



UNDERSTANDING SSP LOG-LEVEL DATA

What Buyers Need To Know To Become More Efficient

WHAT IS LOG-LEVEL DATA AND HOW IS IT USED?

Simply put, log-level data is comprised of various attributes that are relevant to a single ad impression within an auction. The main type of log-level data that buyers are seeking is transaction verification data, namely how the auction operates and what fees are being charged. The data provides insights into an array of areas such as context and transaction detail—including auction dynamics.

Insights that can be gleaned from the auction, in particular, can then be used to better understand an advertising opportunity and how a fair price was reached for that impression. By providing this level of transparency, media buyers can benefit from more informed planning and buying, and ultimately improved return on advertising spend.

73%

of US marketers identified
better insights & reporting
as a core programmatic
challenge¹

WHY DOES LOG-LEVEL DATA MATTER?

Due to recent industry shifts, such as first-price auctions and increased demands for fee transparency, many marketers are choosing to pursue more in-depth information from their technology partners. This is happening mainly because they want the ability to verify that the supply chain is operating as expected (allowing them to trust their technology partners). The additional insights available from log-level data can help better inform future buying, supply path optimization, investment in private marketplaces (PMPs) or shifting traditional IO spend to programmatic.

SSPS AND LOG-LEVEL DATA




To truly understand how auction dynamics work, many advertisers are hiring data scientists to audit their supply chain. However, analysts need quality data from which they can draw insights. In many cases, the type of data they require exceeds most SSPs standard reporting offerings, which led 73 percent of US agency and marketing professionals to state a core programmatic challenge for them was improved insights and reporting deliverables.¹

As an influx of brand spend is moving into programmatic, SSPs are seeing increased requests for their data. There are three specific key categories of data that should be provided by SSPs:

- Anonymized information on competitive bids
- Details specific to auction dynamics
- Insights into inventory verification

This data will allow advertisers to improve internal strategies, maintain transparency with increased visibility, and build long-term success with their SSP partners.

Data parameters can be segmented into specific areas that help marketers obtain a competitive advantage in the auction or verify the quality of the inventory. Below, we have categorized some of these parameters according to these areas:

	DATA POINT	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE VALUE
 COMPETITIVE BIDS	Clearing Price	Discover the auction clearing price, expressed as a CPM value; gain the ability to analyze against the bid price data from your DSP.	3.30
	Bid Price	The amount an advertiser bids, expressed as a CPM value.	2.83
	Highest Bid Price	Learn the maximum amount bid in the auction by a DSP, expressed as a CPM value, so you can remain competitive with bids.	4.50
	Second Highest Bid Price	The second highest amount bid into the auction by a DSP on behalf of an advertiser, expressed as a CPM value.	4.10
	Floor Price	The (CPM) price, below which bids are rejected.	0.75
	Loss Reason	When bids do not win, find out the reason why (i.e. violation of ad specs, competitor priority, etc.) to improve future strategy.	Low Bid
 AUCTION DYNAMICS	Exchange Implementation Type	Confirm tactics and auction dynamics line up with the type for maximum effectiveness — waterfall (1), or header bidder (2).	2
	Deal ID	The deal ID, if any, included in the publishers' bid response.	PM-1234567
	Auction Type	To improve efficiency and maintain transparency, verify if it is first price (1) or second price (2).	1
 INVENTORY VERIFICATION	Ads.txt Certification	Authenticate whether or not the publisher has authorized an exchange in its ads.txt file to maintain transparency and working with high-quality inventory (TRUE/FALSE).	TRUE

3 WAYS TO USE SSP LOG-LEVEL DATA

1 INFORM BIDDING STRATEGIES AND IMPROVE ROI WITH COMPETITIVE BID DATA

DSPs only know if an advertiser won or lost an auction, but an SSP can see the actual competitiveness of that auction. Having log-level data can help advertisers gauge how much additional spend is required to win more and become more competitive.

SITUATION	POTENTIAL INSIGHT	END RESULT
How competitive is an auction? Are you losing to one other bidder or multiple?	Given the ecosystem's transition to first-price auctions, it's critical for buyers to understand how competitive a bidding situation is so they don't overpay unnecessarily.	Lower CPM for a given set of impressions.
If you lose an auction, are you losing by a small or large margin?	Are there opportunities where a slight increase in your bid would lead to a material difference in win rate?	Increased win rates for a given set of impressions.

2 VERIFY AUCTION DYNAMICS AND CONFIRM FEE STRUCTURE TO BUILD TRUST

Additional insights will help buyers to determine whether the auction dynamics are fair and working to their favor. While there is information available on how an auction is run and whether an SSP uses first- or second-price auctions, log-level data from your SSP allows granular insight into the inner-workings of their auction.

SITUATION	POTENTIAL INSIGHT	END RESULT
Can you verify the auction dynamics, including whether it is a first- or second-price auction?	Some SSPs are signaling first- or second-price in the bid stream—but not all. As DSPs purposefully bid higher when an SSP signals it is a second-price auction, this could artificially increase CPMs and reduce ROI. Verify that you are only working with actors who correctly signal auction type.	Make informed decisions on where one SSP is beneficial to a campaign over another.
Are you able to confirm the amount of each dollar reaching the publishers, and thus, the working media?	Determine what you are paying so you can model out how much of each advertiser dollar reaches the publisher.	Fully understand take-rates.

3 IMPROVE BRAND SAFETY AND QUALITY WITH INVENTORY VERIFICATION

Log-level data should allow buyers to follow the ad and know where it was shown so you can measure campaign effectiveness and your target audience's interaction with your content, ultimately improving the customer journey.

SITUATION	POTENTIAL INSIGHT	END RESULT
Are you buying from a publisher through an unauthorized exchange?	Only purchasing verified inventory with ads.txt compliance will protect you from falling victim to domain spoofing and positively impact the full supply chain.	With widespread adoption of ads.txt, purchasing inventory from verified exchanges improves quality for all industry players.

WHAT'S NEXT?

SSP log-level data will allow marketers to:

- better hone their buying strategies
- improve the customer journey
- be more efficient in planning
- protect their brand image
- create more tailored media
- improve ROI

The combination of data from multiple sources can increase trust by offering greater visibility into the supply chain. Armed with increased transparency, marketers will be able to make more informed decisions.

So why isn't everyone utilizing this information? Because it is not easy to do. There are costs associated with an SSP delivering this data and additional costs for a marketer to ingest the data. Plus, there is the human resource cost—data scientists—required to understand the data and identify meaningful insights.

Thus, the opportunity to review log data isn't without corresponding challenges. Marketers who understand how to leverage log-level data are at a distinct advantage both in the programmatic auction as well as in their relationships with technology partners such as SSPs. To learn more about log-level data, contact us at pubmaticdemandteam@pubmatic.com.

**ARMED WITH
INCREASED
TRANSPARENCY,
MARKETERS
WILL BE ABLE
TO MAKE MORE
INFORMED
DECISIONS**

¹ "Getting Detailed Insights Is Top Challenge for Programmatic Marketers," Ross Benes, eMarketer, March 2018

ABOUT PUBMATIC

PubMatic is a digital advertising technology company for premium content creators. The PubMatic platform empowers independent app developers and publishers to control and maximize their digital advertising businesses. PubMatic's publisher-first approach enables advertisers to maximize ROI by reaching and engaging their target audiences in brand-safe, premium environments across ad formats

and devices. Since 2006, PubMatic has created an efficient, global infrastructure and remains at the forefront of programmatic innovation. Headquartered in Redwood City, California, PubMatic operates 13 offices and six data centers worldwide.

For more information, please contact us at info@pubmatic.com