Synamedia
IRIS

The Broadcaster's Step-by-Step Guide to Programmatic Advertising Success

Transform your ad revenue with automated, data-driven selling, without losing control of your premium inventory

Programmatic TV Demystified:
Where challenge meets opportunity.

The advertising landscape has fundamentally shifted. While your audience is fragmented across linear, streaming, and digital platforms, advertisers increasingly demand the simplicity, efficiency, and measurement capabilities of programmatic buying.

The Challenge

Traditional TV buying processes can't compete with the speed, accessibility, targeting, and accountability of digital platforms. Advertisers are shifting their budgets toward channels that enable agile buying and provide clear ROI.

The Opportunity

Broadcasters who embrace programmatic unlock new revenue streams, attract digital-native advertisers, and maximize yield from every impression — all while maintaining the premium value of TV inventory.

Key Takeaway

Advertisers want the precision, speed, and accountability of digital — broadcasters who adopt programmatic now can capture new budgets and protect premium CPMs.

1. Why This Matters for Your Business

CTV programmatic spending reached **$48 billion in 2025**, up 15% year-over-year [1]

Broadcasters using programmatic report **30-50% higher CPMs** compared to traditional linear sales [2]

74% of new-to-TV advertisers come through programmatic channels [3]

2. What is Programmatic Advertising?

A simple definition

Programmatic advertising uses automated technology to buy and sell ad inventory in real time, replacing traditional manual buying with data-driven, dynamic transactions. Instead of phone calls, emails, and manual insertion orders, programmatic uses algorithms to match advertisers with the right audiences at the right price — instantly.

The Synamedia Approach

Not all programmatic is created equal. While digital advertising often relies on open auctions with limited quality control, broadcasters require a different approach — one that combines the precision and efficiency of automation with TV's premium standards : a trusted brand environment, professionally produced content, engaged audiences, premium formats, controlled ad load, and mass reach.

Key Takeaway

Programmatic replaces manual selling with automated, data - driven deals. Broadcasters should focus on **premium options** like **Programmatic Guaranteed and Private Marketplaces** - not open auctions — to protect quality and CPMs.

Why Premium Programmatic Matters

The Synamedia Solution: Controlled Trading Automation

We believe broadcasters should never choose between automation benefits and premium quality. Our platform enables only programmatic transactions that maintain broadcasters' control over their ad monetisation:

- **Private Marketplaces (PMPs):** Control which advertisers access your inventory, set minimum pricing thresholds, and maintain the same quality standards as your direct sales — while benefiting from automated execution and real-time optimisation.

- **Programmatic Guaranteed (PG) Deals:** Secure committed revenue from premium advertisers with automated campaign delivery, dynamic optimisation, and guaranteed performance — eliminating manual trafficking while preserving premium partnerships.

- **OpenRTB Protocol:** Leverage industry-standard automation technology while maintaining full control over brand safety, creative approval, and inventory positioning.

3. How Programmatic Works for Linear TV

Traditional Linear TV Buying	Programmatic Linear TV
Advertisers call your sales team	Automated bidding and buying
Manual negotiations on price and placement	Real-time buying with full broadcaster control via PG or PMP deals
Fixed campaigns with limited targeting	Household-level targeting using data (demographics, behaviour, contextual...)
General audience demographics (e.g.: adults 25-54)	Dynamic ad insertion based on viewer profiles

Key Takeaway
Addressable, programmatic linear TV lets you deliver different ads to different households – combining the targeting power of digital with TV's premium reach.

Making Linear TV Addressable

Your linear inventory becomes programmable when you can:

1. Recognise audiences using anonymised unique identifiers derived from set-top box data, smart TV, IDs, or streaming app activity.

2. Segment audiences based on demographics, location, viewing habits, and interests

3. Insert different ads for different households watching the same program

4. Measure results at the household and campaign level

How a Programmatic Ad Break Actually Works

This entire process happens faster than it takes to read this paragraph

STEP 1

A viewer tunes into your content

STEP 2

Your system identifies the viewer and available ad slot

STEP 3

The most relevant campaign is selected in milliseconds from your pre-approved advertisers

STEP 4

The winning ad is dynamically inserted into the stream

STEP 5

Performance data is captured, reported and independently verified by third parties to support optimisation

4. Essential Tools for Programmatic Success

Ad Decisioning Engine

Key Takeaway

SSAI, advanced ad decisioning, and strong API integrations work together to deliver seamless ads, smarter targeting, and automated execution — all while protecting your brand.

What it does

Decides in real time which ad to deliver, based on audience data, rates, and your campaign rules.

Why it matters

- **Smarter targeting:** Serve the right ad to the right household at the right moment.
- **Frequency capping:** Prevent viewers from seeing the same ad too often
- **Brand safety:** Ensure ads meet your quality standards and appear in appropriate contexts.
- **Yield optimisation:** Maximise revenue by increasing fill rates and prioritising high-value ads for premium audiences

Business impact:

Programmatic advertising revenue rose 18% to $134.8 billion in 2024, driven by automated, AI-powered ad buying and real-time targeting. [4]

Looking ahead, by 2027, 94% of advertising revenue is expected to be influenced by AI technologies, including advanced ad decisioning systems that optimize outcomes in programmatic and video environments. [5]

Server-Side Ad Insertion (SSAI)

What it does

Decides in real time which ad to deliver, based on audience data, bids, and your campaign rules.

Why it matters

- **Seamless playback:** Ads run as smoothly as your content — no buffering, or awkward pauses.
- **Works everywhere:** Consistent experience across all devices.
- **Blocks ad blockers:** Ads become part of the content stream, protecting your revenue.
- **Enables personalisation:** Delivers relevant ads to each household with no extra buffering.

Why viewers care:

SSAI preserves a high-quality viewing experience. With programmatic and SSAI, audiences get fewer repeats and more relevant ads — keeping them engaged and loyal.

Business impact:

Content completion rates increased by 5% to 10% for videos with ads inserted by Server-Side Ad Insertion (SSAI), compared to other methods. (6)

Global video ad revenue generated through SSAI is projected to grow at a 20.3% CAGR — from $3.1 billion in 2024 to $14.5 billion by 2033. (7)

It underscores how SSAI is transforming monetisation in live and on-demand streaming through improved ad delivery and targeting.

API Integration

What it does

APIs connect your systems with external programmatic platforms, automating workflows and reporting.

Why it matters

- **Always-on inventory:** Make your ad slots available to buyers in real time.

- **Faster deals:** Automate campaign setup, approvals, and updates.

- **Real-time data:** Deliver performance reporting to advertisers and your own teams.

Business impact:

API-driven workflows reduce manual tasks and unlock more revenue opportunities by making your inventory visible to more buyers.

5. The Programmatic Business Benefits

Key Takeaway
Programmatic opens access to digital-first buyers, and delivers better targeting, faster deals, and actionable insights — helping you grow faster with less manual effort.

Revenue Growth

- **Access new demand:** Bring in digital-first advertisers who wouldn't buy through traditional sales alone.

- **Premium pricing:** Household-level targeting commands **30–50% higher** CPMs than broad, untargeted spots. [8]

- **Better fill rates:** Automated selling reduces unsold inventory by **20–40%**.

Operational Efficiency

- **Less manual work:** Automate campaign setup, trafficking and reporting.

- **Faster deal cycles:** Launch campaigns in minutes instead of weeks.

- **Streamlined operations:** Manage linear, CTV, and digital inventory in one system.

Enhanced Targeting Capabilities

- **Household precision:** Serve ads based on demographics, location, or purchase intent.

- **Behavioural insights:** Reach audiences by what they watch, when they watch, and how they engage.

- **Cross-screen consistency:** Run unified campaigns across live TV, VOD, and digital.

Data and Insights

- **Real-time analytics:** See how campaign performance instantly and adjust mid-flight.

- **Deeper audience understanding:** Unlock richer viewer insights to strengthen future campaigns.

- **Continuous Optimisations:** Use real data to refine targeting, pricing, and inventory strategies.

6. Getting Started:
Your Implementation Roadmap

Key Takeaway
A phased rollout — assess, build, pilot, scale — keeps risk low and impact high. Start small, prove results, then expand.

Phase 1:
Assessment and Planning (Weeks 1-4)

Phase 2:
Foundation Building (Weeks 5-12)

Inventory Audit:

- Catalog all available inventory (linear, VOD, streaming)
- Identify addressable vs. non-addressable content
- Calculate potential programmatic revenue based on current unsold inventory

Data Readiness:

- Assess your viewer data quality and compliance status
- Ensure GDPR/privacy regulation compliance
- Identify data gaps that need addressing

Technology Review:

- Audit ad serving, insertion (SSAI/CSAI), and delivery infrastructure
- Evaluate ad decisioning platforms and integration needs
- Identify integration points with ad exchanges, SSPs, and measurement & verification partners

Technology Implementation:

- Deploy the appropriate ad insertion technology across your content delivery systems (SSAI or CSAI)
- Implement ad decisioning platform
- Establish API connections with selected programmatic partners

Team Training:

- Train ad operations team on new workflows
- Educate sales team on programmatic value propositions
- Establish new KPIs and reporting processes

Testing Environment:

- Create sandbox environment for testing campaigns
- Establish quality assurance processes
- Define brand safety and inventory controls

Phase 3:
Pilot Launch (Weeks 13-16)

Phase 4:
Scale and Expand (Weeks 17+)

Controlled Testing:

- Launch with 2-3 trusted advertiser partners
- Test 10-20% of available inventory initially
- Monitor performance metrics closely

Performance Optimization:

- Analyse early results and adjust targeting parameters
- Refine audience segments based on performance data
- Optimise yield management rules

Inventory Expansion:

- Gradually increase percentage of programmatic inventory
- Add new content types and dayparts
- Explore premium programmatic products (private marketplaces)

Partner Ecosystem Growth:

- Onboard additional SSP partners
- Integrate with measurement and verification partners
- Explore data partnerships for enhanced targeting

7. Success Metrics to Track

Revenue Metrics

- Overall ad revenue growth
- CPM improvements
- Fill rate increases
- New advertiser acquisition

Operational Metrics

- Time from campaign brief to launch
- Campaign setup automation percentage
- Reporting and optimization efficiency

Quality Metrics

- Viewer experience scores
- Ad completion rates
- Campaign performance metrics (e.g., CTR, view-through conversions, ROAS)
- Fill rates and demand utilisation
- Attribution accuracy and reporting quality

8. Conclusion: Your Next Step

Programmatic advertising isn't just another channel — it's a smarter, faster way to grow ad revenue while protecting the premium value of your TV inventory.

Broadcasters who adopt it today are capturing new digital budgets, commanding higher CPMs, and delivering a viewing experience that keeps audiences loyal — even as competition for attention grows.

Key takeaways:

- Unlock new revenue streams from digital-first buyers.
- Keep premium rates and brand safety under your control.
- Automate the heavy lifting — from trafficking to targeting to reporting.
- Early adopters see 30–50% revenue lifts plus operational savings. (10)

Key Takeaway

Programmatic isn't optional — it's your path to stay competitive, protect premium value, and grow ad revenue in a digital-first world.
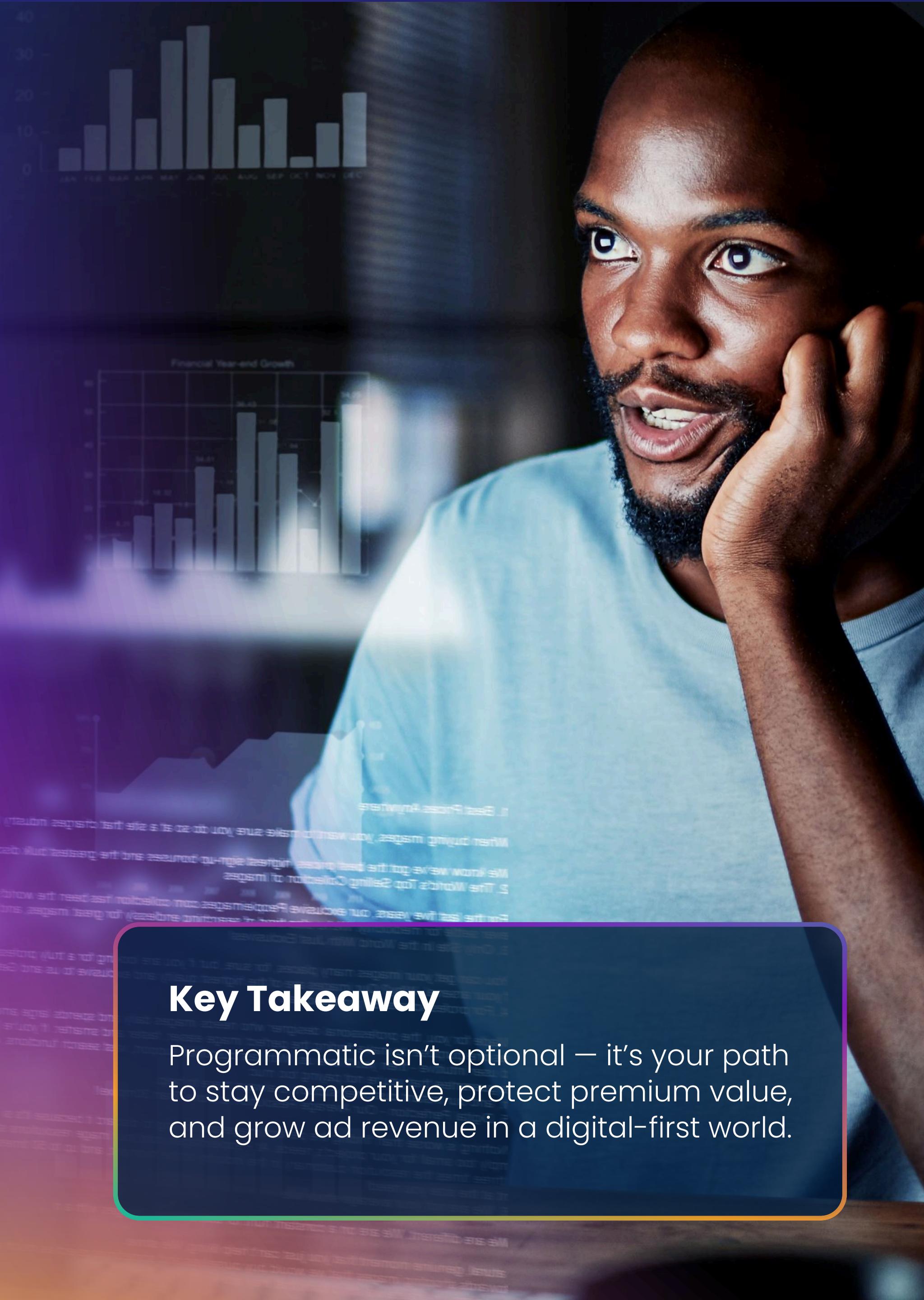
9. Ready to See it in Action?

See how Synamedia Iris can help

Experience firsthand how our unified programmatic platform — with SSAI, advanced ad decisioning, and seamless APIs — makes it simple to tap into new digital budgets while protecting your premium inventory.

Connect with our experts →

Define your objectives together

Experience a free personalised demo →
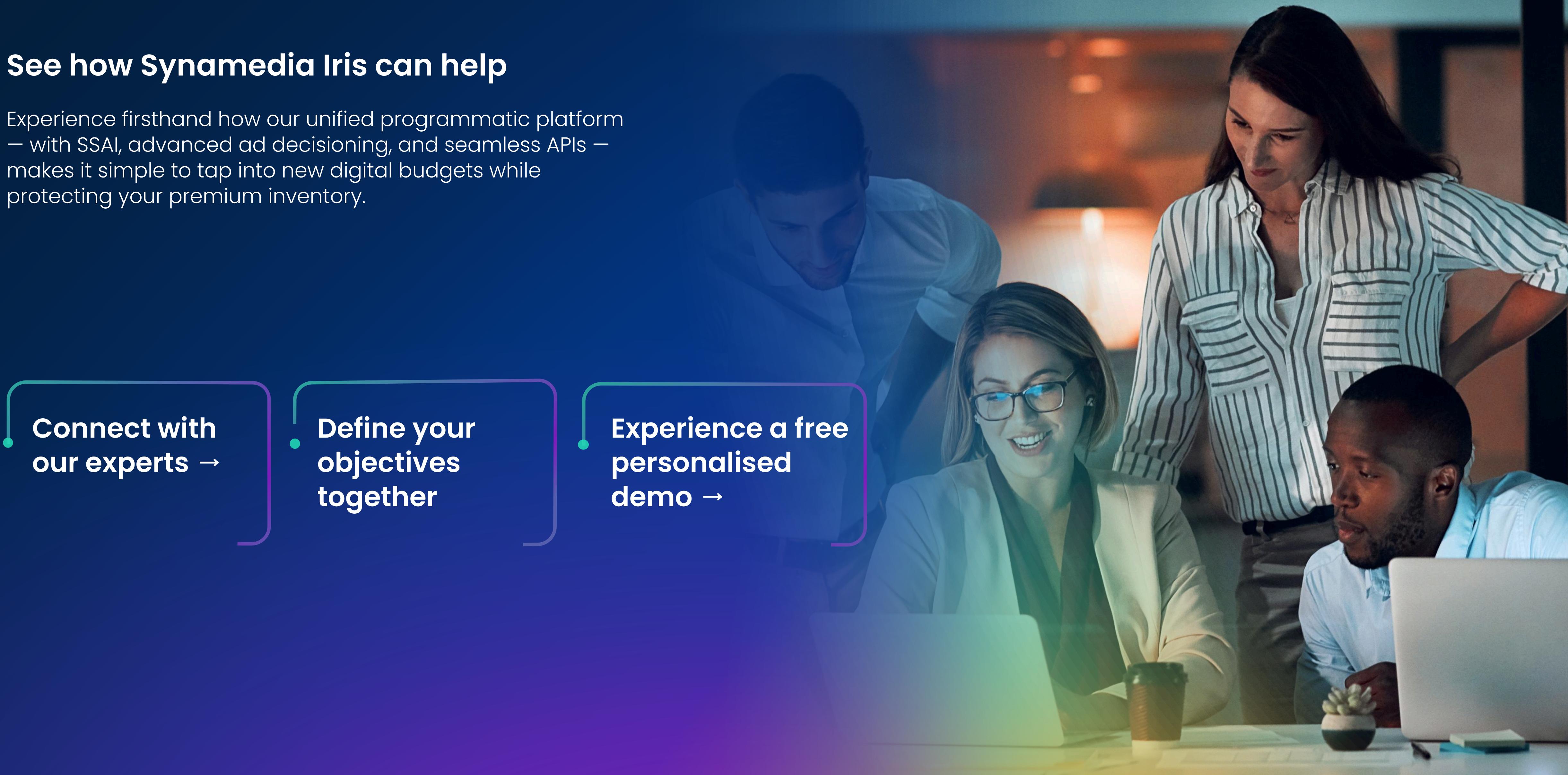
101 Programmatic Glossary

Ad Exchange - A real-time and automated digital marketplace where advertisers and publishers buy and sell ad inventory. It connects demand-side platforms (DSPs) with supply-side platforms (SSPs) to enable efficient, data-driven ad transactions at scale.

Ad Network - A company or platform, acting as an intermediary, that bundles ad inventory from various publishers and sells it to advertisers. often applying its own targeting and optimization before delivery.

API (Application Programming Interface) - A system-to-system interface that uses defined rules and protocols (typically over HTTP or file-based delivery) to enable communication between software applications. APIs allow developers to access specific features or data from another service without needing to understand its internal logic.

Brand Safety – Protecting a brand's reputation by ensuring ads appear in appropriate, non-controversial environments. In addressable and programmatic TV, this includes avoiding unsuitable content and managing ad placements through tools like targeting and clash controls.

CPM (Cost Per Mille) – The cost an advertiser pays per 1,000 ad impressions, widely used to measure cost efficiency in brand awareness campaigns.

CPA (Cost Per Action) – A pricing model where advertisers pay only when a specific action (e.g., purchase or signup) occurs, aligning spend directly with measurable outcomes.

DAI (Dynamic Ad Insertion) – Technology that inserts targeted, personalized ads in real time into live, linear, or on-demand video streams. It enables broadcasters to deliver relevant ads based on data like location or viewing behavior, enhancing viewer engagement and monetization without disrupting the experience.

Direct-Sold – Refers to ad inventory sold directly by the publisher or broadcaster to an advertiser or marketing agency, without involving third-party intermediaries, such as programmatic platforms or ad exchanges.

DMP (Data Management Platform) - Provides infrastructure for the housing and capture of user data that acts as a source for building targeting groups, i.e. addressable audiences

Dynamic Ad Decisioning – Real-time selection of the most relevant ad for a viewer, based on data like behavior, location, and device. It enables personalized, addressable ads across all video platforms.

DSP (Demand-Side Platform) – Buy-side technology that allows buyers to purchase digital advertising inventory programmatically.

101 Programmatic Glossary

Private Marketplace (PMP) – A closed, invitation-only programmatic auction where premium inventory is made available to select buyers. Prices and delivery terms are agreed upon like direct sales, but transactions occur via real-time bidding (RTB) instead of traditional ad serving protocols (e.g., VAST).

RTB (Real-Time Bidding) – A programmatic, on-the-spot auction process where individual ad impressions are offered for bid in real time, similar to financial markets. RTB enables addressable advertising by allowing advertisers to target consumers based on demographic, psychographic, or behavioral data.

SSAI (Server-Side Ad Insertion) – A method of inserting ads into video streams on the server side, creating a seamless viewing experience and reducing the risk of ad blockers. It delivers content and ads as one continuous stream.

SSP (Supply-Side Platform) – A platform that helps publishers manage, sell and optimise their ad inventory programmatically. It connected to multiple Demand Side Platforms (DSPs) to maximise revenue.

Waterfalling – A sequential method of selling inventory, often replaced by header bidding in digital environments.

Yield Management – The process of maximizing ad revenue through dynamic pricing, fill optimization, and strategic inventory allocation.

Sources

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4. IAB, 2024, Internet Advertising Revenue Report

5. Conviva study, 2023

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7. Data Insights Market report, Decoding Market Trends in Server-Side Ad Insertion: 2025-2033

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Future-proof your broadcast ad revenue