

10

QUESTIONS
&
ANSWERS

Transparency





Transparency means full disclosure. Full disclosure means 1) the cost of buying media, 2) where your ad has appeared, 3) why it has appeared there and 4) how data has been and will be used. Historically, this has not always been the case, but the industry must stand up and be accountable, providing visibility on every element of the transaction and, thereby, forging a stronger relationship with better outcomes for brands.

At iotec, we believe in full transparency but the term is sometimes misconstrued. Adtech companies may disclose some select information but to be a 100% transparent media buying partner (platform, trading desk or media agency) they need to be prepared to outline pricing, ad placement, use of data and campaign optimisation across the board.

We hope these 10 questions provide you with the tools to confidently interrogate the partners you work with to ensure you are receiving the correct services and that those services are aligned to your expectations and support your business objectives.



1

What do you mean by transparency?

Many partners offer different definitions of transparency. Generally, there are four key areas where transparency is required; pricing, ad placement, data usage and campaign optimisation.

What does it actually cost?

Understand what margin your media buying partner receives for their service. Is this margin listed on your invoice? If your media buying partner does not disclose their margin and charges a fixed rate for media they may be maximising their margin over your business objectives.

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Do you make or receive payments from others in the media supply chain?

Media volume discounts and technology rebates need to be assessed in light of your desired outcome. There can be some agreements that favour one technology partner over another and this can lead to payments and rebates getting in the way of objectivity and your company's best interests.

How much am I paying for third-party data & third-party technology services?

In many cases your media buying partner will be working with third-party ad technology partners who offer additional services such as data management or brand safety. However, these additional services incur costs and these costs may not have been disclosed to you. While these services are important and legitimate, any additional cost may be coming out of your pocket. It's important you know what portion of your spend is being used for actual media and what percentage may be going to these additional services.

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Do you make your full log files available for third-party validation?

Ensure that you are able to access the full campaign transaction logs from your media buying partner. Ideally, they should use a third-party to validate that the declared margins and placement are accurate.

Will you tell me where my ads have appeared?

Ensure brand safety filters are operating so your campaign doesn't end up alongside negative or damaging content. Your provider should be able to show a list of ad placements to verify placement filtering and work with any post campaign ad verification service. Ensure they buy only ads.txt compliant inventory to reduce the risk of ad fraud.

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Do you trade media or supply media?

Many buy-side platforms and agencies partner with inventory providers to help fulfil media buys. Some media buying partners may provide their own or part-owned media, or have preferential relationships with other media companies. Ensure their media aligns with your KPIs and request additional exchange partnerships if required.

What do you do with my data?

Any media buying partner that optimises needs to track your customers through your website. However, your provider should never store data that could potentially reveal the identity of your customer, and they should not use what they learn about your customers to help other clients' campaigns.

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Is your optimisation transparent?

A truly transparent provider will provide full access to insights, allowing you to analyse what was optimised. Through deep analysis you will come to understand the online behaviours of your audience.

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How do you optimise my campaigns?

If your media buying partner has machine learning or AI capabilities, ask what strategies they employ.

Simple automation techniques are rarely better than human optimisation but true machine learning technology creates efficiencies and drives return on investment.

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iotec 

iotecglobal.com

hello@iotecglobal.com