

Big data is like sex, everyone talks about it but no one has it - this and more from Ad:Tech 2016

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Ad:Tech is a global meeting place for forward-thinking brands, agencies and media owners with events held throughout the year in different countries. Neil Clarence, COO of location-based advertising specialists Vicinity Media, provides feedback from day one at the New York event.

"The big digital topics globally are the same that we see in South Africa: programmatic, big data, video, location and attribution. One major issue being covered here that hasn't had as big an impact in SA is ad blocking - I've seen at least 10 companies with solutions to "beat the block".

Throughout the majority of day one, exhibitors dealt with programmatic tech plug-ins to improve performance. The commoditisation of digital inventory is scary in the first world. Just like at home I wonder if publishers realise they're hurting themselves in the race for the elusive 100% fill rate? Tech start ups need to be focusing less on clever ways to beat each other programmatically and focus on creating premium ad units that generate more revenue for publisher partners. The model is too 'agency and brand centric', publishers and the consumer experience don't feature in the thinking of most of the companies on show.

From what I heard, no one has got beacon technology and distribution right anywhere globally. The most progress has been in the East where they don't use a 'branded app' model per advertiser but rather a single consumer app that talks to all, or a network of apps. For example, your banking app, Shazaam and your news app all allow beacons to engage their apps for each other's products creating mass reach, instead of relying on the consumer to download a branded app.

Foursquare's Michael Rosen warned media buyers to be sure that they can trust the location whenever third party vendors are involved. This immediately resonated with me because part of Vicinity Media's reason for being was to build tech that would elicit real location without involvement from third parties (as much as possible). Other findings from Foursquare's location-based session included the fact that 32% less females had visited Trump properties and hotels in the last month!

Reaching the Chinese consumer was the topic of an entire keynote address and break away session. Key note speaker Richard Tobaccowala, chief strategist at the Publicis Group also mentioned that in 20 years, Africa will be as represented within Ad:Tech as China is now. On that note I haven't heard another 'Saffer' or even African accent here all day.

The quote of the day, again from Richard Tobaccowala has to be: "Big data is like sex, everyone talks about but no one has it!"

Connect and engage with Neil on neil@vicinity-media.com

About Vicinity Media

Established in (2014), Vicinity Media was the first to launch location based mobile advertising in South Africa and continues to rapidly innovate in this space and respond to client needs. The company boasts clients in the motor, food and grocery, petroleum, retail and telecoms industries and works with the country's largest publishers including IOL, Times Media, Mail & Guardian to name a few.

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