CASE STUDY | MOBILE APP

WeatherBug

WeatherBug leverages unified adtech stack to drive operational and monetization efficiencies for mobile app inventory.

WeatherBug is a leading weather site and mobile app, providing users with access to the largest commercial-grade atmospheric network for all their weather data needs. With over 10 million app downloads, WeatherBug monetizes its valuable mobile app inventory to help fuel revenue growth.

A longstanding ad server partner since 2016, WeatherBug was searching for an alternative to the waterfall methodology of mediation, requiring a solution that would reduce its reliance on numerous SDK partners and drive higher CPMs for its mobile app inventory. Additionally, WeatherBug wanted to find the optimal monetization mix for their inventory, needing a flexible solution that would allow them to prioritize their direct sales and programmatic backfill accordingly.

The Challenge

Under their waterfall setup, WeatherBug experienced issues regarding ad latency. Waterfall monetization is dependent on the order and interaction of demand partners which adds latency each time an impression is passed to another SDK partner. This increased latency from working with multiple SDK partners increased load-time, negatively impacting user experience.

The waterfall model was also inefficient for monetizing WeatherBug's mobile app inventory. The high ad latency led to auction timeouts which impeded WeatherBug's yield potential. Additionally, the rigid structure made testing new partners to optimize performance a timely process, sometimes taking up to a month. It also left WeatherBug beholden to considering single bids at a time, potentially leaving revenue on the table.

"WeatherBug was one of the first mobile in-app companies to use a multiple header approach for monetization – at the time this was only done for desktop. Moving to Prebid Server Premium's mobile header bidding allows us to use fewer ad SDKs which lowers our latency substantially and reduces the other complications caused by having many SDKs in our product.

"Using Xandr as our base ad server, we were able to build a whole new ecosystem that produces higher CPMs due to more competition without the hassles of SDKs."

"The ad server set up allows us to create a true unified auction where every source is added to the auction: Direct, multiple headers, and PMP's are all competing for every single impression. This is done efficiently and quickly. If we ever wish to change any priority, it can be done very easily through the ad server."

ED ARRANDALE
VP of Revenue, WeatherBug

The Solution

WeatherBug was already using Monetize Ad Server to manage their direct deal process with access to forecasting, pricing, targeting, and execution tools. WeatherBug needed a way to uphold the rules and priorities set for their direct deals while allowing programmatic demand from their SDK partners to effectively compete for impressions. This would unify their demand sources in a single auction and ensure they maximized yield for each impression served. The next step was moving to a header bidding model to improve their user experience.

Partnering with Xandr, WeatherBug migrated to Prebid Server Premium and swiftly implemented a header bidding model for their mobile app inventory. Prebid Server Premium's server-side solution and intuitive interface gave WeatherBug access to faster response times and point-and-click tools to manage things like timeout configurations. This allowed them to immediately reduce ad latency by removing inefficient SDKs and eliminating the dead weight incurred from contacting each partner in sequence. With their ad latency under control, WeatherBug could rest assured knowing their user experience was preserved in tandem with their monetization efforts.

Now that WeatherBug had Prebid Server Premium in place, they could easily enable SDK partner integrations to compete simultaneously for their inventory. By doing so, WeatherBug increased bid density for its inventory leading to greater competition and the opportunity for higher yield. The flexible environment afforded by mobile header bidding also let WeatherBug explore future revenue opportunities, giving them the freedom to test demand partners much faster than before. WeatherBug could now accept programmatic demand from its SDK partners in an efficient manner.

Combining Prebid Server Premium's header bidding and Monetize Ad Server's capabilities served as the missing piece to balancing WeatherBug's monetization strategies, unifying their demand sources within a single auction.

The Result

By switching to Prebid Server Premium, WeatherBug was able to remove a substantial amount of its advertising SDKs resulting in a significant decrease in ad latency and the ability to test demand partners 8x faster than before. The increased competition generated by aligning SDK partner demand from Prebid Server Premium and direct deals from Monetize Ad Server drove a CPM increase of 38%.

↑ **8x**
faster demand
partner testing

↑ **38%**
CPM increase from
improved competition