GSN Games finds their inner winner with MoPub’s Advanced Bidding

People are using mobile apps in ever-changing ways: for creative inspiration, as a distraction from everyday life, or even to expand their linguistic capabilities. For the GSN Games audience, it’s all about finding their inner winner — and thanks to MoPub’s Advanced Bidding solution, GSN Games has been able to win at monetization in a new way.
GSN Games produces social casino and skill-based games for the casual gaming community. With over 19 years in the gaming space, GSN Games is a veteran at grabbing the attention of consumers wherever they might be. Their marquee title, Solitaire TriPeaks, clocks over 90 million games played every week. They monetize their portfolio of apps through a hybrid combination of in-app purchases and advertising revenue.

GSN Games is always looking to find new and innovative ways to move the market forward and ensure that mobile app monetization remains a sustainable economy. Brian Truman, Executive Director, Head of Digital Ad Monetization at GSN Games was one of the initial pioneers behind the trend of bringing a unified auction to the mobile app world. When MoPub launched Advanced Bidding in late 2017, GSN Games was one of the first to join the program. Over the course of a three-week test in Q2 2019, GSN Games saw a 13% increase in average revenue per daily active user (ARPDAU) on Solitaire TriPeaks.

Advanced Bidding is MoPub’s answer to header bidding for the mobile app world, bringing both ad networks and demand-side platforms (DSPs) together in a unified auction. Truman expects this increase to grow as more networks from his suite of demand sources migrate to Advanced Bidding. These results also show a benefit to the ad networks who participated. Since Advanced Bidding allows bidding participants to get the first look, network bidding participants’ compete rate for the inventory in the test increased to 100%.

“Publishers should encourage their networks to participate in bidding. The more real-time competition there is from networks, the more successful this solution will be for all parties.”

Truman sees bid density as a key theme for driving better yield for publishers.
Publishers have traditionally focused on a network’s average CPM as a key metric for success, but in a bidding world, new KPIs are critically important. Average CPM from one demand source doesn’t provide the whole picture. KPIs like ARPDAU have been something monetization managers have always cared about, but these are now becoming more important as publishers are seeking to maximize revenue on a real-time, impression-by-impression basis. When the majority of a publisher’s demand sources are transacting media programmatically, overall revenue from all demand sources is what ultimately counts.

“eCPM should certainly be a component of what is measured, but at the end of the day it’s just one component. Overall revenue and ARPDAU is the only way to assess the efficacy of your monetization mix. This mindset shift is being enabled by bidding,” Truman tells us.

The currency of time — and an opportunity to take it back

Time spent has always been a key ad engagement metric. But what about time spent on ad network management? We all have an internal barometer for how much our time is worth. What we don’t often do is consider that time has an actual cost, and then factor that cost into the ROI calculation for setting up many individually-priced line items for several demand sources.

Coming up with a simple cost calculation for staff time can help publishers understand the savings that will result with simplified management. Compared to traditional waterfall mediation, Advanced Bidding also offers the opportunity to reduce time spent on ad network management and ad trafficking operations.

“No one wants to spend time managing an unwieldy set-up. If waterfall operations are simplified, we can spend more time on improving ad placement strategy and overall revenue optimizations,” says Truman.
For over eight years, MoPub has connected app publishers and mobile ad buyers looking to buy supply in real-time across a variety of ad formats. Nearly from inception, the MoPub leadership team had the vision that one day all mobile app media would be transacted programmatically.

In 2017, the MoPub team conducted a lengthy R&D effort aimed at determining the best path forward to make the dream a reality. In December 2017, MoPub launched the alpha version of Advanced Bidding, a first iteration in the effort to replace the app ads waterfall with a unified auction. Since then, MoPub has made product improvements to launch the beta upgrade of the solution, and has been busy on-boarding beta publishers and ad network bidders.

MoPub’s Advanced Bidding participants include Facebook Audience Network, Tapjoy, and AdColony alongside MoPub Marketplace which has over 180 DSP buyers including the Twitter Audience Platform. Another 10 ad network bidders are in active implementation and testing phases.

MoPub’s position as a primary network mediation layer and as the leading in-app exchange, connected to over 180 demand-side platforms including Twitter Audience Platform, gives us a unique ability to integrate Advanced Bidding without having to bias the platform towards one demand source or another.

Keep an eye on our Advanced Bidding page for updated results and learnings as we add more publishers to our beta program this year.
Thank you.

Looking for more advice when it comes to your app monetization needs? Contact Us to get in touch with our team of experts today.

About MoPub

To learn more about MoPub’s suite of products, please visit the MoPub Monetization Platform and check out some of our latest solutions: Advanced Bidding, MoPub Analytics, and impression-level revenue data.

Questions? Get in touch at www.mopub.com/contact.

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