



Google Ad Manager.

10 Tips to Troubleshoot Google Ad Manager (Google DFP).

Publisher eBook

Created By

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Reference

We have referenced Google's community forum, support documents, and help guides to detail the steps for troubleshooting.

You can find more at

<https://support.google.com/admanager/topic/6048322>

Introduction

Google Ad Manager, also known as DoubleClick for Publishers (DFP) is one of the most preferred ad serving platforms in the industry. By helping publishers to connect with several ad tech partners (including ad networks, ad exchanges, SSPs, DMPs, and header bidding wrappers), Google's ad server maximizes the yield and manages the ad inventories effectively while delivering campaigns as expected.

Over the past few years, Google has made a lot of changes to its ad server. Though changes are meant to improve the product and ultimately, the user experience, small and mid-sized publishers, most often than not, find it difficult to identify what went wrong with their ad campaigns or how to troubleshoot the thousands of line items. The more complex the campaign, the more complex the setup on DFP and the harder it becomes for AdOps engineers/account managers to get to the issue quickly.

As you know, every minute delayed will have a direct impact on the bottom line of the publishers. Agreed, Google has been updating its support documents consistently. But you don't need to go through countless pages on the support forum and skim the help guides.

Pass this handy guide to quickly troubleshoot and resolve the most common errors/hiccups you confront on a regular basis. We've surveyed our account managers and publishers we work with to come up with a list. This will be constantly updated and if you want to add anything, let us know - info@automatad.com

Tip #1

How to Find Where Unfilled Ad Impressions are Being Served?

An unfilled impression is a blank ad request sent by a demand partner because none of the ads were eligible to serve on the website. Since the DFP interface is somewhat difficult for new publishers, they find it difficult where unfilled impressions are being placed. Follow the steps and find where unfilled ad impressions are getting served.

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Click [Reports](#) > [Query](#).

Step 3 : Then, click [New query](#).

Step 4 : Click [Edit](#) and use the date picker to select a date range and analyze the line items.

Step 5 : You can check unfilled ad impressions at ad unit level and by ad request size. To view at ad unit level, click [Inventory](#) > [Ad unit](#). If you want to view by ad request size, then click [Inventory](#) > [Requested ad sizes](#).

Step 6 : Then, select [Unfilled impressions](#) from the [Total](#) group in the [Metrics](#) section.

Step 7 : At last, click [Run](#).

A report will be generated after doing the above-mentioned steps and this report helps a publisher to find the location of the ad tags that are serving the most unfilled ad impressions.

Bonus: Reduce Unfilled Impressions With 8 Proven Strategies

Tip #2

How to Block Ads Based-on User Data in Google Ad Manager?

Google Ad Manager allows interest-based ads by default. But, if you're not aware of enhanced ad-blocking capabilities of DFP, then this tip is for you. Via Google's ad server, you can block interest-based ads, remarketing ads, etc. from all Google demand sources i.e. Google Display Network, Display & Video 360 or Google's Bid Manager. All you need to do is - follow the below steps and enable Protections.

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Click [Protections](#) > [Network level](#).

Step 3 : Select the [Medium](#) (i.e. mobile, desktop, tablet, etc.) on which you want to control the display of your ads.

Step 4 : As we mentioned above, a publisher can block ads based on [user's interest](#) or [remarketing ads](#). To block based on the first criteria, slide the setting to [Disabled](#). Or, if you want to block a remarketing ad, select it and slide the setting button to [Disabled](#).

Step 5 : And then, click [Save](#).

You can use it if you haven't implemented any consent mechanism to get user consent and show ads accordingly. As there is no user-targeting, you don't have to worry about GDPR fines.

But this can reduce your CPMs drastically and it can block all the ads served via Programmatic Guaranteed, Preferred Deals, Open Auctions, Private Auctions, and First Look.

[Bonus: How to Implement Consent Management Platform and become GDPR Compliant?](#)

Tip #3

How to Prevent Competitor's Ads from Showing on the Same Page at the Same Time?

Since we have already mentioned, DFP enables publishers to block ads based on various parameters, one of the features is that publishers can control competitor's ads from serving together at the same time on the same web page. You can disable a specific advertiser or a group of advertisers from buying your ad inventories across ad exchanges or servers. To do that, follow the below steps:

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Click [Protections](#) > [Network level](#).

Step 3 : Give a name to your [competitive exclusion](#).

Step 4 : Then, target the ad inventories where the protection will be applied to. You can target specific inventories by clicking on [Only protect specific inventory](#) and expand the Inventory section. Then, select your targeting options.

Step 5 : After that, create blocking groups. Also, you can create a [Multi-group](#) block. You can select or deselect the groups. Selecting the groups will disable ad serving from one group and for all advertisers who are members of the group. However, if you deselect the Group, then it will not display ads from two different groups together.

Step 6 : And, click [Save](#).

This competitor exclusion in DFP is applicable for Ad Exchange line items also. Ads via exchanges will be served if they meet the specific requirements defined in the server.

[Bonus: Optimizing Programmatic CPMs - A Guide for Publishers](#)

Tip #4

How to Place all Ad Creatives from a Single Line Item Together on the Same Page?

To block ads from multiple advertisers, Google DFP introduced the Roadblock feature which restricts all the ads from other advertisers and reserves the ad slots for a single line item (or advertiser) on the same webpage. If you want to roadblock and enable the delivery of only one line item when there is available space on the webpage, following steps can help you to achieve it:

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Click [Admin](#) > [Global Settings](#) > [Features](#).

Step 3 : And, click the toggle [Guaranteed roadblocks \(GPT SRA only\)](#) to enable or disable roadblocking.

This will disable all the ads from other line items and displays all the ad creatives from one line item together on the same page.

However, if there are more ad slots on the pages than the active creatives on the line items, ads from other line items can serve to fill up the extra slots.

Bonus: Don't want to increase ad units? Try advanced ad refresh.

Tip #5

How to Find Which Line Item didn't Serve in the Past Few days and Reasons Behind it?

To inspect and resolve issues related to line-item delivery, Google DFP introduced the **Delivery Inspector** tool for publishers. With the help of Delivery Inspector, a publisher can troubleshoot ad requests, delivery, eligibility, and many more things. So, if you want to find why line items didn't serve properly, follow the below steps to get insights into line-item delivery.

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Go to [Delivery](#) > [Troubleshoot](#) > [Delivery Inspector](#).

Step 3 : Here, enter your [website's URL to troubleshoot](#). Then, click [Troubleshoot](#).

Step 4 : Select [OK](#) in the [Troubleshoot](#) your live page pop-up block.

Step 5 : The [Delivery Inspector](#) will display all the information from each ad request. In case if you want more details on the line item delivery, select the specific page and then click [Simulate](#).

This will inspect web pages of the site and enables a publisher to better understand line item delivery process and issues related to the delivery of ad requests.

Bonus: A guide to understand line items and priority

Tip #6

How to Limit Number of Ad Impressions for a User Served by a Line Item?

One of the major problems faced by publishers is - serving the same ads over and over again to the same user. So, DFP can ensure publishers that an ad will not be shown multiple times to a particular user by setting **a frequency cap** on the server. Frequency capping can restrict the delivery of same ads for the same user within a given period.

Step 1 : Sign-in to **Google Ad Manager**.

Step 2 : Go to **Order > Line item > Settings > Type**. Select **Standard** as line item type.

Step 3 : Then, go to the **Adjust delivery** section.

Step 4 : Tick the **Set per user frequency cap** checkbox.

Step 5 : Then, click **Save**.

With a **frequency cap**, publishers can set the number of times that ad creatives can be served to a user within particular ad slots during a time-interval that can be specified by them.

Bonus: How to analyze user experience and optimize programmatic ads?

Tip #7

How to Preview an Advertiser's Creative?

Google Ad Manager enables publishers to view how an ad creative will look even before serving it to the audience. DFP's preview tab provides a chance to the publishers to check an ad creative and verify if it will work perfectly after delivering across desktop or mobile.

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Go to [Delivery](#) > [Line items](#).

Step 3 : Click the [line item](#) you want to preview. Here, you can use [filters](#) to find the line item e.g. start or end time of ad delivery, active or inactive status, etc.

Step 4 : Click [Creatives](#), and then select the creative you want to preview.

This setting will make DFP display ad creative in a new window or on publisher's website or mobile app. However, this set-up will only generate a website's preview for one ad creative at a time.

Bonus: Using data to optimize your campaigns and revenue.

Tip #8

How to Troubleshoot Private Auction Bid Responses?

Although private auctions (invite-only) enable publishers to sell their exclusive inventories to a selected number of advertisers, there are some common issues publishers face that affects the auction transactions. So, DFP enables publishers to check the bid responses issues and troubleshoot private auctions.

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Go to [Sales > Private auctions](#).

Step 3 : Then, click the [Per deal](#) tab. Here, find the [private auction](#) you want to troubleshoot.

Step 4 : Under the [troubleshooting](#) column, click [View](#).

Private auction troubleshooting will help publishers who are running the auction using RTB (real-time bidding) only. Also, it is suggested to check the ad exchange line item settings and ensure that it is matching to your deal's targeting criteria.

Bonus: Getting started with Private Marketplaces (PMPs)

Tip #9

How to Check if a Line Item has Violated Advertising Policy?

Occasionally, you might stumble upon a situation where some line items you've created has been marked as "violated terms and conditions" by Google's ad server. And the reason could be anything - Malvertising in creative or the landing page, illegal content, etc. Therefore, to ensure brand safety and safe user experience, DFP enables publishers to disable/remove creatives that violated policies.

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Go to [Delivery](#) > [Line items](#) > [All line items](#).

Step 3 : Then, apply filters - [Policy violation](#) or [Policy violation updated](#). [Policy violation](#) provides a view of the line items who have violated the advertising policies and the second filter i.e. [Policy violation updated](#) enables publishers to know about the changed status of line items that violated policies before.

Step 4 : Click [Creatives](#), and then select the [creative](#) you want to preview.

This enables Google Ad Manager to display the line items with policy violations. In order to find the reasons behind it and troubleshoot the such line items, publishers have to navigate to the creative details page in DFP by following steps - [Delivery](#) > [Orders](#). Here, you can find the disabled ad creatives and why they violated the policy.

Bonus: What is Invalid Traffic (IVT) and How to handle them?

Tip #10

How to Check Why Ad Exchange isn't Winning an Ad Impression?

If you're familiar with Google Ad Exchange, you will know that Google AdX wins the majority of the ad impressions (remnant). Even when you've connected to multiple demand partners using header bidding or exchange bidding, Google AdX typically performs well and in fact, earns you more because of the competition.

However, if you noticed a sudden drop in "match rates" (won impressions by Google AdX), it is better to see what's the reason.

Step 1 : Sign-in to [Google Ad Manager](#).

Step 2 : Go to [Reports](#) > [Queries](#) > [New query](#).

Step 3 : Then, select the [Ad Exchange Historical](#) report type. Include [dimensions and metrics](#) you want to view e.g. active view impressions, ad CTR, ad eCPM, clicks and many more.

Step 4 : Click [Run](#).

With the help of Ad Exchange Historical report type, publishers can find out why Google AdX didn't deliver ads, reasons behind low matched request rates and additionally, performance of various PMP deals, targeted ad campaigns, and other demand partners too.

[Bonus: Header Bidding Vs Exchange Bidding](#)

About Automatad, Inc.

We are a publisher-focused company and offer [Full-stack Programmatic Monetization Suite for Publishers](#). We have helped 1000+ mid-sized and premium media publishers across the globe and improved their ad revenue substantially while preserving the user experience.

As an independent entity, we strive to stay transparent and have built direct relationships with all the major ad exchanges and DSPs to get the best demand for our publishing partners. We are also a Google NPM partner.

Products:

[Header Bidding Wrapper](#).

[Advanced Ad Refresh](#).

[Video Monetization](#).

[PMP deals](#).

[Reflex](#).

[Google Ad Exchange \(NPM Partner\)](#).

For discussing how we can help you monetize your inventory and drive more ad revenue, contact us - info@automatad.com.

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