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1020 Placecast and Targeting Audiences

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ADOTAS EXCLUSIVE — Alistair Goodman, CEO of 1020 Placecast gives Adotas insight to the people behind the vision of the company and an entirely new way to target audiences.

ADOTAS: What truly differentiates Placecast from its competitors?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: 1020 Placecast translates place information into audience profiles, and then delivers integrated campaigns across the Web, mobile, Wi-Fi and email. We are able to build rich profiles of audiences by using a broad range of location data sources – including GPS data, wireless, publisher information and third-party databases. This is an entirely new way to target audiences. On top of this targeting, we add the ability to customize messages dynamically to deliver more relevant campaigns. Taken together, these capabilities offer a number of solutions for both brand and performance advertisers.

Experienced online advertisers know the limitations of contextual and behavioral approaches for audience targeting. Contextual is not much help for sites with dynamic content and behavioral requires mining large amounts of user data which is not particularly predictive, not to mention the privacy concerns and cookie deletion issues. Advertisers who run geo-targeted campaigns can relate to the shortcomings that result from reverse IP lookup as the method of delivery – it can be highly imprecise. Placecast resolves these issues without collecting user information by aggregating many different sources of location information to derive audiences and deliver campaigns.

ADOTAS: Can you give us a little background on the people that make up your management team and why this group will help the company to continue to grow?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: Our team reflects deep competencies in each of the areas we are working in today. Our founders, President Anne Bezancon and CTO Dan Parkes, bring years of product development experience in the content management, Wi-Fi and supply-chain industries. With the addition of time and location components, inventory management and ad serving, the process looks a lot like managing SKU's for a retail store, which is why supply chain experience is critical. Blair Swedeen, our VP of Business Development, has many years of experience working in the mobile and location-based spaces at companies like Navteq. I bring several years understanding of digital media, and we'll soon be announcing another new executive-level hire with deep online advertising and technology experience. With this team and solid expertise throughout our organization, I'm confident that we have the right people in place to succeed.

ADOTAS: How do you ensure the audience you are targeting is relevant to an advertiser?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: This is the heart of our proprietary technology. We begin by working with the advertiser to understand the audience they are trying to reach. We source and process large amounts of location information, then layer on top additional information on demographics, psychographics, purchase patterns, and tie it all to place. This allows us to build audience segments that perform better for advertisers for one simple reason: our place-profiles turn out to be a very strong predictor of relevance and intent. As

human beings, we are only in one place at one time, and our platform gives us the ability to deduce a lot about what might be relevant to that user and deliver it to whatever device they are using to connect to the Web.

For example: an electronics retailer can run a campaign where different products can be showcased on-the-fly within a single creative unit depending on the audience segment (example: a laptop for an on-the-go professional vs. a 50" plasma screen for a more affluent individual). We add even more user relevance by dynamically mapping the nearest retail location directly into the ad. The customized ad can have a click-to-call component in mobile vs. click-to-purchase on the Web or email. At the end of a campaign, the advertiser sees integrated reporting on the audience they reached across each of the different platforms. This closes the loop on validating that we reached the right audience

ADOTAS: Who are your advertisers?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: A strong set of initial advertiser brands are working with us - FedEx Kinko's, Microsoft, Avis and Budget Rental Cars, Hyatt Place, Chanel, Oracle, Sealy and Lufthansa, to name a few. We've also worked successfully with top agencies like Starcom, OMD, Universal McCann, VML and Cramer-Krasselt, among others.

ADOTAS: Do you ever have issues with the wrong users being targeted and if so, how do you minimize this?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: Our objective is to deliver more relevant campaigns for advertisers with less waste. We are continuously incorporating new sources of location data to our platform. With each campaign we run, the system learns and improves its targeting capabilities. Through this process, data sources that do not add value to performance are dropped, giving us a high degree of confidence in our targeting methodology. Initial feedback for our approach from our advertiser partners has been strong and they are measuring us against other providers on a buy.

ADOTAS: Your website says that Placecast Media delivers improved profit margins for agencies. How can you promise this?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: Placecast uses a unique ad tag to deliver, track and report on a single creative strategy, personalized at the impression level across multiple locations. This eliminates the need to traffic multiple campaigns for geo-targeting and develop different creative units for each targeted location on the buy. The system can also simultaneously deliver this creative across any digital platform - Web, mobile, Wi-Fi, email, ipTV and digital out of home. All of these are time savings for advertisers.

ADOTAS: What is the benefit for publishers to use CPM as opposed to CPC, CPA or CPL?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: Our platform is built to maximize publisher eCPM for their inventory. Today, we sell on a CPM basis, but we can optimize to an advertiser's specific performance goal. From publishers' perspectives, CPM campaigns give them a clear understanding of the value they have generated from their inventory.

ADOTAS: How have you seen the current economic situation affect the industry?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: Online has been attracting spending from traditional media because of the increased accountability it can provide and the current economic crisis is only going to reinforce that trend.

Companies will still need to promote their products and online's more advantageous pricing and measurement capabilities make it an even better choice in an economic downturn.

Clearly, sectors directly affected by the current crisis like financial services are decreasing spending. It's a bit early to tell the full impact, but advertisers are beginning to talk about cutting back budget for new marketing tactics, working with fewer providers, and also shifting pure branding spend to more performance-oriented tactics. Since Placecast delivers campaigns simultaneously across multiple platforms, we are able to help advertisers that are consolidating their spend with key partners.

ADOTAS: What is next in development for 1020 Placecast?

ALISTAIR GOODMAN: We're at an exciting point in the lifecycle of the company right now. The underlying technology powering our media solution has proven itself and we are building a critical mass of publishers and advertisers. We're continuing to add deeper reporting and analytics to give advertisers more insights about their campaigns, and looking at additional channels for distribution.

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