

Growing Video Ad Avails

by Eric Franchi, Tuesday, August 19, 2008



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THE RELEASE OF THE BAIN/IAB Digital Pricing Research study has had the online media blogosphere buzzing for several days now. No matter what area of the business you specialize, the study -- which examined pricing data and other key data points of seven branded online publishers -- had some significant and thought provoking takeaways. I recommend taking a look at the study when you have a chance.

While most of the insights were macro and focused on display, some attention was given to online video. The summary noted that there is more demand than supply for quality video ad inventory, resulting in healthy CPMs that are two to three times that of display for the studied group. These publishers were also often oversold in video, needing to resort to makegoods for client buys.

It's unlikely that these statistics are news to anyone, particularly Video Insider readers. However, there was one data point that really intrigued me; two of the unnamed publishers were very successful in growing their total video ad impressions year-over-year on a percentage basis. That is very impressive and something that all publishers should be striving for in an environment where demand is outstripping supply. The question then is, how did they do it? Since it was an anonymous study, we don't have the benefit of dissecting and analyzing the sites. But there are some tools out there that any publisher can use to boost avails. Here are three that come to mind:

Leverage offline assets: Most video-centric publishers are extensions of larger media companies. These platforms create an instant opportunity to drive loyal readers or viewers to the Web site to access Web-exclusive content. Publishers should drive that message home at every appropriate chance. Best practices here include prominent messaging and easy-to-remember URLs. Remember, these are people who are usually not in front of their laptops at the time, but have them within arm's reach.

Online exclusives: Always have the camera rolling. This is particularly important for network or cable television companies. Loyal viewers tune in to their favorite shows, TiVo or watch them on demand. Publishers need to direct them next to the Web with exclusive content and keep them coming back by updating it frequently. News or financial outlets can deliver content all day long and take advantage of the Web's easier content deliverability.

Site configuration/sharing/SEO: Too many times, the video section of a site is relegated to a single tab in the navigation bar, with perhaps a link or two on the left or right hand side. Video shouldn't be relegated to a single channel; it should be incorporated throughout the site experience wherever it makes sense. It might require a partial site redesign, but the economics could very well justify it. Video also should always be easy to share, email or add to RSS. Finally, search is still king even for video, so SEO teams need to focus on driving users to relevant pages as they are for all other types of content. There has never been a better time for branded publishers to take advantage of their assets -- content, loyal audiences, and sales teams -- and create more online video opportunities. The ball is in their court!