WhizzCo

Adtech evolution

A quick history of digital advertising

1994

The first banner ad

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Pick and choose the content recommendation vendors who deliver the best results for you.

1995

The first ad networks

Advertising networks started sprouting up in 1995-1997. OKO Ad Management notes that the first such network was operated by an ad agency called Webconnect. They sought to place ads on the websites that would most interest their clients' target markets. The ad network served as a broker and could package and sell leftover ad space at a lower fee.

1996

The advent of ad servers

1996 brought the welcome development of ad servers, which provided advertisers and publishers with more accurate information as to how their campaigns were faring. Doubleclick (not yet owned by Google) was the first such network. They could measure ROI, and the technology enabled the introduction of the CPM (cost per 1000 impressions) pricing model.

1996

The introduction of keyword-based advertising

Open.text was the first to try it, but their project did not prove successful. The concept was picked up by GoTo.com in 1998 and about a year later Yahoo launched its own keyword-based ad program.

1997

Sixdegrees.com pioneers the idea of social networking

The idea that we are all six or fewer social connections away from each other served as the basis for Andrew Weinreich's social networking site. At its height Sixdegrees.com, the very first social media site had 3.5M users.

THE RISE OF SEARCH ADVERTISING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

2000

Organic search and search advertising

In the early 2000s, Google introduced AdWords, initially using a CPM model, and then migrating to the cost per-click (CPC) model a few years later. AdWords served text based ads, instead of the banner ads that were prevalent until that point. They based top results on a combination of user experience, interest, and payment.

2000

The first ad-funded social media site

Lunarstorm launched in Sweden on January 1, 2000. The social networking site's daily polling question used to be answered by 150K users at its height and by 2005 ad income reached $600K

2002

The advent of Adblockers

Adblockers entered the scene in 2002 when young software developer Henrik Aasted Sørensen created Adblocker 0.1 as a side project during his time at Firefox to weed out some of the bad players in the advertising market. Since then adblockers grew popular among users, significantly impacting publishers' earnings.

2003

Google acquires AdSense

AdSense, a content targeting advertising program was acquired by Google in 2003, broadening Google's offering. From then on Google could serve text, banner, video, or interactive media ads to its network of publishers.

2005

YouTube's first video ads

YouTube was launched on April 23, 2005 with co-founder Jawed Karim's post, Me at the zoo (a 19-second video still available on the site). In November of the same year, the first ad - a Nike commercial featuring Ronaldinho - ran on the site.

2006

Content recommendation advertising is born

In 2006 a new kind of advertisement was born - native content recommendation. Outbrain, and the other vendors that followed, found new use for the less expensive ad placements below-the-fold and end-of-article. Instead of placing a large banner, they placed groups of articles - with more options to click - to attract the reader. And it worked. Native ad vendors function in the same way as an advertising network - by brokering between advertisers and publishers.

2007

Facebook launches its ad platform

Starting in 2007, companies could create business profiles on Facebook. This new feature coincided with the launch of the Facebook Ad Platform. The platform offered accurate targeting to businesses based on the users' actions and interests.

2008

Real-time bidding (RTB)

emerges and advertisers buy impressions through real-time auctions via demand-side platforms (DSPs).

Real-time exchange

Real-time bidding was a major step forward for the adtech industry towards a seamless, open and serving process. With real-time bidding technology, winning ads can be served after an open auction and without latency.

THE RISE OF SEARCH ADVERTISING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

2010

Twitter offers promoted tweets and accounts

In 2010 Twitter launched its promoted tweets, trends, and accounts offerings. Disney-Pixar was the first to use this advertising option to drum up interest ahead of the release of Toy Story 3.

2011

The term 'native advertising' is coined by Fred Wilson.

2013

Instagram introduces advertising

The first Instagram post was shared on July 16, 2010 by Instagram co-founder Mike Krieger. The company was purchased by Facebook in April 2012 for $1 billion. The first ad (a sponsored post by Michael Kors) appeared in users' feeds on November 1, 2013.

2015

Header bidding democratizes the programmatic market

Header bidding popped up in 2015. With this new auctioning technique publishers could offer up most of their inventory - but not content recommendation ads - to multiple ad exchanges, at the same time.

Transparency

Header bidding opened up the programmatic ad market for true competition. With header bidding inventories are filled after the demand side providers placed their bids. The process takes milliseconds but ensures that publishers close on the highest bid, every time.

2016

Google and others create the Coalition for Better Ads

The Coalition for Better Ads was formed to improve consumer experience and demonstrate self-regulation. The organization sets ad standards based on consumer insights and industry expertise.

2015

GDPR changes the advertising game

The EU introduced its own set of rules and regulations regarding the collection and handling of personal data in 2018. The General Data Protection Regulation was first published in 2016 and officially implemented in 2018. The GDPR was the first in a series of legislative initiatives around the world.

Ad quality and privacy

With the imminent loss of third party cookies and losing information from IP addresses, the industry is heading towards a significant shift, challenging advertisers and publishers to find new ways to deliver targeted, quality ad experiences.

2020

Native advertising ad spend hits $52.75 billion

While in 2016 native ad spend stood at a yearly $16.7 billion in the US, by 2020 it increased by 315% to $52.75 billion. However, the native content recommendation space lacked the infrastructure on the supply side for open competition - any form of bidding - for publisher traffic. In most cases, publishers are limited to working with a single vendor.

2021

WhizzCo enables bidding for content recommendation ads

While the display ad market was opened up in 2015 with header bidding, the native recommendation field never made the leap towards supply-side platforms. WhizzCo introduced a vendor-agnostic platform where all content recommendation vendors compete for a publisher's traffic, requiring only a single integration. WhizzCo's proprietary neural network technology predicts the winning bid from among the

Why is competition important in the native ad space?

While there are smaller and larger vendors - no one vendor will offer the best CPM every time. In fact, data shows, that even the best performing vendor will only offer the highest result about **40% of the time.**

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