



CUSTOMER STORY:

The Seattle Times

ADSERVER FOR EMAIL HELPS SEATTLE TIMES SAVE TIME, IMPROVE ACCURACY IN AD OPERATIONS



121

Years in Business

32

Million Monthly Page Views

7

Email Newsletters

138

Thousand Email Subscribers

Like many news outlets of its kind, the award-winning Seattle Times has recently shifted its strategy toward growing digital subscriptions, seeing building their digital audience as a cornerstone towards long-term sustainability.

With some 183,000 email newsletter subscribers across seven different formats, email plays a critical role in the Times' overall growth strategy. In particular, its Morning Brief and Evening Brief daily sends attract substantial traffic to its site, with five other weekly campaigns driving visitors to the specialized content.

"Advertising is still a big piece of our strategy, but as far as revenue growth is concerned, digital subscriptions have been our primary focus area," said Rob Schwertley, yield and advertising systems manager. "Our newsletters are a huge piece of that strategy. We want people to get comfortable with us coming into their inbox with headlines, and then, of course, click through to our site to read the articles. The more frequently readers are consuming our content and reaching our paywall, the more likely we are to convert them to paid subscribers."

Because of the drive to grow digital subscriptions, the Times also uses other channels, including social media, to engage potential subscribers. Schwertley says the challenge here, however, is that the Times has little control over these channels or the monetization.

Company

The Seattle Times is the Northwest's most trusted source for independent journalism, connecting you to your community and the world in print, online and on the go. Home, sports, travel, entertainment, health and wellness — we've got the information you need where you want it, when you want it, to get the most out of your life.

Size

1,001-5,000

Location:

Seattle, Washington

Industry

News media company

"We know readers are spending time in different places, so it's important to have content there, but we also need control over how we can monetize that content," he said. "With email, we have good control on distribution, timing, the message and monetization. Plus, subscribers are generally more trusting of content delivered via email because they've opted in, which means they're more likely to click through."

To monetize its mission-critical email campaigns, the Times had been using LiveIntent, while its web campaigns trafficked through DFP. Looking to simplify its sophisticated program, the Times began exploring options that would consolidate traffic and management and improve accuracy in reporting.

"We never liked the idea of trafficking direct-sold campaigns in a different place, and we were spending a lot of time reconciling reports for programmatic revenue because the numbers never seemed to match," Schwertley said. "It was always off, always underreported and when payments came in, it wouldn't rectify. It was just really frustrating."

On the advice of a co-worker, Schwertley switched to PowerInbox's AdServer for Email, the only email ad server solution on the market that integrates directly with DFP. This offered the Times the standardization and consolidation of its email and web monetization that the team needed to improve accuracy and efficiency. Now that Schwertley and his team can traffic both display and email ads directly through DFP, with all of the reporting in one place, it's saved a substantial amount of time and effort in reporting and reconciliation.

"With PowerInbox, I have consistent reporting, and it's saved our ad operations and product teams a great deal of time," Schwertley said. "They live in DFP anyway, and it means our advertisers that are also running display along with email ads don't have to get reports from multiple places."

"Getting started with AdServer for Email is extremely easy, and the customer service team is very flexible in helping us to test new things," Schwertley said. "For anyone considering this option, I'd say yes, definitely check it out. Ordinarily, these systems can be complex and hard to get going, but with PowerInbox, we couldn't believe how quickly and easily it worked."

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