

Go beyond Google Ads with programmatic advertising

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When most of us think of online advertising, we think of Google Ads.

Or, if we're talking retail and shopping, we might think of Amazon, Walmart or Target ad buys.

And, if you're a B2B, you might think of Microsoft Ads and LinkedIn Advertising.

And that just about covers it, right? Not so fast!

There's another type of advertising that's often overlooked: programmatic advertising.

Why do many advertisers tend to forget about programmatic advertising? Probably because it's not a great fit for everyone – and it has a reputation as a platform solely for big brands with big budgets.

But that's not necessarily true. Let's dive deeper to see if programmatic advertising might make a good addition to your digital B2B advertising program.

What is programmatic advertising?

Traditionally, digital advertisers buy ads through ad networks, such as the Google Ads network or the Microsoft Ads network, where the networks have control over the platform and the cost of the ads.

With programmatic advertising, you buy your ad in an ad exchange – a central place where publishers, advertisers, agencies, and networks buy and sell ad impressions on an automated system.

You feed it data about your campaign, audience, and goals, and the programmatic advertising platform uses automated technology to manage and optimize your ad spend.

Why programmatic advertising?

Why should you consider programmatic advertising? Isn't your Google Ads program enough?

Perhaps. It's certainly true that Google is transforming Google Ads in a fundamental way to include omnichannel options like Demand Gen (formerly Discovery) campaigns and Performance Max campaigns. And there's no denying that Google has a lot of online real estate where we can unleash these ads.

But although Google has the lion's share of inventory, they don't own the web. There may be other opportunities outside of Google that you aren't tapping into.

That's where programmatic advertising comes in.

Google Display vs. programmatic advertising

When I discuss programmatic advertising with my clients, they'll often ask how it differs from Google Display advertising because it's easy to confuse the two.

As mentioned above, display ads are placed within the Google Ads network. In contrast, programmatic advertising allows advertisers to buy ads across ad exchanges and networks via demand-side platforms (DSPs).

The cost of entry

Programmatic advertising has a reputation for requiring big ad spends to gain entry. And yes, programmatic advertising campaigns' starting point is usually much higher than Google Ads.

So, if you have a budget of under \$10,000 and target a smaller, defined location (such as one small city), you may want to stick with the Google Display Network only.

However, if you have a bigger budget and want to reach a broader audience or geographic area, you might want to add programmatic to your digital advertising program.

Further, programmatic advertising probably isn't as "expensive" as you might think. The cost of entry isn't as high as it once was, thanks to service providers such as Choozle.

In some cases, advertisers can get started with programmatic advertising for as little as \$5,000 to \$10,000 per month.

It's important to ensure your budget is consistent with your objectives with any advertising strategy. A platform like Choozle, for example, will automatically set spending limits, optimize advertising bids and help reduce overspending.

As the number of different channels, tactics, and strategies continues to grow, you will most likely have to utilize several marketing tools to be effective.

Developing in-house expertise around programmatic advertising budgets and campaign execution allows advertisers to be nimble with their media spend and shift toward tactics and channels that work best for your brand.

Note I'm not suggesting that you choose programmatic over Google or any other tool (or vice versa). Each can serve different goals and purposes.

It's worth testing programmatic alongside your existing digital advertising initiatives to see if it helps you get more interest in your business and products.

Two use cases for B2B advertisers

Let me highlight two use cases where programmatic advertising might benefit your B2B.

Low search volumes in Google Ads

Sometimes, B2Bs have difficulty with keyword targeting in Google search because the keywords that best describe their product or solution have very low search volume (or no search volume at all).

The most obvious way to overcome this challenge is by building awareness and traffic via YouTube, Display and Discovery campaigns.

But this is also a great opportunity to test programmatic advertising. Its broad reach can be a great way to build awareness of your product or service through various targeting tactics.

For B2B campaigns, Choozle's third-party data catalog is a great place to start to expand reach and build awareness of your product or service.

Rather than relying on their own data, Choozle's catalog is aggregated from 60+ outside data partners to maximize reach and lean on the expertise those partners provide. For example, many clients will leverage data from Bombora and DNB to layer on B2B demographic, firmographic and intent data.

Competitive site conquering is another great tactic, especially if you have a lot of direct competition in the market. With site conquering, advertisers can create a custom data audience to target individuals who have searched and visited competitor websites.

Industry trade shows and conferences

Another really cool application of programmatic advertising for B2Bs is industry trade shows and conferences.

If you can identify a trade show or conference you know your ideal customers will attend in person, you can target them by geofencing.

Geofencing uses GPS location data to pinpoint the physical location of your audience. So, in the trade show scenario, you could target the location where the trade show or conference is taking place and serve up what is essentially a retargeted ad to that audience.

Programmatic advertising might be the boost your B2B needs

If you're happy with your Google Ads B2B program (and especially if you're not), it's worth giving programmatic advertising another look.

It may not be a good fit, especially if your digital advertising program is small.

But if you're looking for new opportunities to expand brand awareness and lay a strong foundation for further sales and growth, then programmatic is worth checking out.

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