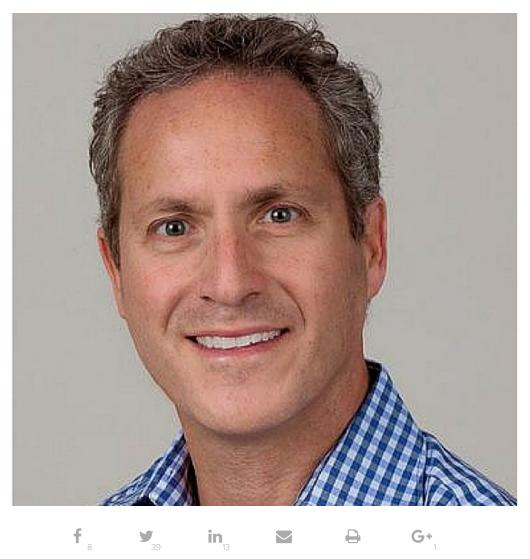**MediaVillage**
The Perceptions Engine

Eric Bader of Transparent Media Partners -- The Ad Automation and Programmatic Confidantes

BY **JAY SEARS**   JUNE 09, 2016   **RUBICON PROJECT ARCHIVES**

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In a series of conversations with the leading confidants and consultants in the ad automation and programmatic area, Jay Sears, Senior Vice President Marketplace Development of Rubicon Project, discusses trends and issues of the day impacting advertisers and media owners. n this interview, Sears speaks with Eric Bader, partner at Transparent Media Partners. Bader has served in a variety of roles prior to Transparent, including CMO of ad tech company RadiumOne and Managing Director of Digital at MediaVest Worldwide.

(Editor's Note: Be sure to read the first installment of this series -- **Jay's interview with Jon Mandel of Dogsled Enterprises***.)*

Your Name: Eric Bader

Your Company: Transparent Media Partners

Your Title: Partner

SEARS: What do you read to keep up with politics, art and culture?

BADER: The New York Times, The New Yorker, Vanity Fair, Politico, ESPN the Magazine

SEARS: What do you read to keep up with friends?

BADER: Text messages, a silly amount of email

SEARS: What do you read to keep up with the advertising technology industry?

BADER: AdExchanger, Wall Street Journal, Business Insider, AdAge

SEARS: What's your favorite commercial of all time?

BADER: Can't be just one. **Dos Equis: Most Interesting Man in the World**, **Old Spice: The Man Your Man Could Smell Like** and **Sony: The Super Balls spot**.

SEARS: With regards to advertising automation, what are the three biggest trends you expect to impact companies in 2016?

BADER:

1. Transparency of fees, methodologies and measurements
2. Operationalizing marketing automation to realize the performance benefits
3. Identifying and implementing unified, simplified and compatible platforms.

SEARS: With regards to advertising automation, what are the three most overblown topics that you wish would just go away?

BADER:

1. IoT strategy
2. Viral strategy
3. Mobile-first strategy

Does anybody know what a strategy actually is??

SEARS: Describe your firm and then tell us the three most common issues you help clients on with respect to advertising automation and programmatic trading.

BADER: Transparent is an objective buy-side advisor that helps brand marketers understand the full range of costs, regain control of their data and restore their media investments back into working media. We help them navigate the vast, complicated landscape of marketing technologies to choose compatible technology systems and then implement and operationalize them to increase their marketing performance.

The three most common issues are:

1. The need for brand marketers to control, centralize and activate their own data

2. Lack of transparency and efficiency in marketing technologies and operations

3. Visibility into and understanding of how to select new marketing technology systems

QUESTION	ANSWER
How many employees does your firm have?	10
Where is your headquarters?	Chicago, with San Francisco developing fast.
Where are you located?	San Francisco
When was your firm started?	2015
Approximately what percentage of client engagement dollars are spent to address ad automation and related issues?	100%... because it's what we do.
Do any markets outside your home market account for more than 10% of overall billings?	EMEA emerging

SEARS: What are the most common issues you help clients on regarding automation?

BADER:

1. Data: Separating the signals from the noise, understanding costs and taking control

2. Activation: Architecting compatible systems that will impact ad performance

3. Independence: Freedom from rev-share influence, arbitrage, rebates, kickbacks, volume bonuses -- all the things that siphon media dollars away from working media.

SEARS: The majority of ad technology companies have struggled (relatively small, unprofitable or both). Of the poor performers, what are the commonalities between them that have contributed to this weakness?

BADER: Mis-playing the managed service and self-service platform opportunities. Mixed priorities for selling through agencies and going direct to clients. Mobile as an after-thought. Low R&D spending.

SEARS: A smaller handful of ad technology companies has achieved scale and performed better than the rest. What are the commonalities between them that have contributed to this relative strength?

BADER: Relatively transparent operations. Clear go-to-market strategies with tech investments to support them. Not trashing their margins to grab revenue and market share.

SEARS: Do we live in a "tale of two cities" where Google and Facebook win almost everything, advertisers are dictated to and other media companies fight for the scraps?

BADER: Yeah, pretty much. But, publishers and media owners need to take back the share that GOOG and FB can't serve as well or efficiently and there's more of that than may be apparent. That said, there are still billions moving though the rest of the ecosystem. The game's not over (but hurry up).

SEARS: Please answer the following statements yes or no.

BADER:

STATEMENT	Yes or No	One Sentence Explanation [Optional]
Google will remain a dominant company for the next 10 years	Yes	It's *yuuuge*
Google will remain a dominant company for the next 20 years	Yes	Reg data.
Amazon is a data company	Yes	Data, Data, Data
Facebook will remain a dominant company for the next 10 years	Yes	Billions served.
Facebook will remain a dominant company for the next 20 years	Yes	Reg data.
Chinese Internet companies such as Alibaba will become active buyers and/or investors in US based Internet companies in the next two years	Sorta	Invest yes, buy probably less-so.
Yahoo! is dead	Yes, technically	The parts will be worth more than people expect though.
Less than 20 companies on the "Lumascape" are of a material size and	No	Very few have revenue above $100 million. They may not necessarily be

these companies will behave as the consolidators of the group.		the consolidators. Capitol burn will take out as many companies as consolidation will. Isn't Verizon just going to buy everything?
Ad technology is not well understood by investors	No	Why Transparent exists!
The impact of ad automation to date has largely been in digitally traded media, however impacts of automation will be felt across the entire $600 billion worldwide media market over the next five years including the out of home and television markets.	Yes	Most planning and buying processes for all types of media have either outstripped human capacity or are currently inefficient or insufficient.
Ad automation will start to materially impact media trading in the $70 billion US television market in the next two years.	Yes	In impressions, inventory, transactions and data.
Ad automation improves (or can improve) the direct trading relationship between a media company and an advertiser—by improving efficiency (workflow) and effectiveness (leveraging data).	Yes	God, yes. Transparency, visibility, performance.

SEARS: If you could go to the airport *right now* with friends or family and fly anywhere in the world for vacation, who would you take and where would you go?

BADER: Meribel, France, which means skiing the three valleys: Meribel, Val d'Isere and Tignes all at once.

SEARS: If you could create an endowment to fund any existing non-profit you designated, what lucky non-profit organization would that be?

BADER: Not a specific non-profit by name, but I am totally in support of developing literacy, making college accessible and affordable, providing valuable job skills and enforcing human rights.

SEARS: What is your favorite restaurant in the world?

BADER: The Spotted Pig. Bonus: The best meal I ever had was in some place in Jerusalem that I'll never remember the name of.

SEARS: Thanks, Eric!

(Editor's Note: Do know a leading ad automation consultant in the ad automation and programmatic area advising advertisers and media companies that Sears should consider interviewing? Tell him here.)

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Jay Sears

Jay Sears was Senior Vice President Marketplace Development for Rubicon Project, where he worked with management and business unit heads across the company to expand Rubicon Project's market -- and across the media owner and adver... read more

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