How Bauer Media increased revenue by 75% with Permutive

About Bauer Media

Bauer Media is an entertainment network of iconic and innovative multi-platform brands reaching 25 million consumers using insight and instinct to tell stories relevant to audiences and advertisers, delivering cultural impact. Bauer Media is home to more than 50 of the UK's best-loved audio and publishing brands across autos, outdoor, lifestyle, and entertainment — including Parkers, Today's Golfer, CAR, MCN, heat, Closer, Grazia, Empire, Mother & Baby, Take a Break, Magic Radio, Absolute Radio, KISS, and Hits Radio.

The challenge

As advertisers and agencies lose the ability to reach and engage audiences via digital advertising, due to privacy regulations and browser changes, publishers are evaluating their audience and data strategies to fill that gap.

Before adopting Permutive, Bauer Media only sold on contextual targeting, limiting volume and selling into agencies.

The multi-brand and market publisher, also faced challenges with siloes and differing products, complicating efforts to grow their digital presence. Bauer Media needed to move from a brand-centric audience strategy to an audience and portfolio strategy. Despite deep brand knowledge, encouraging teams to sell across the entire portfolio rather than individual brands required a massive internal shift.

In partnership with Permutive, the challenge was to create a scalable product across markets, navigate resource constraints, and foster a comprehensive understanding of the audience approach in a competitive environment to drive revenue and performance.

The solution

Illuminating data

With Permutive as a central component of their data strategy, Bauer successfully executed a project to make Illuminate — Bauer's premium targeted advertising solution across publishing and audio display formats — their default solution.

Using Permutive's Campaign and Audience Insights tool, Bauer can now package unique first-party data and insights for campaigns, drawn from a vast portfolio of lifestyle and specialist brands. For complex advertiser requests, Bauer leverages Permutive's Audience Planning tool.

Challenging stereotypes

Bauer's data-driven campaign approach also challenges traditional stereotypes around their brands and unveils untapped markets. This was substantiated by a brand effectiveness study for a tech brand, demonstrating Illuminate's superior performance with a 20% increase in click-through rate, even though Bauer does not have a tech-focused publication.

Distinguishing themselves from publishers relying solely on the open marketplace, Bauer prioritises programmatic and direct selling and builds long-lasting brand relationships. Using Permutive's platform, Bauer Media leverages data for effective, transparent, and impactful advertising solutions, providing buyers with transparency and detailed post-campaign insights, reporting performance and specifying audience engagement.

Internal buy-in

The initiative required a cultural shift, encouraging sales teams to proactively promote Illuminate, adopt a longer-term perspective, and align strategies with client needs. The team started by collaborating closely with their digitally focused sales team to cultivate internal buy-in, creating a domino effect within the organisation.

"We have seen anything up to a 53% increase in engagement around our ad campaigns since we made the switch to work with Permutive"

Nat Francis, Digital Revenue Operations Director at Bauer Media Group

The results

75%
revenue increase

152%
increase in advertiser (client) count

31%
increase in the average CPM across the network year over year

Bauer Media is seeing incredible results from switching to Permutive and focusing on a brand-centric audience strategy. Results include a revenue increase of 75%, an increase in advertiser (client) count of 152%, and an increase in the average CPM across the network of 31% year over year.

By packaging up data and using data and insights in the Permutive platform at different sales cycle stages (pre, mid, and post), Bauer has seen increased audience engagement in their campaigns.

First-party data is increasingly important in the digital advertising ecosystem to reach highly engaged audiences in a world that can no longer rely on third-party identifiers. Combined with actionable insights at all campaign stages, it unlocks incremental value and delivers performance throughout the funnel.

Using audience data for a campaign for a tech brand resulted in brand recall of 59%, performing significantly better than other channels. Another campaign for a retail brand saw 69% brand awareness, 59% for action taken, and 73% advocacy.

Working with Bauer, an auto brand saw 23% of users more likely to recall seeing ads for the brand versus the control group and 12% more likely to agree that the brand is a leader in electric cars versus the control group.

A books campaign targeting "Book Lovers" saw 1.7% unique ad engagement from an incremental, younger audience (25–44s).

Next steps

Bauer Media is at the forefront of digital advertising with their first-party data strategy and the unique insights they provide advertisers. The publisher is looking forward to providing more sophisticated responses to RFPs through Permutive's tools, such as Audience Plans and building internal tools to build on the foundation of first-party data they have built using Permutive's technology.

Get in touch

hello@permutive.com
NYC: +1 646-712-9383
LDN: 020 3936 8623

Learn more at
www.permutive.com