xandr

Greenhouse + American Express

How Xandr Invest Supercharged Greenhouse's Performance for American Express

"Xandr Invest is the way forward, and Greenhouse's expertise in using this strategic buying platform is generating a higher return on ad spend than we can achieve with other partners."

Marc Bergers, Marketing Executive Online Acquisition, American Express The Netherlands

"In our head-to-head pilot, Xandr Invest came out on top against one of our best traders. When you add these results to the amount of time BidWiser saved our traders, it's safe to say we'll be using this combination again very soon."

Pim van Boekhold, Head of Programmatic Buying, Greenhouse

The Challenge

Greenhouse Wanted to Increase ROI While Decreasing Trading Time

Greenhouse is the umbrella organization for five innovative, trend-setting digital marketing companies: Blue Mango Interactive, Blossom, Fresh Fruit Digital, LemonPI, and Pubnxt. Together, these agencies employ more than 325 dedicated experts, who work tirelessly to deliver successful campaigns through a blend of creativity, technology, and data science.

Above all else, Greenhouse is committed to doing everything in its power to maximize results for its clients. While the organization's campaign managers were already generating strong programmatic performance on behalf of American Express, the firm wondered whether it might be able to create additional ROI through the use of automated, machine-learning algorithms. With the right programmatic buying software, they believed they could lower American Express' cost-per-click and limit the amount of time its traders spent manually adjusting their line items.

Ultimately, Greenhouse needed a technology solution that was both highly intelligent and highly customizable. If the automated platform performed well enough, their traders and data scientists could spend less time trading and more time on high-level strategic planning. However, a purely plug-and-play solution would be a waste of the firm's considerable data science expertise. Instead, Greenhouse needed a flexible solution that would allow the organization to layer on its granular data insights and proprietary buying strategies.

The Solution

Greenhouse Puts One of Its Top Traders to the Test Against Xandr Invest

Greenhouse chose to run a test for American Express using the built in optimization capabilities of Xandr's strategic buying platform, Xandr Invest. The platform's powerful UI streamlines campaign set-up and delivery, and through an intuitive, simplified workflow, media buyers can set their targeting parameters and advertiser goals without the hassle of building multiple line items and campaign objects. Once that's done, the optimal inventory is automatically purchased based on a variety of complex factors using machine learning to improve its real-time decision-making throughout the campaign.

Greenhouse leveraged the power of the platform to build its proprietary BidWiser technology, a tool that automatically creates self-learning algorithms that process tens of variables alongside the client's unique historical data. Through a single piece of code pushed to the Xandr platform, Greenhouse was able to execute hundreds of bidding strategies created specifically for American Express, based on factors like seasonality, data segment, bid density, and viewability.
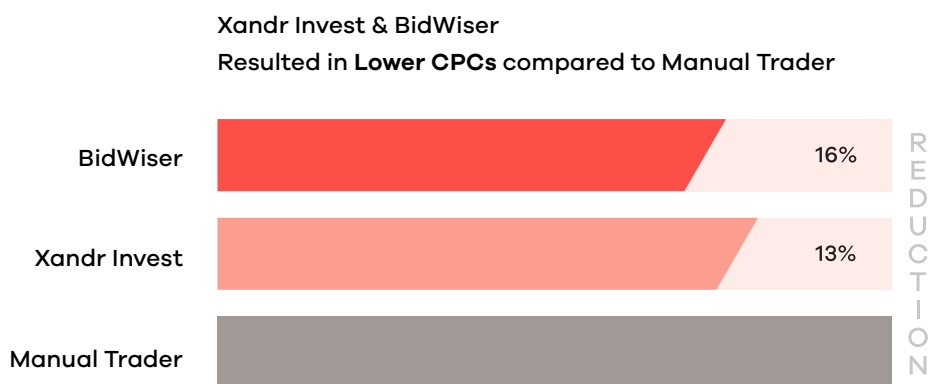
In order to create a level playing field, Greenhouse decided to run a month-long, pure A/B test with three line items: two line items managed within Xandr Invest's powerful UI, and one legacy line item controlled manually by one of the firm's most capable traders. Though the trader was incentivized to outperform the automated programs, the end results ultimately proved the power of the Xandr platform and the machine-learning algorithms.

The Results

Xandr Invest Lowers CPCs by 13% and Decreases Operation Time by 73%

The line items built on BidWiser and directly in Xandr Invest significantly outperformed the manually-operated campaign, both in terms of CPC and operational efficiency.

The Xandr Invest line item that leveraged the built-in optimization generated a CPC that was 13% lower than the manual line item, and the campaign setup took less time than the manual line item - a total reduction in operation time of 73%. The BidWiser line item performed even better. It delivered a CPC that was 16% lower than the manual line item. As a result, BidWiser delivered higher ROI while giving Greenhouse's human trader more time to focus on strategic work, with a reduction in operation time of 81%.

Xandr Invest & BidWiser
Resulted in **Lower CPCs** compared to Manual Trader

BidWiser	16%
Xandr Invest	13%
Manual Trader	

REDUCTION

Though consistent manual changes were made to all three line items, the manually-traded campaign required 2.6 times as many human adjustments as the machine-learning algorithms. Rather than making many laborious manual changes, Xandr's built-in optimization algorithm updated with every impression delivered.

Finally, the manual line item was hampered by an unfortunate, if predictable, hiccup: human error. At one point during the campaign, the trader made a mistake that led to a day's worth of poor delivery. By contrast, the machine-learning algorithms performed more consistently and made fewer errors.

"We are proud of the work we've done with Greenhouse to drive higher value for American Express on our programmable platform," said Mike Campbell, Account Director, Xandr, "Greenhouse is continuously pushing the boundaries with our machine-learning capabilities, and is already testing new functionalities to drive further results for their client. We're excited to see what they have in store next."