

How OpenX Bidder became Philly.com's "2nd best salesperson"



Publishers often think of direct sales and programmatic sales as two separate entities, an old-school philosophy that limits unlocking their maximum revenue potential. Philly.com optimized OpenX Bidder to compete for all inventory, resulting in overall ad revenue increases and a better understanding of the true value of their ad inventory.

“ *We were very happy with yield results, but wanted a better understanding of what the potential was.* **”**

Martin Calhoun



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Director, Digital Advertising Operations and Yield Management, Philadelphia Media Network

The Philadelphia Media Network, which includes Philly.com and Pulitzer Prize-winning Philadelphia Inquirer and Philadelphia Daily News, prides itself on being a tech leader and innovator in the digital future. Committed to finding progressive ways to monetize, Martin Calhoun, Director of Digital Advertising Operations and Yield Management signed on with the OpenX SSP solution.

“Resource savings alone was a win,” Philly stated, “It did as much for expense savings as it did for growing revenue.”

From there, Philly tapped OpenX for more creative solutions, implementing OpenX Bidder. After proven success, Philly wanted to go one step further and maximize revenue for every impression while strategically pricing their inventory. OpenX suggested leveraging Bidder to compete across all inventory, including impressions typically reserved for direct-sold campaigns. OpenX brought in a dedicated team, including a yield analyst and solutions architect to ensure the best possible setup.

“ *Quite simply, it worked. We’ve seen such high CPMs that it’s like Bidder is our 2nd most successful salesperson.* **”**

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Key Results

- **2X growth** on OpenX CPMs
- **300% increase** in PMP as part of programmatic revenue mix
- Ability to **benchmark direct-sold** rate cards
- **Coordinated revenue lift** on non-OpenX inventory

“Our initial concern was to make sure it wouldn’t impact our reserved inventory,” Philly emphasized.

To alleviate concerns, OpenX worked with Philly to create a controlled testing environment, specific to their needs, including close monitoring of sell-through rates. There was no impact to guaranteed campaigns; furthermore, it gave Philly the ability to benchmark direct-sold and provide sales staff flexibility.

“Now we can quantify value and make sure direct sales CPMs keep pace with bidder CPMs,” Philly said. “The whole process was done well, from communication to setup, and with OpenX’s team, we’re able to look at two layers of data: current data, and more importantly, what’s actionable for the future.”

