

The background of the image is a complex, abstract geometric pattern. It consists of numerous overlapping, parallel lines in various colors: bright blue, yellow, orange, and purple. These lines are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and perspective, resembling a series of nested, three-dimensional shapes or a maze. The lines are not perfectly straight but have slight curves and offsets, giving the overall composition a dynamic and modern feel.

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# Welcome



**Justin Pearse**  
Editor  
New Digital Age

**Welcome to the second print edition of New Digital Age, our end-of-the-year roundup of some of NDA's regular content.**

It's been a tumultuous year and the following pages reflect the tectonic shifts our industry has experienced. From Apple's App Tracking Transparency tool (ATT) and the deprecation of third-party cookies, to the explosion of connected TV (CTV), the industry has been buffeted on all sides.

But as the following pages make clear, nothing has dampened the creativity and innovation that drive this industry, enabling advertisers, publishers and tech companies to continue to deliver incredible experiences for the consumers they serve.

Alongside snapshots of the columns, features, roundtables and interviews featured on NDA recently, we also feature initiatives we are proud to be part of helping drive diversity across our industry, from our partnership with the Women in Programmatic Network to our Practice Makes Unperfect programme.

I hope you enjoy this magazine and please don't hesitate to get in touch if you've got any views you'd like to share on NDA - a title that is by the industry, for the industry.

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# Why publishers' first-party data is central to privacy-first programmatic advertising



**Morika Georgieva,**  
**Customer Success Lead**  
**for EMEA at Permutive**

**Privacy is the future of programmatic, and right now, the entire digital advertising industry is feeling the impact of privacy. Consumers are more informed about how their data is being used and handled; according to Deloitte Digital Media Trends survey, 78% of consumers across generations believe that companies are responsible for protecting their data. Data breaches and investigations into parts of programmatic advertising have revealed transparency issues and captured the attention of regulators across the world. And browsers are making privacy updates that are disrupting the entire industry.**

All of these actions are dramatically changing the way media is bought and sold. There is a route through these somewhat chaotic changes in publishers' first-party data, cohort-based media buying, and closer relationships between publishers and advertisers. But there's work to be done to educate and empower publishers and advertisers to change how they manage and leverage data.

## From third-party cookies to first-party data

Privacy regulation and browser changes are moving digital advertising from relying on third-party cookies and identity-based tracking to first-party data. As third-party cookies disappear, publishers' first-party data will be crucial for advertisers.

Many of Permutive's customers have already built entire platforms from their first-party data. But with Google's stay of execution for third-party cookies, some publishers and many advertisers still rely on third-party cookies. The issue is that third-party cookies are already blocked in Safari and Firefox, and publishers will struggle to reach and monetise users that are not addressable — it also means advertisers lose out on a chunk of their target audiences, and publishers lose out on revenue opportunities. First-party data is a critical component of privacy-first digital advertising. Every publisher should have the ability to understand and target their users across all browsers to protect their advertising revenue.

What first-party data does is rebalance digital advertising towards those who have a relationship with users, rather than unknown third parties that track user behaviour across sites and leak data into the bidstream.

Publishers are data owners and have an abundance of rich data beyond just declared data. They know what the interests of their users are, how long they spend on-site, how many times a month they visit, whether their browsing habits have changed. Via technology, they can showcase the depth of their audience insight to advertisers to regain their rightful place in the centre of the advertising ecosystem.

## Publisher Cohorts are the new media currency

To couple first-party data and inventory to preserve privacy, the digital advertising industry will need to move away from one-to-one targeting and identifying individuals to cohort-based targeting. Publisher Cohorts are descriptions of groups of users based on shared characteristics or behaviours. They are built from publishers' first-party data, both contextual and



**Shifting from third-party data to first-party data and Publisher Cohorts is an important step. Publishers need to make their data useful but not at the expense of their users or their users' experience on-site**

behavioural, and by building audiences this way, buyers don't need to know the ID of each user. Instead, they can just target a specific cohort.

As publishers have been working on their first-party data strategies since third-party cookies were blocked in Firefox and Safari, they've been creating bespoke Publisher Cohorts, testing them and have found that

they outperform campaigns built from third-party data. One example is Dotdash, who, after running A/B tests, saw a 2-3x performance-based increase with first-party data versus third-party data. And *The Guardian*, as another example, saw consideration increase by 102% and an intent uplift of 79% when they created a bespoke first-party cohort for readers interested in art, architecture, interiors, and luxury for a furniture brand. As more publishers and advertisers realise the value of Publisher Cohorts, they will become the media currency for a privacy-first advertising ecosystem.

## Direct relationships between publishers and advertisers

Shifting from third-party data to first-party data and Publisher Cohorts is an important step. Publishers need to make their data useful but not at the expense of their users or their users' experience on-site. Protecting this data, and avoiding IDs leaking into the bidstream, will require publishers and advertisers to work together for media trading, and ad-tech will be necessary to facilitate this direct relationship. Through technology, greater collaboration between publishers and advertisers will enable publishers to connect safely with advertisers at scale in a brand-safe environment, bringing much-needed transparency into the ecosystem.

First-party data, cohort-based targeting and retaining control over data via direct relationships are all driven by the need to protect privacy. Without it, programmatic advertising will not be sustainable. And the only way for advertisers and publishers to safeguard from the uncertainty around regulation and browser-level changes is to plan for it and work with partners who see it as an opportunity to rebuild — especially those who are enabling privacy-first digital advertising for brands, publishers, and users.

# The rise of programmatic out-of-home



**Helen Miall, Chief Marketing Officer at VIOOH**

**In 2020, the world spent more time indoors than ever before, and unsurprisingly the out-of-home (OOH) ad industry suffered as a result. With vaccine roll-outs in mature markets reaching significant levels, OOH audience levels have been growing weekly, and this is reflected in this year's global advertising spend reports.**

According to the most recent [AA/WARC Expenditure report](#), UK ad spend for DOOH is expected to rise by 43.7% by the end of this year. [eMarketer](#) estimates programmatic OOH (prOOH) has doubled in terms of spend each year since 2018. Whilst in 2021, programmatic is set to account for less than 10% of digital out-of-home spend in the UK, that penetration is likely to accelerate, as more digital buyers start utilising prOOH.

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, brands have had to rapidly adapt their marketing strategies to survive the

unprecedented obstacles thrown in their paths. The need for campaign flexibility has become a critical consideration, and once used for the first time, advertisers are becoming reluctant to return to more traditional buying methods.

This is one of the key findings from VIOOH's most recent *State of the Nation* report, conducted to gain a deeper insight into why and to what extent more advertisers are investing in prOOH.

Below are three further takeaways from [this year's report](#):

## Stop, start and pause

Confirming the findings in last year's *State of the Nation* report, executives said that programmatic advertising has become increasingly more important to their businesses over the last 12 months. In the 2021 edition, nearly nine out of ten (89%) executives stated that programmatic advertising is more critical to their business as a result of the pandemic.

A key reason for this increase in importance is due to the flexibility in planning and running advertising campaigns,

the ability to stop, start and pause campaigns, reallocate and optimise media spend at short notice and adapt creative messaging in real-time.

When carrying out our interviews, executives agreed that flexibility has become a major consideration and has helped accelerate prOOH adoption. The majority interviewed believe the pandemic gave the industry time to educate clients on prOOH and they predict this new buying method is here to stay.

## Making your media spend work harder

Another key reason for the increased adoption of prOOH is the precision offered by trigger-based buying. Nearly nine out of ten (84%) of respondents recognised that buying DOOH programmatically allowed them to deliver stronger business results, and most importantly they're able to measure and prove its effectiveness. This was



**Through programmatic, for the first time media buyers can monitor DOOH activity in hours if not seconds, and are therefore able to respond and adapt in real-time during a campaign**

reflected in our findings, as prOOH ranked second globally compared to other digital channels on increasing sales and placed third on generating ROI, reinforcing that prOOH drives strong business results.

Through programmatic, for the first time media buyers can monitor DOOH activity in hours if not seconds, and

are therefore able to respond and adapt in real-time during a campaign. This gives brands many more options and ultimately makes their media spend work much harder.

## Suitability across brand and performance campaigns

Versatility is another key factor that buyers are recognising, as prOOH enables brands to reach broad and targeted audiences, and also supports both brand and performance marketing goals.

This was highlighted in the report, with 94% of agency respondents and 91% of advertisers stating that prOOH is a great way to reach a broadcast audience. As an effective driver for reaching consumers on the go, programmatic OOH was recognised by 88% of advertisers and 93% of agency respondents.

Similarly, programmatic's ability to expand OOH from a traditionally brand-driven medium to one that also encapsulates performance drivers is being realised. In fact, 80% of agency and 75% of advertiser executives believe that programmatic OOH is a great way to build brand awareness, and even more (82% of agencies and 78% of advertisers) see programmatic OOH as a great way to drive response.

Our report also showed that executives are planning to invest more in prOOH in the next couple of years, including through building internal expertise and education. With 84% of respondents planning to integrate programmatic OOH more closely in multi-channel campaigns in the future, this is where the real opportunity lies, and is the reason why both the OOH industry and digital planners alike are so excited about the future of programmatic OOH.

# Programmatic Stars

Programmatic Stars celebrates the pioneers, trailblazers and innovators holding the role of Head of Programmatic, one critical to any company today.



The latest to join the series is Sturrae Hickley, Head of Programmatic Buying Unit at GroupM.

## What are the biggest challenges for programmatic and how will we overcome them?

We face many challenges, such as questions on transparency, lack of knowledge and understanding and finding resources. We are struggling to find people fast enough to grow with the changing ecosystem.

The solution is for businesses to groom talented interns, teach them the foundations and the basics with on the job training.

## What innovation or technology in programmatic are you most excited about currently?

With Data Management Platforms (DMPs) moving out, and more room being made for Customer Data Platforms (CDPs), I'd have to say that's exciting for me.

CDPs will not only benefit programmatic campaigns, but assist in personalisation across marketing. In many instances, marketing channels work in silos, and are fragmented, however if we have a tool that can work across marketing holistically, this allows for better

consumer experience which in the end is quite important. Brands don't exist without their consumers.

## How is the role of 'head of programmatic' evolving or changing at present?

Although the role will always be technically driven, I believe we're gearing to a role that's not only focused on programmatic strategy, but also guiding stakeholders both internally and externally into becoming forerunners of digital advertising. I believe that we are custodians of programmatic education, and the responsibility lies with us to shape young minds to become even better than we are now.

## What do you love most about your role as Head of Programmatic?

There are so many elements to my role that I love. Leading and mentoring a team of young minds within a constantly evolving industry and being part of that evolution is quite fulfilling. Taking a brand on a journey of growth by conceptualising performance strategies, implementation of these strategies and performance measurement against realistic KPIs. Advertisers are becoming more intuitive and being able to educate, direct and assist in this growth is exciting.

## What is the biggest opportunity for programmatic over the next year?

Besides clients managing their own data, the move into a cookieless future is one of the biggest opportunities for programmatic. As we move into a new era of targeting, audience building, measurement and accurate reporting, while being completely transparent, it's exciting to see what this dimension of change will bring.

## What is your proudest achievement in programmatic?

When my team won the IAB Bookmarks Award for best ad operations teams in South Africa. Getting that type of recognition from such an established institution globally definitely puts a feather in my cap.

# Women in Programmatic Network



The Women In Programmatic Network was set up to represent women in the programmatic industry. To celebrate its work and its members, NDA is running a series of interviews. Next up is Ashleigh Footit, Senior Programmatic Manager at *The Independent*.

## Why did you join the Women in Programmatic Network and what do you hope to get out of it?

I joined the network in the UK having recently emigrated from South Africa. I want to ensure that the knowledge I share within the company is in line with industry trends and updates.

## What are the biggest challenges and opportunities for women in the programmatic industry today?

Digital media, generally, is a heavily male-biased industry. However, I believe this is more based on legacy. Women are, in fact, celebrated and encouraged to stamp their mark within this space.

## What does the industry need to do to champion women in the programmatic industry better?

I believe continuing to highlight successful women and their contributions to effect change in the industry will allow us to be top of mind.

## What are the biggest challenges and opportunities overall for programmatic advertising this year?

Identity, identity, identity. Media buyers need to get used to buying differently now, i.e. accepting cross-domain targeting is a thing of the past, and media owners need to work hard on their identity strategy, offering buyers multiple, viable options to buy media.

## What is your biggest achievement in programmatic to date?

Speaking on an all-woman panel about the importance of data at an IAB conference in South Africa, as well as being a key contributor to the South African IAB whitepaper on viewability.

# AI in the privacy era



**Matt Nash,**  
UK Managing  
Director at **Scibids**

**With the privacy-first era upon us and a post-cookie world full of unknowns, it's essential that digital marketing leaders future-proof their media strategies and related advertising technology stacks. This is especially true for advertisers who focus on paid media and the surrounding ecosystem.**

Thankfully, a new wave of innovation in paid digital marketing is enabling systemic respect for consumer privacy while generating strong, scalable returns on investment for advertisers. Fuelling this wave of innovation is artificial intelligence (AI) and Scibids AI is leading the way. Since our inception, Scibids has engineered privacy-respecting technology with powerful ad decisioning that doesn't need cookies or Personally identifiable information (PII).

Scibids AI is accessed through the user's demand side platform (DSP) and is easily customized via a simple UI with a light interface for supplemental input. It is engineered to understand unique business and campaign goals — including real-world constraints — to deploy unique bidding algorithms based on specific objectives and requirements. In addition, Scibids AI learns quickly and progressively from abundant,

non-personally identifiable metadata from bid requests on websites to create better alignment between brands and consumers. Put simply, Scibids AI is engineered to deliver dramatically better results on paid digital marketing today.

Marketing is a large, complex, and continuously evolving industry that drives brand growth. What's more, digital marketing is quickly outpacing traditional marketing in impact, size, and spend. As such, digital marketing is critical to brand growth.

Meanwhile, as consumers increasingly use more digital applications across more devices and channels, they generate exponential increases in data volumes. The result is huge-scale challenges for those seeking to grow brand equity and sales from digital marketing. Only sophisticated decisioning technology, engineered to tackle the advertiser-specific business growth challenges presented by an advertiser, can provide solutions.

Scibids has pioneered AI in digital marketing at a time of great opportunity and great uncertainty for the industry. At once, global consumer flight to a multitude of digital devices creates vast scale opportunities for advertisers while privacy issues sully the industry's reputation and detract from its promise.

This doesn't have to be. The technology exists to rise above the fray, to create step-change performance, and to respect consumers.

It can also ease operational complexity to open scale potential. At Scibids, we know the realities of media buying and execution today — top-line KPIs described in media briefs tell only a small part of the story, while detailed campaign requirements create vast complexities that challenge scale at every turn. Without customizable AI, a whole industry suffers from underspend and under-delivery relative to its potential.

As a result of our experience, we have developed a best practices framework for advertisers to gain a competitive advantage by leveraging AI in paid media, which is detailed in our latest reference guide and summarized below.

**Step one: customize - unleash tailored media buying decisioning.**

AI should be engineered to tailor its media buying approach to meet the always-unique demands of digital marketing stakeholders who reasonably expect their paid media campaigns to comply with brand-specific requirements. Scibids AI drives customized scale and performance through:

- high cardinality learning and variable selection; and
- flexible bidding functions.

**Step two: enhance - create AI-aligned campaign setup and business process.**

Because we can rely on AI to automate complex multi-dimensional decisioning, we can reimagine the

complexity of campaign management and free ourselves to think about how to feed the AI better data and media assets that scale great results. Scibids AI helps campaigns to grow by:

- enabling campaigns to ease targeting constraint without sacrificing performance;
- pointing budget at tactics that have the potential to scale efficiently; and
- expanding media supply opportunities and therefore campaign scale confidently.

**Step three: grow - feed scibids AI more relevant business data with which to grow relevant business results.**

Scibids AI impact can be expanded by exposing it to:

- first-party (opted-in) user segmentation or behavioral predictions, which can be explicitly considered as variables in the modelling process;
- performance KPI data (including data points from external oracles such as attribution systems or other metrics providers);
- data from a campaign's creative; and
- any custom variable engineered into the bid request.

At Scibids, we hope to enable the industry to move confidently beyond privacy concerns and embrace a future in which the interests of consumers, regulators, brands, and the digital media supply chain are harmonized. Properly engineered AI for digital marketing can generate marketing performance and ROI that is far better than intrusive legacy systems without the use of PII.

# The evolution of location



**George Dixon, Head of Product and Strategy at Mobsta**

**It's no secret that digital advertising is evolving; it has changed forever. Whether due to Apple's Tracking Transparency (ATT) or Google's plan to launch its alternative to the third-party cookie within the next two years, change is afoot.**

Nowhere in the ad ecosystem has this been felt more significantly than location. Even before ATT and GDPR, location existed as the Marmite of digital currencies; some believed, some championed and others lambasted it. It's been oversold and underutilised in equal measure.

The truth is that location has changed for the better as consumers gain more control over their data. Location

data can no longer be used as an analytics product to count the number of women on the third aisle of Tesco Extra in Milton Keynes. Those days are gone. People don't give their precise location away that easily, or that often, any longer.

Location is now context and context is location.

The future is bright, then. It has become a more viable planning currency than ever before. It can still be used for measurement. It can be used to lessen advertising's impact on the environment. But the key to all of this is aggregated mobile operator data.

Scalable, anonymised, and accurate operator data means that location is set to become the lynchpin for the future of digital media. It can show where your audience is, nationwide, and when they're there. It can be leveraged by any media channel to inform planning, pinpoint buying and measure effects.

So, what's the difference between location then and location now? It's all about trends, not individuals, identifying patterns of visitation across audiences temporally; activating campaigns against thousands of postcodes, not hundreds of thousands to deliver relevant rather than seemingly prescient media. For example, we can still spotlight audiences that are mostly ABC1 Men, aged 18 – 24 who regularly go to the gym, or middle-aged women who are likely to be in the market for a new Volvo. But it's whole postcodes, keeping up with the Joneses rather than thousands of datapoints per user. We don't need to know what people think, we just need to see behaviour at scale and identify the trends.



**Scalable, anonymised, and accurate operator data means that location is set to become the lynchpin for the future of digital media**

Operator data even offers campaign measurement, showing what type of people are accessing which apps most and where and when. This may allow you to see the types of audiences that are in the vicinity of a store, or that of a competitor. All of this is possible with mobile operator data without counting, tracking, or identifying individual devices.

But perhaps the biggest by-product of this is that location helps to generate greater efficiency in media. This not only creates outcomes for clients in a more cost-effective way, it also leads to a smaller impact on our environment.

At Mobsta we have built a carbon calculator that demonstrates the true environmental impact of a campaign, not just the footprint of the device on which it is displayed. Our calculations include the carbon cost of storing the data for targeting, and delivery of the media viewed or displayed. We believe our calculations are world-leading - for the first time we know the carbon weight of each impression by format, which allows clients to make choices about the environmental impact of their campaigns. So, we help reduce emissions where possible and offset any residual carbon. We actually more than double offset the residual to ensure that we, as an organisation, are climate positive which, in turn, means our clients' campaigns are also climate positive.

We know the positive impact that accurate targeting can have on results, we know inaccurate location data means people are reached in the wrong place even if it's the right time. We know that low-cost untargeted media, at a high volume, means a greater carbon impact, even if the end ROI is similar to more premium and accurate media. So as location evolves it can still inform the who, when and where. And that allows you to be far smarter with your messaging to your audience.

Location is dead? No, long live location.

If you'd like to see Operator data deliver context at scale, or understand how you can reduce the emissions of your campaigns to become not just net zero but climate positive, we'd be happy to talk to you about the evolution of location.

Mobsta – scalable, accurate, responsible.

# The NDA Roundtable: Should brands be developing 'CTV-first' strategies?



**NDA ran a roundtable discussing connected TV and the opportunities it presents. On the roundtable, we heard the thoughts of Pete Markey, Chief Marketing Officer at Boots; Melissa Blaha, Head of Product, Data and Analytics at Finecast; Daniel White, Group Director, EMEA at DoubleVerify; Andy Jones, Head of Agency Development at Samsung Ads; Alex Debenham-Burton, VP, Head of Reservation Media at Essence Global; Rhys McLachlan, Director of Advanced Advertising at ITV; and Charlie Glyn, Ad Technology Lead at 4 Sales (Channel 4).**

For many years, the industry has been defined by the idea of striving to be 'mobile-first'. However, with the emergence of connected TV (CTV), is it perhaps time for us to be thinking 'CTV-first' instead?

"For the majority of advertisers, it's seen as a means of incremental reach. There are hard-to-reach audiences, especially the younger ones," said DoubleVerify's White.

"The other thing I'm seeing in conversations with agencies is that a CTV-first approach is appealing for those advertisers that haven't necessarily moved into TV or haven't seen TV as a major part of their media plans in the past."

## The whole picture

Despite the appeal of going CTV-first for some within the industry, Boots' Markey prefers to look at things from an "audience-first perspective".

An example provided by Markey was around the Boots Advantage Card loyalty base of 15 million people. If the health and beauty retailer wanted to reach these customers, it would look at what it can do through CTV with the likes of ITV and Channel 4. On the other hand, for a Christmas campaign, where the retailer will be looking to attract a larger number of people into its stores, a broader approach would be used.

"It's about who you want to target and through what outcome," Markey explained. "There's always going to be a role for traditional TV. It's still powerful, and there's no other way to reach certain audiences at scale and with impact. But there will come a crossover point, where I think CTV will become even more mainstream, but we're not there today."

ITV's McLachlan agrees that putting CTV first is perhaps not the best strategy, instead suggesting that

advertisers should be looking at the TV landscape as a whole.

"We're encouraging advertisers and agency partners to think about a 'total TV' strategy – and you'll see other folks around town speak to the same as well," said McLachlan. "How are we holistically thinking about all the platforms, all the channels, that are available to us? And how are we activating those to the best of our ability to drive business outcomes?"

## Behavioural shift

The driving force behind there even being a consideration around going 'CTV-first' has been the rapid growth of the channel over the course of the pandemic. Finecast's Blaha thinks that consumers will continue to adopt CTV, as long as the amount and quality of content on those platforms continues to meet their expectations.

"Consumers want to watch the content where it's available," said Blaha. "They want to watch the shows and the things that their friends are talking about. And, if that's on CTV, then you'll naturally continue to see that trend accelerate. I'm thinking about the way that people like Netflix and Disney are investing in shows. As they continue to be major content investors, I think you're going to continue to see adoption of those platforms naturally, because people want to watch those shows."

And this feeling was also shared by both Channel 4's Glyn and Samsung's Jones.

"We saw such a surge in TV consumption at the beginning and, whilst it's dropped as we've started to come out of the lockdowns, I think it's been quite clear that there's always going to be a really prime position

for TV and for content. Whether it's CTV devices or not is irrelevant. We just know that's how people are consuming their content," said Glyn.

"As long as there's top quality content, there's going to be a CTV market. It's not the same as digital display, where everyone is using the internet in various guises and forms. It's so content-driven when it comes to CTV consumption."

Jones added: "What viewers really understand and love is great content. They don't care what channel it's on, they just care about the content and, increasingly, at their convenience. That's not going to go back."

"We have to have a broad content choice, and we have to help users with that content choice, but the convenience is here to stay. The competition for our beloved traditional broadcasters is that they are now competing against every app that's available on the TV for that viewer's attention. The challenge that they've got is that those apps are spending billions globally on content."

Despite this, Essence's Debenham-Burton warns that advertisers have to be careful about the way they view CTV and the stats around that, because "there are so many premium CTV channels which don't take advertising".

"You've got the obvious ones like Netflix, Disney+, and Prime has elements of it," he said. "There are also platforms like DAZN which, again, have no commercial opportunity from an advertising perspective. So, I think sometimes we blur the stats around CTV, which are hugely relevant and correct, but that's very different from the commercial opportunity for advertisers."



Launching a trade title when you are a communications agency might not seem the most obvious move but it's one that has worked really well over the last two years.

Every agency has a blog and the ubiquitous podcast, but we wanted to do something very different. We wanted to create an editorial platform, not only for our clients but also for some of the biggest names in the industry. Given our backgrounds in the trade publishing sector - a combined 40 years at titles such as New Media Age, The Drum, Media Briefing, Digiday and Mobile Marketing - it was also imperative that we built a credible editorial proposition and a title that was a great addition to the media landscape.

We've always been very clear that we don't see ourselves as being in competition with the bigger established names in the sector. We don't have a focus on news and we focus tightly on a defined area of the market - the intersection of tech providers, agencies and publishers.

We believe that those who work in the industry are those best placed to write about the industry, and thus the majority of our content is supplied by regular columnists such as Dora Michail-Clendinnen of The Ozone Project, Akama Davies of Xaxis, Harmony Murphy of eBay and, of course, the enigma that is Media Lad.

We are passionate about giving a voice to names that you might not have heard of. Our Practice Makes Unperfect course has supplied us with more than 80 new female contributors who've written columns for us and taken part in podcasts. And recently, NDA editor Justin Pearse made the pledge to endeavour to ensure we always have a 50/50 split in male/female contributed articles.

The last two years have been a bit of a whirlwind for New Digital Age. We've learned a lot about remote publishing, we've redesigned the site, launched a sister title in Ecommerce Age, and in November will host our first big event, The Trinity Lunch. We like to think that we've succeeded in our original aims and hope you do, too.

**We're always happy to hear your views and ideas, so don't hesitate to get in touch.**

## Bluestripe Content Studios

Working with its own in-house creative team and a network of specialist suppliers, Bluestripe Content Studios delivers against the most complex and challenging content briefs. Content is an essential tool in modern B2B communications to drive leads and showcase your work. Waze, Snap, Xandr, LiveRamp, Broadsign and many others have trusted Bluestripe with their branded content.

*All zebras' stripe patterns are unique.*

***Because who wants to look like everybody else?***



To learn more, contact  
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# Brand safety - do you want to be part of the mess, or part of the clean-up?



**Peter Szyszko,**  
CEO at **White Bullet**

**Imagine you're a big brand. Perhaps you work for one, or with one. Now, how do you feel about online hate speech alongside your advertising? How about fake news? Pornography? Graphic violence? In the brand safety discussion, these are types of content everyone can agree on, and no sensible brand wants to flirt with them under any circumstances.**

And here's another one for the list: IP infringement. Not necessarily your own at this point, but someone else's - unauthorised live stream football, illegal access to boxing, movies, subscription TV shows. Illegal websites and apps [reap \\$1.34bn \(£968m\) in ad revenues](#) from this type of stolen content each year, and that money largely comes from mainstream advertisers, most of whom have strong opinions about more obvious brand safety issues.

**Who cares about IP infringement? You should.**

Do brands care about IP-infringing content as a brand safety issue? Does the ad tech industry? Well, they should.

First, there's the obvious commercial case. Nearly a billion pounds in stray ad revenue is sucked out of brand budgets by ingeniously fraudulent organisations who

know exactly how to game programmatic advertising on the web, in apps, and creeping into CTV. That money should be buying safe and profitable brand uplift, but instead it's funding copyright crime in environments where fraud and malware are also rife. Should brands be letting that happen? Should their ad tech partners be allowing it, when they could make it stop?

But the waste of ad spend is not even the only reason



**Do brands care about IP-infringing content as a brand safety issue? Does the ad tech industry? Well, they should**

why, for those who monitor brand safety, IP-infringing content is now one of a toxic dozen, including the various horrors above and a few more. And it is climbing the ladder fast.

IP crime directly affects the wider economy - the big guys and the little ones - harming the viability of legitimate businesses in ways that inevitably trickle down. A lack of respect for it hurts us all. And IP infringement damages brands who associate with it, just as surely as any of brand safety's household names - the fake news, the hate speech, the video nasties.

## Demonetising content piracy isn't a pipe dream

When a brand's ad partner lets its client's ads pop up on a pirate site or app, that brand lends its stamp of approval to IP theft, and it funds a criminal enterprise that has few alternative revenues.

If the ads to such domains were all to stop - and as a company that monitors the pirate content industry in real time, we can help brands and their partners to do that, often with the flick of a switch - then the piracy would stop too. Demonetising piracy is a purely technological matter, and we have the technology to make it happen.

## Be on the right side of the internet clean-up

High-profile forms of unsafe content are fixtures of the front page these days, fuelling indignation against the inaction of Big Tech as the fabric of society frays, elections are manipulated, divisive rhetoric flows freely.

IP piracy belongs on the same list. It causes harm to the

economy and to individual livelihoods, and it lives in the murk of the internet with all the other malign content. Many pirate sites and apps carry malvertising and malware.

The fact is that the kind of material that triggers brand safety alerts doesn't just represent a problem for brands, but for society as a whole. And neglecting its own role in that picture is something no brand can afford to do.

For brands, and for the ad tech companies they deploy to scatter their ads, here are a few questions. What are your values? Does harm to your consumers and to the wider economy constitute a brand safety issue? If you agree that you don't want to support the worst of the internet's toxic content, why make an exception for IP theft, which weakens us all?

And one more. Do you want to be part of the mess, or part of the clean-up operation?



# ATTENTION PLEASE!

## How ‘human metrics’ have come of age



**Dom Tillson, Marketing Director at [Inskin Media](#)**

**The departure of third-party cookies from Google Chrome, a shocking prospect when first announced in [January 2020](#), increasingly looks like a lengthy farewell tour that most of us will be glad to [see the end of](#).**

That’s partly because we won’t have to talk about it any more; and partly because, in the process of figuring out alternative means of measuring the impact of advertising, the entire industry’s understanding of the value of attention has moved on in leaps and bounds.

Only a very few years ago, viewability was still the digital media world’s default suggestion for a meaningful advertising effectiveness metric. Attention, meanwhile, was not so much unappreciated as unmeasurable, and therefore scarcely worth aiming for.

These days, not only do we have a statistically robust understanding of how much time people spend looking at digital advertising, incorporating data such as dwell time, interaction and time in view, but we can also link that attention to the kind of meaningful results marketers can take to the boardroom.

No more ‘well, they had the opportunity to see it’ or ‘well, they *clicked*’ - the technology available now allows marketers to connect seconds of attention to real business outcomes, which we now know include [not only brand impact but also conversions and lower-funnel, lead-generating activity](#).

### **If attention is the prize, creativity is the way to win it**

Publications like Dentsu’s [Attention Economy Programme](#), in partnership with Lumen, have done much to push the attention argument forward over the past three years, tying higher dwell times to greater brand preference and ad recall, and noting that even lower levels of attention indicate statistically significant uplift.

All of this creates a clear set of challenges for advertisers and the creative tech they use. If attention is the end game, then high impact creative advertising is the way to get there.

We also know that the reason attention is so valuable is because it is hard to get. Digital advertising is famously ignorable, to the extent that standard formats, fitted with generic or repurposed creative served across “long tail” publishers, make scarcely any impression on consumers.

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**Advertising, which dodged its creative obligations for too long in favour of cookie-driven methods, is once again reminded that without compelling creative in an arresting context, all the attention metrics in the world will simply note the fact that you didn’t get any attention**

Advertising, which dodged its creative obligations for too long in favour of cookie-driven methods, is once again reminded that without compelling creative in an arresting context, all the attention metrics in the world will simply note the fact that you didn’t get any attention.

In practice, high-impact formats are one of the very few methods capable of consistently generating attention in the digital space. The combination of stop-you-in-your-tracks creativity and contextual targeting across premium publisher content increasingly looks like the must-have for those interested in future-proofing their advertising methods.

Standard display ads - MPUs and leaderboards - don’t even chart in comparison with high-impact formats, which [our partnership with Lumen](#) has found deliver significantly higher attention - 20x or more, in our case - than the standard kind.

### **Human metrics and human engagement**

Dentsu has called attention “the first human metric” for advertising measurement, in recognition of its emphasis on people’s actual behaviour, and other

trends are feeding into this humanisation of digital advertising. And as the attention economy grows, we see there being a measurement evolution into the types of attention advertising gets, and how these subtleties impact on a campaign’s effectiveness.

Quality media, particularly news brands, once again proved their worth during the pandemic, while digital stole an increasing share of mainstream attention from TV. The dots are easily joined between engagement with content that is well crafted, sought-after and credible, and engagement with featured advertising that possesses the same properties.

High-impact digital ads are typically delivered in premium environments and demonstrably offer a richer quality and experience than standard display formats. Now, they can also be traded at scale programmatically, giving them a new accessibility.

In this way, high-impact advertising formats are increasingly becoming the standard bearers, not only for quality advertising online, but for the post-cookie attention economy itself.

Other categories have also burgeoned in the time of the scramble for post-cookie solutions. Along with attention metrics and creativity, contextual targeting likewise strengthens the ability of brands to capture attention with their message, lending further support to the cause.

There are no longer any shortcuts to real engagement, and there’s no reason why brands should grind away with ads and strategies that don’t capture the attention of the right people. Third-party cookies may be going - though you wouldn’t want to hold your breath - but our understanding of who is paying attention, and what they are doing about it, is just taking off.

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# 2022 will be the year of CTV - consider these three crucial factors to make it yours



**By Sarah Lewis, Global Director CTV at ShowHeroes Group**

**One of the major fundamental shifts in the recent television ecosystem has been the rapid growth in CTV (connected television). Driven by a shift of viewing habits away from linear TV and the growth in TV app-based ecosystems, [61.5m households across Europe](#) now have a connected TV set, with smart TVs being the preferred device choice. The recent launch of [Sky Glass](#), a CTV set from a broadcaster once synonymous with satellite delivery, only serves to underline how far the industry has come.**

More viewers are watching more content and ultimately 'cutting the cord' by moving to digital TV viewing. Not only have we seen a strong shift from cable and satellite to CTV, driven by the flexibility and convenience of the platform, but we have also seen that subscription fatigue is on the rise. With new SVOD services launching seemingly every few months, to access all available content users now need to have numerous monthly subscriptions, which is becoming increasingly

costly. AVOD CTV services are offering a refreshing alternative for viewers by allowing free access to streaming content and an opportunity for advertisers to reach their audience on a premium platform. The result of this structural shift is that viewership as well as ad spend is on the up. Coupled with the difficulties elsewhere in the digital ad ecosystem precipitated by the cookie phaseout, the attraction of CTV becomes increasingly clear.

In 2021, [73% of CTV buyers shifted budget from broadcast and cable to CTV](#). This will no doubt continue to grow as we head into 2022. However, CTV does have challenges that need to be addressed in the coming years to allow advertisers to maximise the potential of this opportunity.



**In 2021, 73% of CTV buyers shifted budget from broadcast and cable to CTV. This will no doubt continue to grow in 2022**

## The drive for CTV standardisation will be key

The field has changed considerably over the past few years. From having a focus on traditional IOs, CTV buying has rapidly evolved to the point where it is predominantly bought programmatically. This has given more control and flexibility to advertisers, helping to accelerate the adoption of CTV. But the consequences of this rapid uptake, along with technical differences in TV sets (i.e being VAST only and cookieless), has been a lack of transparency and standardisation in the marketplace.

Happily there are frameworks such as app-ads.txt and sellers.json that make understanding the supply chain much easier, but the industry still needs to drive forward further initiatives to make the CTV ecosystem more open and more efficient. In the meantime, working with trusted partners and seeking out current best practice advice is paramount.

## The importance of relevance

Despite this, the advantages of CTV campaigns are compelling enough that the pivot towards them remains rapid. Not only is CTV a chance to align with TV-quality content, it's also recently been found to be the platform with the [highest viewability at 93.2%](#). When compared to other devices such as desktop web at 77% it is clear why advertisers are clamouring to include CTV in their strategy. However, one element that desktop web has had over CTV is granular targeting options. With an abundance of third-party data solutions available it has been relatively simple to target the exact audience that you require. With CTV

these targeting solutions have not been available due to the nature of the platform. CTV targeting up until now has been much more simplistic, with channel or publisher-based targeting the only options. However, the winds are changing and more sophisticated targeting solutions are becoming available.

The key is ensuring that the right ad is seen by the right audience at the right time. In a post-GDPR world that requires contextual solutions that can extract the rich metadata of the content and accurately understand and categorise it. [60% of consumers](#) prefer to see ads that are relevant to their interests. This leads to higher retention rates and more effective campaigns, as well as increasing viewer satisfaction. In short, everyone wins.

## Follow the audience

For companies looking to dip their toes in the water, the right time to be examining their CTV strategy is now. Targeted advertising via CTV is both more effective than traditional TV campaigns' broad brush approach, and provides a dynamic alternative to the soon-to-be cookie-less online campaigns. It is in fact the perfect middle ground between the two — and it just so happens it is also increasingly the area where the largest audiences are congregating.

For brands that are serious in their attempts to reach viewers, CTV is now by far the most effective game in town and the market will continue to develop in 2022 and beyond.

# Practice Makes Unperfect

**Practice Makes UnPerfect is about honing that natural voice and joining a community of women who want to be themselves on stage, on air, and even written down. Our groups will go on a journey of self-discovery that's designed to help you understand your barriers, understand other people, work out what you want to say to the world, and how.**



**We've partnered with Amy Kean to create a one-of-a-kind six-week training course that mixes psychology with role play and media training. It combines storytelling techniques with podcasting, blog writing and presenting, as well as community-building, and having fun.**

**I hired a confidence coach once. It cost a lot of money, but desperate times call for desperate measures: I was working in Asia reporting into an insecure and inadequate boss who lashed out and undermined instead of working on his own professional development.**

I'd wager about 70% of people reading this have been in exactly the same situation. It's not easy to talk about, because we've been programmed to believe that if other people treat us badly it makes us weak. Somehow, lesser. The claustrophobic dynamics of a bad employer/employee relationship can impact your brain, your body (stress is an illness with physical side effects) and your long-term sense of self. So as a precautionary measure, I invested in a confidence coach to make sure I didn't break.

The coaching was an interesting experience. I got hypnotised! We talked about the little voices in our heads - the 'chimp' - and how one can only control one's own reaction to things, so it is important to stop trying to change others. In one session, my confidence coach delivered an immortal line I'll never forget: "Some people will always be arseholes. Deal with it."

I dealt with it. When my confidence was sufficiently rebuilt I found another job, and left. Handing in my notice felt like a cool shower on a hot day. A release! A revival! The ROI of that financial decision, and the allocation of my own personal funds, was exceptional.

A number of my learnings and life experiences have been channeled into Practice Makes UnPerfect: a course designed to help people finesse their public voices and be themselves more. Like you, but extra you. You squared!

So all the bad stuff: the dents on my confidence, the shitty unsolicited feedback, the fear of putting myself out there, the social media trolls, my own relationship with my nerves (which I've learned will always exist) have been put to good use. For two hours a week for six weeks, we practice public speaking, writing, podcasting, sitting on panels... we even practice fucking up... so that participants find out how it feels, and that things are rarely as bad as you think they'll be.

Practice Makes UnPerfect has been described by alumni as "transformative" and "life-changing" and "essential". (Without any prompting from me, I promise!) The course is mostly for women, and an inevitable, extremely pleasant side effect is that it boosts their confidence. PMU increases their desire to get out there and start speaking. Shouting! And that, for me, is an invaluable outcome.

However, I'm often asked to put a value on it. I talk to many, many companies about Practice Makes UnPerfect because it's unique, and a number of business leaders are interested in 'empowering' (hate that word) women. So I'll run through the process and benefits and sometimes I'll be asked: what's the business case for this?

# A media owner's plea to make campaign measurement a bit more interesting



**Michaela Rairata, Client Solutions Account Director, Mobsta**

**When I started my career, I was in awe of all the things happening behind the scenes in the world wide web that I'd been completely oblivious to. In particular, all the technologies gathering data. Everything was "real-time" and "revolutionary" and I was wide-eyed, and loving it! And then the campaigns rolled in... the data came in... but people remained bizarrely focused on how many clicks there were.**

Our industry is obsessed with the click-through rate (CTR). We all crave CTR benchmarks, even if it's not even the main KPI. This is tangible and easy to explain, but it's also unrealistic. Who even clicks on ads? Sometimes the clicks are so low that it's difficult to bring out any insights, and for me, the insights you draw are the best part of my job.

There's so much data we have access to and so many different stories we could tell but we hold these insights hostage because we're all after more clicks. So we may be optimising towards the wrong areas, publishers, locations or types of users for that elusive engagement, and we could be missing out on the consumers brands really want.

If you're a luxury car brand selling aspirations knowing

that it could take months/ years before a conversion, what does a 0.12% CTR even mean? Would you then discount users or whole locations just because they didn't click during a three-week campaign? Or want to completely skew delivery towards a few publishers just because these have a high CTR?

To make a digital campaign successful in the real world, there needs to be a bigger emphasis on time. A recent study showed that time-in-view is "king". One of the key takeaways was that the number of pixels in view is not the driving factor – how long consumers have to see the ad is. Research showed an 8% change in ad recall when the ad was in-view for 4 seconds, rising to 17% at 7 seconds, compared to just 3% at the MRC standard. So we can make an impact even when we're not pushing people to click.

Publishers have also taken advantage of a combination of different metrics to prove the effectiveness of advertising. *The Telegraph* moved on from impressions and clicks, and started to use a combination of 11 metrics, including time-in-view, to qualify user attention and this has led to a 24% year-on-year increase in average campaign price since its introduction.

IPG, IAS and *The Telegraph* have proven there's more to campaigns than just clicks. When we move away from clicks, we work towards metrics that seem to have more real-world applications and are more in line with how people behave. It's time to bin the CTR once and for all.

Hang on. What's the business case for investing in your staff and boosting their confidence? The first time I heard it, this felt like a strange, clinical question, at odds with my heart and soul. Dramatic? Very. But I thought we'd moved past those conversations now: conversations about whether your staff should be happy, fulfilled, challenged, and rewarded.

To some of these companies I could respond with: what's the business case for blowing £3k on a client lunch, or £30k on a boozy trip to Cannes? One thing we've realised over the last 12 months is that these radical social occasions aren't the only way to keep your clients engaged. Doing the work well is also a massive plus.

But from a business case perspective, there are few ways you can benefit from more confident women. They're happier at work (presenteeism costs the UK economy £73 billion per year); they're amazing spokespeople for your company (which can be

calculated via a PR metric like AVE); they're better storytellers and communicators which results in stronger client relationships; and they stay. They stay at your company because you've demonstrated that you care about their development.

Wouldn't you love to be able to say to future employees: "Come for the job title and salary, stay for the ongoing investment we make into the self-esteem of our staff." But not every company can say this. Can you?

According to the innovations company &us, almost a fifth of people say the bravest decision they've made at work is to leave. After I spent months with a confidence coach, that was my bravest decision, too.

To retain your female employees; give them the mic, space to speak, to develop their opinions, and to help them practice pushing the whole industry forward, is a pretty solid company perk, if you ask me. Delivering a lifetime's supply of confidence isn't just a 'business case', it's a healthy dose of humanity, too.

# Programmatic Stars



**Richard Kanolik is Head of Programmatic at Vodafone. Previous roles included stints at the7stars and Omnicom Media Group. At Vodafone he has led the company's in-housing strategy.**

## What do you love most about your role as Head of Programmatic?

The rapidity of change. Being able to find solutions to problems whether they are media, data or tech related.

No two days are ever the same.

## What is the biggest opportunity for programmatic over the next year?

CTV! Embracing CTV as an advertising opportunity will give advertisers a chance to develop their approach from siloed TV & digital plans to one integrated CTV plan.

Whilst targeting methodologies are still evolving, they offer the promise of reducing some of the wastage associated with traditional TV buying, and they open the door to advertisers with smaller budgets.

## What is your proudest achievement in programmatic?

Building a best-in-class team at Vodafone whilst simultaneously in-housing and onboarding new tech in the midst of a global pandemic!

## What are the biggest challenges for programmatic and how will we overcome them?

The death of the cookie will bring about a fundamental change in online advertising. As cookies vanish, scale disappears for all but authenticated users. We need an

end-to-end solution that connects first-party data securely without sacrificing privacy, scale or control.

## What innovation or technology in programmatic are you most excited about currently?

Supply chain optimisation (SPO). There are many ways to approach this on both the buy side & sell side.

However, seeing a renewed commitment from both sides of the industry in pushing for a new era of 'programmatic transparency' is extremely exciting and goes some way in demonstrating that Programmatic advertising is entering its second cycle: maturity.

We now need to ensure the tools and products built to enable this are being utilised in the right way.

## How is the role of 'head of programmatic' evolving or changing at present?

With programmatic advertising becoming more prominent within emerging channels, you need to keep up with the latest technology now more than ever. But not only that. You need to make sense of it all to ensure your media activation and buying routes are as pioneering as possible.

With this in mind, the role has become a lot more commercially focused... though there is still no getting away from a quality assurance (QA)!



# My Digital Hero

**The digital industry is supported by technology but is conceived, created and developed by people, who are the heroes of digital. But who are their heroes?**

**Samuel Regan-Asante is CEO of JOE Media. He spent five years at UNILAD, before co-founding Iconic Labs, a new media and technology business, which in 2020 was appointed to manage JOE Media following its acquisition by Greencastle Capital. As CEO of JOE Media, Regan-Asante works with the newly appointed leadership team to lead the growth and drive the vision of JOE Media in the UK.**

## Who is your digital hero?

I'm going to say Phil Hutcheon, founder and CEO of Dice, the personalised live event ticketing app. I should probably caveat this with I don't really follow people's careers, as terrible as that may sound, but I am more interested in ideas, innovations, and trends.

Specifically, how products and ultimately businesses are built from them, how people interact with these products and how consumer behaviour and expectations are shaped by products and trends, and the ongoing cycle that creates.

## What has he done to win hero status in your eyes?

He's created an amazing product that solves a genuine problem, with a really engaged user base. Dice is one of the apps I check on a weekly basis as a huge fan of the arts; because it feeds my need.

Before lockdown I would be at gigs or other kinds of events at least twice a week. Dice does what it says on the tin, it made it so much easier to discover what's

going on and to book it. What I love the most is that I feel confident using the app and knowing that if I can't make it at the last minute I can sell my ticket at cost to another fan in the waiting list and I won't lose any money.

It's also anti-ticket touting and while in the past I have had to go to touts, now I can benefit from the waiting list feature of Dice. In summary, he has identified a problem, and executed a vision to create an easy-to-use app that solves the problem in a very straight-forward and consumer-centric way.

## How has his heroism helped drive digital?

This answer may not necessarily address how it has helped drive digital, but for me the best products, technology, apps and tools should help serve the people, fix problems and/or create positive experiences for people. That's exactly what Dice does; it allows people to get away from screens, get away from the world and enjoy real experiences.

Furthermore it has created a digital marketplace which has allowed upcoming and local bands or acts to promote their events to a massive audience. I have been to many gigs I would have never been to, and discovered loads of acts I would have never have discovered without Dice.



It's created an ecosystem to support the arts which is brilliant. Even during lockdown it has facilitated live streamed events for audiences to attend and escape the monotony of lockdown life, and also support an industry that has been decimated by the pandemic.

**What are the biggest challenges in digital we need another hero to solve?**

Without a doubt one of the biggest challenges that needs to be solved with digital, technology and social media is misinformation. If we look at the biggest challenges we face as a society, such as climate change or the pandemic, misinformation has been extremely damaging. Digital needs to address this, and the onus is on the big tech platforms, and rightly so, to drive that. But I wouldn't say it is just down to them, there is more nuance in this debate than public discourse seems to recognise.

There are wider societal issues that need to be addressed, such as anti-intellectualism, that are a real problem. Governments both in the UK and the US have leaned into it when it suits them to promote their own agenda, e.g. Brexit, climate change and so on, and that needs to change.

This is why I am so excited to lead the team at JOE. It is the new media/social first publisher with the most credibility and its foundations are rooted in on-the-ground reporting and covering the big issues that young British people face today, and will continue to face.

It's important that we continue to build on this and challenge misinformation that exists online and on social media. The approach the team has taken to covering the news has always been a digital- and social-first approach and that's why it has cut through, and that's something we have to build on.

**What is your most heroic personal achievement so far in digital?**

This is a tricky one. I work in a very collaborative manner so I am by no means taking complete credit or saying I am solely responsible for this, but most recently I have been very proud of my involvement in creating Infotagion, which was set up in a couple of weeks during the early stages of the pandemic.

Infotagion is an independent, expert fact-checking service for Covid-19, sourced from the World Health Organization and other official UK government advice. We set this up really quickly after we saw how much misinformation was being spread on Whatsapp and other platforms to do with the pandemic. It was recognised by Ofcom, and referenced as one of the fact-checking sites to use.

We created a simple and easy to understand traffic light system, and it was viewed by hundreds of thousands of people. In my opinion, it is a prime example of how different stakeholders can collaborate to create a digital product to solve a real-world problem.

## Bluestripe Connect

Bluestripe Connect is a commercial strategy and business acceleration service that supports adtech businesses' growth through a unique combination of commercial and communications consultancy and execution.

It brings together experienced consultants and practitioners in the adtech marketplace to help businesses build, develop and communicate their commercial propositions.

Unlike traditional business development offerings, Bluestripe Connect seamlessly integrates commercial strategy and communications, helping businesses to develop their proposition, communicate it to their target audience and close the loop with active lead generation.

*Zebra foals can stand six minutes after birth.  
Because you don't want to hang around*



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