COLLABORATION CORNER: URBAN SCIENCE & VDX.TV

Q&A with Carl Matter, Urban Science

VDX.tv's latest collaboration with Urban Science leverages their data-driven audience segments (specifically new vehicle purchasers and leasees) and helps advertisers in the automotive industry target the right audiences and measure advertising impact. Carl Matter from Urban Science shares more about the company's deep expertise in the Q&A below.

CAN YOU GIVE OUR READERS A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF WHAT URBAN SCIENCE DOES?

Urban Science is a collection of dedicated business problem solvers who has been deeply vested within the automotive vertical with over 40 years of experience. Through the majority of our history, we have focused on helping OEMs understand where to place their dealerships as well as how those dealerships are performing. As a result, Urban Science has a unique set of automotive data sourced directly from the automakers and automotive purchase expertise, covering over 99% of new vehicle purchases* in the U.S. and is updated as frequently as daily, in many cases.

Within the marketing realm, we focus on connecting this data in an anonymous and permissible fashion to automotive marketing efforts across channels. Our end goal is to help all auto marketers improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their efforts to ultimately yield improved performance for the OEMs, dealer groups or dealers for whom they are working.

Purchases refers to vehicle unit sales and does not represent vehicle price or revenue.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES THAT AUTOMOTIVE OEMS FACE TODAY WHEN IT COMES TO DIGITAL MARKETING?

Automotive is an interesting vertical. For many people, it represents the 2nd biggest purchase they will make, which is why marketers collectively spend billions of dollars every year trying to drive automotive sales. The interesting piece, however, and a significant challenge for the OEMs, is that when it comes to digital, those investments are being made with little to no understanding of the actual sales conversions they are connected to.

In auto, the speed of marketing has long outpaced the speed of sales data. In addition, the ability to connect sales data to marketing exposures remains a challenge even today in 2020, let alone at a cadence that's fast enough to impact either a live campaign or the subsequent round of campaigns being planned. Taking Urban Science data and developing strategic collaborations, like VDX.tv, provides a unique opportunity to help with this challenge and it's exciting to be on the forefront of this conversation!

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES OEMS HAVE TO ENGAGE THE RIGHT AUDIENCES?

OEMs are in the best position they ever have been to understand who their audiences actually are. Some are taking the first step and are leveraging their own purchase data to inform their marketing efforts, but they could take this even further by incorporating industry-wide data that can help them evolve into a truly data-driven strategy. Many pay lip service to this concept, but few execute against it. The more marketers can move away from profiling who they think will buy, who they want to buy and what brands they think they are competing with, they will be in position to really let the data drive their decisions.

Urban Science has fielded many requests to target specific brands or specific profiles, such as millennials, because that's where the opportunity is perceived to be. In actuality, it doesn't matter what was purchased last, it matters what will be purchased next. If as a marketer you bring a new customer to your brand, does it matter if their last vehicle was in your "competitive set?" Urban Science looks at numerous variables within its data to produce a score that tells whether an individual is in market – and mostly importantly, who is likely to buy. Whether it's Urban Science or another data source, the more OEMs let the data decide who they should market to and when, it will give them the best opportunity to insure they are talking to the right audience at any given time. Also, the more they coordinate their audiences across tiers the more effective their results will be.

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WHAT QUALITIES DOES URBAN SCIENCE VALUE IN A COLLABORATION?

One of our central tenants as a company is to make sure our work is ultimately bringing benefit to the OEMs. Urban Science has always been committed to a client-first approach, so we look for collaborators who are committed to bringing the best solutions to their clients. Working with companies, such as VDX.tv, that share that philosophy makes for the best long-term collaborations. It's so much more gratifying to be able to come together with the end-client's goal in mind. The shared desire to innovate and work together make it fun each day to take steps towards a better future. The great thing about digital is that it's always changing so flexibility and adaptability are key. The best collaborators are mindful of the capabilities that exist today, but not at the expense of what we might need tomorrow.

> **"It's supposed to be hard. If it wasn't hard, everyone would do it. The hard is what makes it great."**

ARE THERE ANY MOTTOS THAT DRIVE YOUR WORK AT URBAN SCIENCE?

"It's supposed to be hard. If it wasn't hard, everyone would do it. The hard is what makes it great." As lifelong baseball fan, this quote from A League of Their Own reminds me that greatness is on the other side of the effort. We don't like to take no for an answer, especially if the reason is, "we've always done it this way." It makes it exciting to work for a place the shares my love for innovation and figuring out a better way.

If you'd like to talk to someone about Urban Science and the power of Media Performance, call or email me. And let us show you how we can apply the power of science to your challenges.

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