



Case Study

Outdoor Sportsman Group Increases Programmatic CPM by 114% Using Operative Compete™

Outdoor Sportsman Group (OSG) is the largest media company and leading producer of television programming focusing on the outdoor lifestyle and activities. Outdoor Sportsman Group includes channels such as the Outdoor Channel and the World Fishing Network, and has significant digital inventory in both display and video.

THE PROBLEM:

OSG was using programmatic partners to fill unsold inventory across its sites, but was unhappy with its return. Using a “set it and forget it” approach, **OSG earned a meager 2 percent of its total digital revenue from programmatic even though programmatic accounted for 34 percent of OSG inventory.** OSG also felt that it was sending too much of its inventory to programmatic channels, but was unsure how to increase yield. OSG was unable to improve on its own due to the work required to integrate and test new partners as well as to analyze and manage the programmatic part of its business over time.

“We needed to figure a way to grow the budget by increasing the level of competition.”

- Reggie Hudson, Director of Digital Ad Ops

One reason programmatic had been put on the back burner was the recent formation of Outdoor Sportsman Group, which was created from a merger of three different television media companies—a huge undertaking. Operative already provided OSG with ad serving and trafficking technology and services through this transition period, so it was a natural next step for the two companies to work together to create a strategy for improving programmatic performance, and ensure that yield would be maximized for every impression, both programmatic and direct. Unlike many partners that specialize only in programmatic or direct optimization, **Operative was able to offer its innovative Compete™ solution, which includes management services as well as reporting and optimization technology that would improve yield across OSG’s entire advertising business.**

OSG’s sellers and buyers were just starting to use programmatic channels, as many of them had long legacies with traditional channels and targeted older audiences that were slower to adopt digital channels.

THE SOLUTION:

Operative initially recommended that OSG update its product catalog in order to categorize and name inventory more effectively. With several updates, Operative made it easier for programmatic buyers to more easily understand what they were buying.

The next step Operative took was to implement several new programmatic revenue streams that could compete with OSG’s current programmatic partners. **Operative provided quick and easy integration and frequent testing to determine the right combination of programmatic partners** for every part of OSG’s digital inventory.

After that, Operative set up its Compete™ technology and provided ongoing optimization analysis and transparent reporting to ensure that OSG not only maximized revenue but was able to build insights into its overall advertising strategy.

THE RESULTS:

Within two months, **OSG realized a 114 percent increase in programmatic CPMs** as a result of its partnership with Operative. Additionally, OSG was able to increase the amount of inventory it sold directly—from 66 percent to anywhere from 75 to 90 percent, depending on the season and programmatic availability. These improvements resulted in a **6 percent bottom line increase in digital revenue for the company.**

Equally important was that sellers, brands and company management have started to understand the potential of programmatic for the business. After several years of stagnant programmatic growth, the large uptick in revenue has sent a positive message throughout the company. **As a next step, OSG plans to increase programmatic sales for video with Operative,** which is an important part of its digital strategy going into 2017.



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