

Digital debrief with Leonel Silva

 By Leigh Andrews

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Leonel Silva, media partnerships director EMEA at Celtra, is one of the international speakers at today's IAB Digital Summit. He lets us in on the rise of creative programmatic advertising and mobile video.



Picture: pixabay.com

With over 170 employees worldwide, 250,000 ads built using their AdCreator and those ads appearing in more than 30 countries, there's clearly something to Celtra's data-driven programmatic advertising platform. Select Cape Town-based agencies got to see this in action earlier this week, when Mike Carter, special projects director of MaxAxion, led Silva in micro sessions about the platform ahead of today's similarly short TEDx-style session at the IAB Digital Summit on mobile video.

Carter says the micro sessions were a definite success, despite Silva having just landed that morning: "They love it. The problem is that inherently, when someone speaks of a programmatic event, it's very boring and speaks of data, heavy things, DSPs, ad exchanges and the technical side of billions of impressions. Celtra, on the other hand, is injecting creativity into this environment."

That's fitting as programmatic is best understood as a layered concept, so if you try to look at it all, your head will spin. Instead, Carter says we need to see it as a stack. So you have your trading desk, you have your audience segments and you have Celtra providing a creative overlay. Silva interjects that they are a technology company so there are technicalities to consider, but with the surge of programmatic we tend to forget that advertising is based on creativity. He says to think of the creative first, pulling example from the success of a print magazine like Vogue, where half the pages are ads, yet still considered valuable content to the reader. They're doing great, because their ads are amazing and that's the approach that digital advertising should take in creating better ads. Ultimately, the creative shouldn't just be a repurposed banner, we should think of something bespoke for mobile.

Africa: Mobile-first, innovation-first

This is especially important with more people than ever before reaching for their mobile before switching on their desktop.

This is a global trend but especially pertinent to mobile-first Africa. From a locality point of view, Carter says we're quite fortunate in that the industry has always been mobile-first.



Leonel Silva.

In SA though, a growing number of people's first engagement with technology is with that 'cool shit' like Twitter or Snapchat not through work. So our appetite for apps, knowledge and connectivity is probably far greater than most Europeans, as our mobiles become the modern day digital 'Swiss army knives'. As a result, our agencies are already calibrated towards mobile. Many products have thus been developed for desktop first in Europe, whereas in SA it's mobile first and then built up. Silva cites mobile-first payment platforms like SnapScan as a lovely surprise in this regard – something he hasn't yet seen in London.

Speaking of the rise of ad blockers, Carter says they're often asked how this will affect online advertising. He says that there will obviously be an affect for online publishers so we need to work together to solve the problem by regulating or policing ourselves in the hope of creating better ads that users can enjoy, and not skip.

Explaining how to do so, Silva pointed out that it's ultimately about user experience, and being polite in the way we introduce ads, recognising that they're reading something and asking their permission to show them your content – he says pop-up ads definitely aren't polite as they impede the way we read the content, and unlike broadcast media where the advertising is built into the time we spend on the actual show we're paying attention to, with digital those ads appear without our permission and end up being heavy on the wallet as they cost us data and airtime.

Programmatic advertising, the creative way

That's why Silva says you should buy that single impression at a time, as opposed to TV that's broadcast for the masses.

As a result, Celtra has developed other formats with programmatic elements that are infinitely customisable with options based on variants like the individual viewer's age or home language. For example, their context at the time they see the ad like location, weather conditions or specific real-time information such as stock levels in store to ensure a seamless fit between content and advertising.

More importantly, it also enables the user the freedom to scroll past the ad if it's not of interest. If it is, then the focus is on the UX, following guidelines such as using short-form video with a timer that shows viewers it's only 10 seconds of their time, and tailoring the content to a mute environment, as a majority of mobile users tend to keep their phones on silent throughout the day.

Carter explains: "Locally we have AdJoin, recently launched as a joint venture between MaxAxiom and Kagiso Media, which will collaborate with local publishers. Using Krux as the DMP layer, it will build out audience segments for advertisers to target. Celtra plays a major role through certification and auditing of the inventory for those advertisers to run rich media immersive ad formats. It's currently in beta and we are testing the interscroller format, considered native and very 'polite' in its execution. This is exciting as it would be a first globally for a private market place, and unique as it's the combination of publisher co-op, data and high-impact immersive creative execution." See the example below:

Silva asks: “You must ask when building a campaign, does the user want to see and read the message? Is it a great creative and entertaining?” It’s about using technology to help us, not do the job for us. That’s the ultimate endgame of digital advertising.

Click through to see more rich media in action on [Celtra.com](https://celtra.com).

It seems digital’s definitely dominating the local business scene, in every industry. That’s why you can’t afford to miss out on the IAB Digital Summit today! [Click here](#) for my interview with IAB SA’s CEO Josephine Buys, [here](#) for my digital debrief with fellow speaker Davin Phillips of CSA, [here](#) for a recap on all of this year’s Bookmark Awards finalists, [here](#) for what to expect from the IAB Digital Summit and keep an eye on our [IAB Digital Summit and Bookmark Awards](#) special section for all the latest updates!

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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