

admonsters

PLAYBOOK

**AdOps are Rock Stars. Are Sales Teams
Taking Advantage of their Stardom?**



An Admonsters Playbook
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What's a Playbook?

A playbook is an extension of what the AdMonsters community has been doing at our conferences for 20 years. A playbook solidifies what has made our events “must-attend” for many digital strategists. By bringing people together to share learnings and best practices in a focused way, people can create a plan and avoid hours — if not days — of doing research on their own.

The AdMonsters playbook concept takes existing AdMonsters content (from conferences and AdMonsters.com) and, with the help of the AdMonsters community, “crowdsources” a document that outlines best practices on a particular topic. Our belief is that this will allow for a free exchange of ideas with the benefit of curation for accuracy. This document does not get into specifics about individual solution providers intentionally.

Great effort has gone into writing the playbook in a fashion that applies to as many publishers as possible without becoming too general. In a technology-driven industry like digital advertising, information quickly becomes obsolete. The intention is that, based on the feedback of the AdMonsters community, the next playbook will start to take shape and, with additional contributors, grow in both depth and breadth.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1.** Introduction | 4
- 2.** Executive Summary | 5
- 3.** Key Findings | 6
- 4.** The State of Data Access | 7
- 5.** AdOps is an Underutilized Strategic Resource | 12
- 6.** Types of Data Needed | 14
- 7.** The Playbook | 17
- 8.** About the Survey | 18

1. INTRODUCTION

AdOps team members are data superstars. They often sit on a treasure trove of data, which contains rich and nuanced context that can help grow the business — these ad units perform best, our readers respond to ads in this vertical or industry sector, and here is the return on ad spend (ROAS) advertisers in specific sections can expect to see.

Intuitively, we understand that if AdOps had more tools and workflows to share those insights, client-facing teams could have more data-driven conversations with advertisers about campaign performance. This in turn will lead to repeat sales, as well as provide the data needed to recruit other advertisers in their sector. Additionally, this data would help product teams design premium ad units and ad packages by sector, as well as the right price to charge for them. Once this data is made actionable, there are even more possibilities that we can outline here.

But how widely is contextualized AdOps data shared with sales and ad product teams? Have publishing organizations succeeded in digital transformations, or are they still struggling with silos that ultimately inhibit a more robust monetization strategy?

To answer these questions, we surveyed 136 people who work in digital publishing in an AdOps, sales, revenue, or product function.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AdOps Data is an Underutilized Asset, and That's Costing Publishers Money

AdOps teams are data superstars, sitting on a treasure trove of information that contains rich and nuanced context. Many can say which ad units perform best, by format, section, industry and vertical. Some can accurately predict the ROAS advertisers can expect to see from their campaigns.

This is the kind of data that attracts advertisers, especially during a recession when their budgets are smaller and all focus is on performance and business outcomes.

But are publishers taking full advantage of these amazing resources? Our survey indicates they are not. There's not enough collaboration between AdOps and the sales, product, and business intelligence teams. This is caused by a combination of tech limitations and interdepartmental inefficiencies.

More worrisome, only 22% of AdOps teams say they have access to a wealth of data and insights, which means the remaining 78% can't help their colleagues succeed in their jobs to the fullest possible extent.

Now that advertisers are cutting back on campaigns, publishers need to work harder to attract brands to their sites. Detailed performance data distributed to all the teams that need it can help publishers win more business and revenue. As it stands, they're leaving money on the table.

22%

of AdOps respondents say they have access to the full wealth of data and insight they need to help advertisers drive performance

19%

of publishers say their sales teams have a strong relationship with AdOps

85%

say that engagement & attention metrics could improve sales and product teams

3. KEY FINDINGS

- Only **22%** of AdOps respondents say they have full access to the insight they need to help advertisers drive performance.
- **60%** of sales respondents said that access to more contextualized, sales-ready data could help them close more business.
- Although the AdOps team is closest to the performance data sales needs to win more business, less than one-third of organizations (**28%**) say their sales teams “always” work with AdOps on specific campaigns. And only **19%** of all publishers say there’s a strong relationship between AdOps and sales.
- **85%** of all respondents said engagement data would help both their sales and product teams succeed. Engagement data ranks higher than contextual, brand safety and viewability data.
- Publishers need a digital transformation. **58%** of publishers say technology limitations hinder their ability to share context-heavy, detailed advertising data throughout the organization.

4. THE STATE OF DATA ACCESS

Publishers have a wealth of data that are created as users peruse their sites, viewing and clicking on ads and content. What's more, ever since the browsers announced plans to do away with third-party cookies, publishers have focused on building up their first-party data offerings.

But are AdOps teams utilizing the full breadth of this data? Are they able to share what they have to help sales drive performance for their advertisers and product teams to make strategic decisions about ad packages?

The results of this survey show that when it comes to analyzing, contextualizing and sharing data, there's plenty of room for improvement.

AdOps

AdOps is uniquely positioned to understand how ads and ad formats perform, by audience and sector. But when we asked if they felt they had full access to rich engagement and performance data, only 22% said they did.

We asked: To what degree do you agree with this statement, "I have access to a wealth of data and associated insights that can help advertisers get better ad performance?"
We heard:



This is a missed opportunity for AdOps, as well as the sales and ad products teams. The smooth operation of a publisher's advertising business requires keeping tabs on a plethora of advertisers, measurement and supply/demand data sources. Given that AdOps is at the nexus of this complex puzzle, challenges accessing and interpreting campaign data regularly place these teams in defensive situations. This is compounded by the reactive nature of their role and the need to focus on tactical data alone. Instead of being forced to focus on only what they need for trafficking and ad delivery,

PRO TIP: *To fully optimize across all aspects of campaign delivery, while staying connected to the rest of your business, teams need access to business intelligence tools that can help organize disparate data sets into views that display each team's goals and how those roll up to the publisher's overall objectives. With the full picture, AdOps teams can not only streamline their own tasks but interact and align with other teams, ensuring a holistic approach aligned with business goals.*

PRO TIP: *Meaningful workflow changes can help your team implement vital data and cross-department initiatives that better grow your business. As a starting point, [calculate your team's time-to-resolution \(TTR\)](#) for key AdOps tasks. Optimizing your TTR is the first step toward unlocking your team's time and potential, refocusing them on revenue-generating tasks.*

Sales

Deals are closed when sales can tell compelling stories about their audiences and the tactics that influence them. 60% of sales team members said they strongly or somewhat agreed that data is the secret sauce for attracting new advertisers.

We asked: To what degree do you agree with this statement, “If I had access to more contextualized, sales-ready data, I could close more business, get more repeat business, tell better performance stories to our prospects, and advise clients on how to be successful on our site.” We heard:

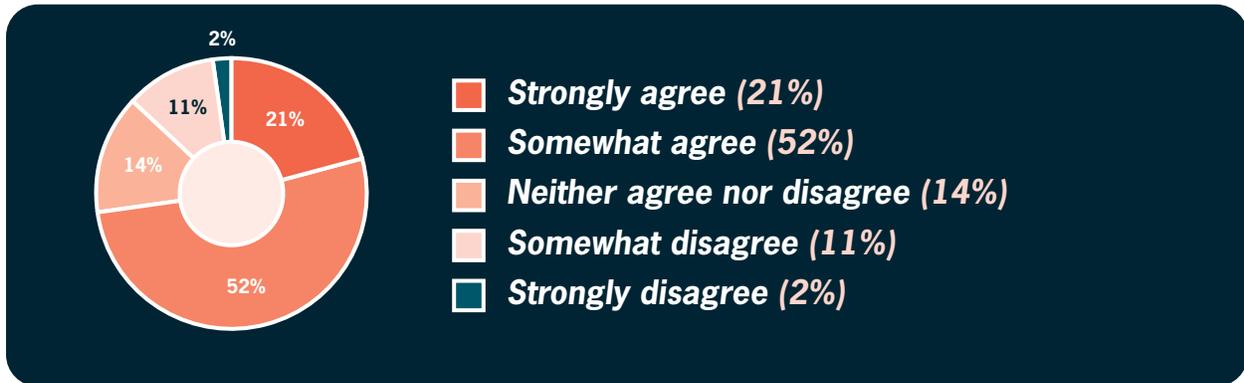


PRO TIP: Consider elevating someone in AdOps to the role of data translator. When someone is connected to the goals and KPIs for multiple departments, they can better provide context for those departments, helping them understand and utilize data. This also elevates AdOps within your organization, ensuring that they get the recognition and resources they deserve.

Product

Driving revenue begins with designing compelling sites and premium ad packages, but once again we see that over half of those respondents say they only somewhat agree that they have access to the performance data they need.

We asked: To what degree do you agree with this statement, “I have enough data about how campaigns perform on our site to create premium ad products and packages our sales teams can sell.”



Business Analysts

To what degree do you agree with this statement, “I have enough campaign performance data to understand how our ad placements, formats and packages will perform for our advertisers.”

Strongly agree

0%

Somewhat agree

33%

Neither agree nor disagree

33%

Somewhat disagree

0%

Strongly disagree

33%

Don't know

9%

Other (Rev Ops)

“The teams within my organization receive enough campaign and inventory performance data from AdOps to help us both close more deals and drive higher revenue.”

Strongly agree



Somewhat agree



Neither agree nor disagree



Somewhat disagree



Strongly disagree



Don't know



PRO TIP: It's clear that most publishers aren't utilizing their campaign and performance data to the fullest extent possible. Getting there will take some work. Teams must start with the foundation of their data and how it is connected. This involves integrating and expanding advanced datasets through better connections and workflows with other departments and third parties. This task is not just for AdOps, but for everyone.

5. ADOPS IS AN UNDERUTILIZED STRATEGIC RESOURCE

Digital transformation needs to come to digital publishers before they are left behind by more data-driven technology players. AdOps is at the forefront of audience engagement: they place the ads, and they see the results. But from strategizing on campaigns and ensuring advertiser success to developing products that will resonate with the market, AdOps is an underutilized resource. When AdOps teams are buried in technical tasks (e.g. pulling and normalizing data) they have less time to focus on more strategic activities.

Collaboration with AdOps:

Always



Sometimes



Never

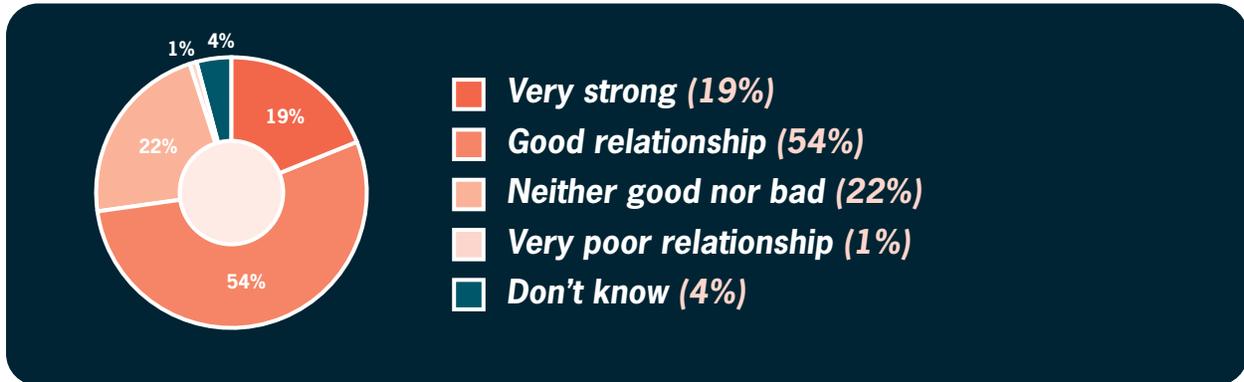


Don't Know



State of the AdOps/ Sales Relationship

A strong working relationship between sales and AdOps is instrumental in driving performance, and ultimately revenue. Advertisers want insight into why campaigns and ad units perform the way they do. Sales and account managers rely on data, yet often lack the insights and context needed to build narratives and grow business.



PRO TIP: Most of the disconnect comes from a lack of available context surrounding AdOps data. Being on the front lines, Ad Ops will often know more about specific creatives, targeting strategies, measurement requirements and other KPIs. But, what do they do next?

The answer is to elevate AdOps to a visible and strategic position, with clear plans as to which data should be shared, and when. Sharing contextualized data should be an integral part of doing routine business — e.g. planning campaigns, building sales pitches and marketing.

6. TYPES OF DATA NEEDED TO DRIVE GROWTH

Attention and other forms of engagement metrics are becoming powerful currencies for performance measurement, fuelled by the privacy-friendly nature of these buying tools. Not surprisingly, 85% of all respondents said that engagement and attention metrics would be helpful to their sales and product teams.

Similar to conversations around brand suitability, fraud and viewability, attention becomes more trustworthy if measured by third-party vendors that already work with buyers and sellers alike. Performance data of this type lends more credibility to a publisher's ad products, including special creative formats and first-party data. By building an attention-based narrative in the market, advertisers will feel more confident in a publisher's ability to maximize ad performance at a time when ad budgets are coming under more scrutiny due to economic conditions.

We asked: Which types of data will be helpful for your organization's sales and product development teams? (Check all that apply.)

Engagement & Attention Metrics



Brand safety/suitability



Viewability



Fraud rates



Contextual data



Don't Know



What impediments do you face in terms of sharing more context-heavy, detailed advertising data throughout the organization?

Lack of workflows



No time/scheduling issues



No leadership buy-in



Technology limitations



Lack of knowledge about available data



Lack of storytelling experience utilizing data



Don't know



Other (difficulty simplifying data,



PRO TIP: Time and workflow constraints plague publishers trying to keep up and uncover new revenue opportunities. Isolated point solutions, siloed data sets, spreadsheets and cloudy processes can slow down insights and awareness. In an industry that changes as much as ad tech, publishers should implement holistic tools that don't require internal development work or other resources to maintain functionality. To improve data awareness, teams should adopt tools that automate tedious tasks, making it easier for them to understand the data and surface insights to the larger organization.

If you had streamlined access to context-heavy, detailed advertising data, how often are you likely to use it?



PRO TIP: Sales and product teams won't seek out contextualized AdOps data unless they understand how it can benefit their daily activities. In a sense, you need to market your data to your internal teams by framing it in ways to make their jobs easier or to help them accomplish business objectives that matter.

This internal marketing initiative should focus on achieving specific goals: First, it must be meaningful for the business. Second, it must be focused specifically on what's most important to individual teams or stakeholders. Finally, that information must be easily accessible in the form of dashboards, reports and other BI tools utilized by various departments.

7. THE PLAYBOOK

- 1. Implement a business intelligence tool that can help teams organize disparate data sets, and allow team members to glean insights into your organization's unique data.**
- 2. Improve data awareness and make it easier to understand and surface insights to the larger organization through reports and dashboards. Implement holistic tools that don't require internal development work or other resources to maintain functionality.**
- 3. Evaluate data transparency choke points, whether they come in the form of teams, tools, or legacy knowledge.**
- 4. Create a space for cross-functional data tools and discussions so you can begin to learn what helps each department do its job more effectively.**
- 5. Consider elevating your data superstars by regularly placing them in front of unique problems and opportunities that their knowledge can help unlock.**
- 6. Simplify your data tech stack by implementing as much data aggregation and transformation as possible, then document ways for other departments to benefit from the tools.**
- 7. Build ways for third-party and first-party data to be analyzed together so you can build inventory narratives that buyers can trust thanks to data points that resonate with them.**

8. ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Number of respondents: 139

Organization Type	
Publisher	68%
Agency	9%
Brand	3%
Technology Provider	20%

Types of Publications Represented	
News	25%
Business	3%
Sports	4%
Lifestyle	12%
Entertainment	13%
General	13%
Technology	6%
Financial	4%
Other	20%

Size of Organization	
1 to 40	6%
50 to 499	45%
500 to 999	13%
1,000 to 4,999	20%
5,000+	16%

Role within Organization	
AdOps	64%
Sales	6%
Product Development	10%
Analytics	3%
Revenue	17%



The global leader in strategic insight on the future of digital media and advertising technology. Through our conferences, website, and original research, we offer unparalleled in-person experiences and unique, highquality content focused on media operations, monetization, technology, strategy, platforms and trends. We provide a forum to share best practices, explore new technology platforms and build relationships.

AdMonsters has built its reputation on providing objective editorial leadership based on deep, real-world expertise. We have continued to evolve our editorial strategy to address the changing needs of the market and, as a result, AdMonsters has attracted a highly focused audience who are at the forefront of the industry, and leading marketing partners have found AdMonsters to be a powerful channel to reach these decision makers. Today, our portfolio of integrated media solutions includes industry-leading live events, our innovative Connect content solutions, email marketing programs, and more.

AdMonsters is part of the [Access Intelligence](#) family of companies.

For more info:

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About DV Publisher Suite

DV Publisher Suite is an enterprise-level SaaS analytics and automation platform for premium digital publishers that want to maximize revenue yield from their high-value inventory, reduce friction with buyers, and streamline operations. We have worked closely with over 150 blue-chip media companies, ad-tech platforms, and ad networks to deliver one of the industry's first comprehensive digital advertising solutions for publishers. We believe that by empowering content creators with holistic solutions, we can build a better industry.

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