixels faster, in order to better track performance.

1 STRATEGY

Media Planner determines pixel strategy.

Tip: Browse the advertiser's website to suggest all conversion opportunities. These recommendations should be driven by what the advertiser is selling, who they're selling it to, and how their customers can buy their product(s).

2 DELIVERY

Media Planner sends pixel strategy, pixel(s), and instructions to advertiser.

Tip: Provide an Excel sheet that outlines pixel placement instructions. Place pixels anywhere between the opening <body> tag and closing <body> tag in the HTML code of the advertiser's website.

3 EXECUTION

Advertiser gives pixel(s) with instructions to web developer (or to the person who developed the advertiser's site).

4 CONFIRMATION

Advertiser confirms with Planner when pixel(s) have been placed.

5 TEST

Specialist tests pixel placement and launches campaign!

Tip: Troubleshoot as needed, to ensure pixel is placed correctly.

MASTER TIP

★ If your advertisers have multiple pixels, send them a spreadsheet, so they know exactly where to place each tracking pixel, and send the pixels in a separate text file.

PACING

Most DSPs offer machine learning and auto-optimization tools, but a human touch is also required. Pacing and optimization will occur throughout the lifecycle of the campaign, and should be a continuous practice. Frequency will depend on the spend level per tactic.

[PACING

Check spend across all live tactics and evaluate projected daily spend to meet monthly or flighted budgetary goals.

[OPTIMIZATION

Utilize the data within your campaigns to drive performance towards best-performing sites, creative, etc.

[WHEN TO DO BOTH

Execute daily or weekly, depending on budget size.

Pacing and optimization are dependent on each other throughout the entire campaign.

MASTER TIP

★ If the campaign is pacing behind, always start by adjusting the daily budget, and then move the rest of the “levers”.

BEST PRACTICES

WHEN?

Pacing should be monitored weekly, at minimum.

WHAT'S BAD?

Anything under 98% or over 105% pacing requires attention.

WHICH SPEND?

Always pace in NET and Gross.

WHICH NUMBERS?

Always look at ALL line items, not just overall pacing.

**GOAL:
100%
DELIVERY!**

OPTIMIZATION

MANUAL OPTIMIZATION

FOUR STEPS TO SUCCESS

Depending on the KPIs and tactics chosen, use these tips to help ensure your campaign delivers.

1 LAUNCH

Check to see if your campaign is delivering within 24 hours.

> If not, troubleshoot!

2 ACCRUE DATA

Ensure campaign size is large enough to make statistically sound decisions.

> Wait until 10-25% of campaign is delivered or you're one week into a campaign.

3 MINOR OPTIMIZATIONS

Begin to make changes on a tactical level to push spend toward performance.

> Shift budget to higher-performing tactics.

4 MAJOR OPTIMIZATIONS

Start making optimizations.

- > Build blacklist/whitelists.
- > Turn off underperforming tactics.
- > Pull data segment reporting.
- > Optimize ad sizes.

OPTIMIZATION BENEFITS

PERFORMANCE

- Generate better goal outcomes for your campaign
- The best performing inventory will be rewarded
- Automated bid adjustments should be made on each placement within a domain

CONTROL

- Many DSPs offer manual and automated optimization options—it's up to you to determine which one works best
- Assess your campaign goals regularly, and ensure current optimizations align with previously set KPIs

EFFICIENCY

- Utilize the auto-optimization and machine learning tools within your DSP to save time
- If possible, interact with your DSP's algorithm to influence optimizations within a domain

TRANSPARENCY

- Programmatic provides incredibly granular data and insights, which means optimization options are plentiful.

OPTIMIZATION

CONTINUED

OPTIMIZATION BY KPI

CTR/CPC

- Whitelist sites and implement low bids on historically high CTR/low CPC sites
- Turn off high impression sites with high CPC/low CTR sites
- Add click retargeting
- Test, mobile-only, ATF, new data partners, frequency caps
- Daypart better goal outcomes for your campaign
- Keep an eye out for placements with abnormally high CTRs or unusual click patterns, as these can be an indicator of fraudulent activity

CPA

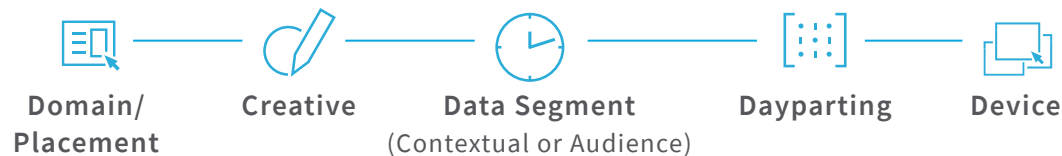
- Retarget with daypart targeting towards hours with highest performance
- Increase bids
- Add in converters based on the acquisition
- Turn off exchanges/sites with high impressions and no conversions
- Evaluate pixel strategy
- Re-evaluate all data providers
- Evaluate and modify the landing page
- Separate tactics by channel

VCR

- Prioritize 15s video over 30s or 60s
- Time of day optimizations during hours of highest VCR
- Create platform-heavy up tactics—desktop vs. mobile
- Turn off exchanges/sites with high impressions and low VCR
- Evaluate pixel strategy; pixels can be placed in the middle or end of video
- Re-evaluate all data providers
- Test PMPs

Advanced Optimization Strategies

ADDITIONAL LEVERS YOU CAN PULL:



MASTER TIP

★ Don't forget to optimize between tactics! Follow a cadence—not too frequently, or infrequently.

LEARN MORE

www.centro.net

QUESTIONS?

Don't hesitate to reach out to
blueprint@centro.net

ABOUT CENTRO

Our technology platform—Basis, centralizes, organizes, and automates digital media across programmatic, direct, search, and social channels. We empower agencies to control their digital business, optimize their advertising intelligence, and drive team performance by advocating for the thoughtful integration of digital buying.



READY?

Email us at blueprint@centro.net

Basis

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