

How Directopub and Grindr partnered to shake industry standards and create

A TRUE PUBLISHER-DIRECT ADVERTISING SOLUTION

Executive Summary

Since exploding onto the dating app scene in 2009, Grindr has established itself as the undoubted market leader, with a brand that is strong enough to make it a household name. The sheer size of Grindr's audience, combined with the Strength of its brand has made the App a unique option for advertisers.

Through the power of Bucksense's Directopub, Grindr now offers its ad inventory - directly and at scale - to advertisers of all sizes, budgets, regions, and expertise.

The challenge

As most brand name publishers do, Grindr sells its ad inventory directly on a rate card. But given the high demand, it was impossible to serve all incoming requests below a certain minimum spend and Grindr's sales team had to prioritize big budget advertisers.

Smaller clients left to buy ad inventory via either ad networks or the programmatic funnel (DSP/SSP/Ad Exchange). The drawback was that these channels can take up to 40% of the ad revenue from the publisher and not all advertisers had the expertise to buy using complicated platforms.

Partnering for a solution

Grindr reached out to Bucksense, a leading player in the ad tech space, for their publisher direct product, Directopub. Directopub is an industry changing solution that increases revenue, reduces ad tech fees and gives publishers such as Grindr, more yield, control, and transparency over who buys their ad inventory.

Directopub provided Grindr with a customized offering that fulfilled all these needs.

Immediate impact

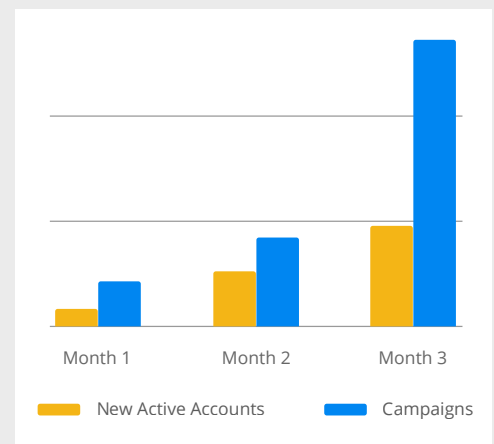
Within 90 days of launching the service, Grindr saw unprecedented growth as large volumes of advertisers created self-serve accounts and ran direct campaigns. It also eliminated costly revenue shares and saw eCPMs increase by as much as 6 times compared to programmatic channels.

The service also improved Grindr's fill rate, reached advertisers from all over the world, and generated leads for the direct sales team.

RESULTS



Increased direct accounts/campaigns



Higher eCPMS





"One of the most impressive results is the volume of direct campaigns we now run through the self-serve interface. Without it, it would be impossible to handle direct sales on this scale!"

- Nico Zhang, of Grindr.

The Case

Background: Taking on ad industry that is set up to tax the publisher

In May 2018, everything was looking great for Grindr as one of the top Apps in programmatic with billions of bid requests per day. Its internal ad sales team had more demand for direct deals than it could possibly handle. So much demand in fact that it had been forced to turn down orders under \$30k worth of ad spend.

But Grindr was growing frustrated at not being able to serve these advertisers below the minimum budget. Many of them were left to navigate the complex programmatic and several were left in the way.

"It is seemingly, a great situation to be in as a publisher or in any business: To have so much demand that you turn down sales because you simply don't have the manpower to serve them. And yet, that was our situation. We had no option but to send many customers to third party companies and sacrifice a significant share of revenue in doing so. And that's why we reached out to Bucksense."

- Nico Zhang, of Grindr.

Grindr and Bucksense agreed that there must be a better way for publishers to serve advertisers at scale. Upon this, Bucksense set about customizing its white label product, Directopub, to serve Grindr's unique needs.

"Cutting out the middlemen simply makes sense for the main parties involved. Grindr shares our vision that proper technology should enable advertisers of all budgets to reach publishers directly, rather than adding complexity to what should be a relatively simple process."

- Cristian Carnevale, CEO of Bucksense.

The goal of Directopub was clear. They would provide Grindr with:

	
A direct to publisher platform, that integrates with the existing ad stack to:	
SELL INVENTORY DIRECTLY	▶ A Grindr branded interface
ACHIEVE SCALE OF DIRECT SALES	▶ Self-serve campaigns
SELL AT RATE CARD	▶ Grindr determined inventory prices
SELL WITHOUT REVENUE SPLITS	▶ No third party vendors
CREATE NEW RELATIONSHIPS	▶ Serve smaller advertisers with little experience

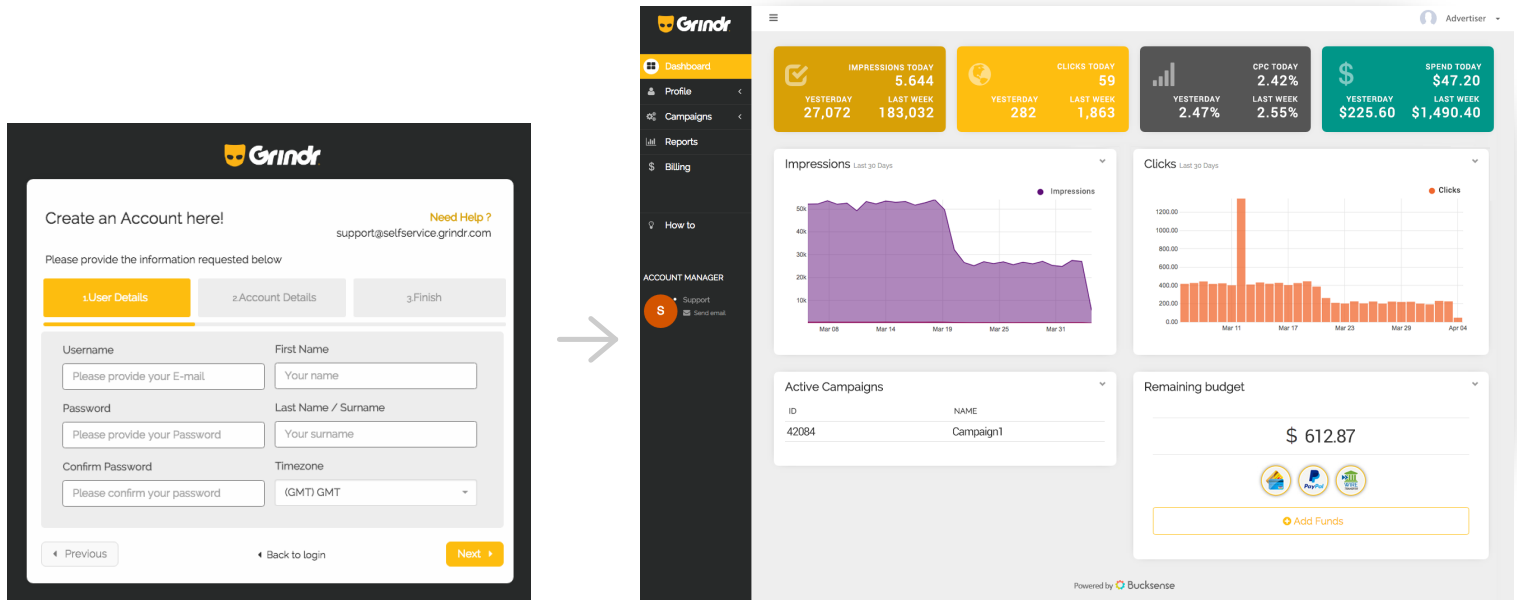
Solution components

A self-branded direct-to-publisher platform

A Grindr branded platform offering, with a customized interface and URLs. Advertisers would access the platform directly from the Grindrads.com and sign up for self-serve accounts.

A self-serve campaign management platform

A platform that would require no minimum spends and whose features were customized to match the expertise levels of Grindr's advertisers. This would enable advertisers of any skill level or budget to run self-serve direct campaigns.



Advertisers follow a smooth sign up process to set up their accounts and run self-serve ad campaigns.

Publisher control

Grindr would have full control over all aspects of the interface such as rate card prices, terms of use, creative policies, and reports available to advertisers.

The expertise of the Bucksense team

Along with the interface offering, Directopub would provide a catalog of value added services to ensure smooth functioning.

Grindr could pick and choose which services they want managed by Directopub, including but not limited to:

 <p>Advertiser IO's & Sign Ups Automated system for account creation & IO's.</p>	 <p>Auditing of Creatives Manually auditing all ads as per Grindr's creative policies.</p>	 <p>Reporting Real time reports. No manual pull of excel files.</p>	 <p>Billing Management of all billing functions.</p>	 <p>Customer Service A dedicated team available 24/7.</p>
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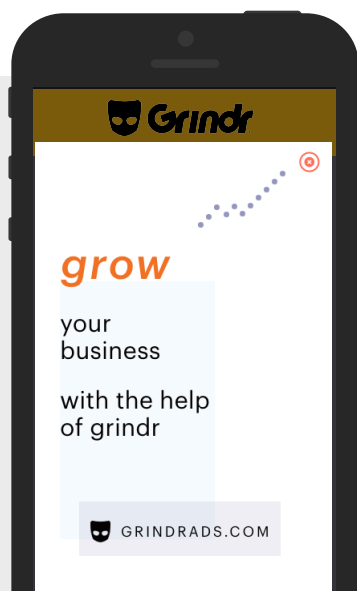
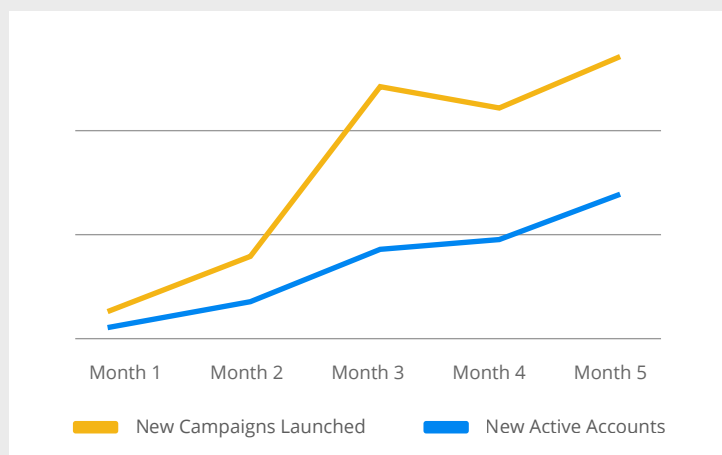
Results that hit all the objectives

Less than a month after agreeing on the specifications, Directopub delivered the customized interface and the service was launched. For Grindr, the benefits were immediate.

Direct campaign growth and scale

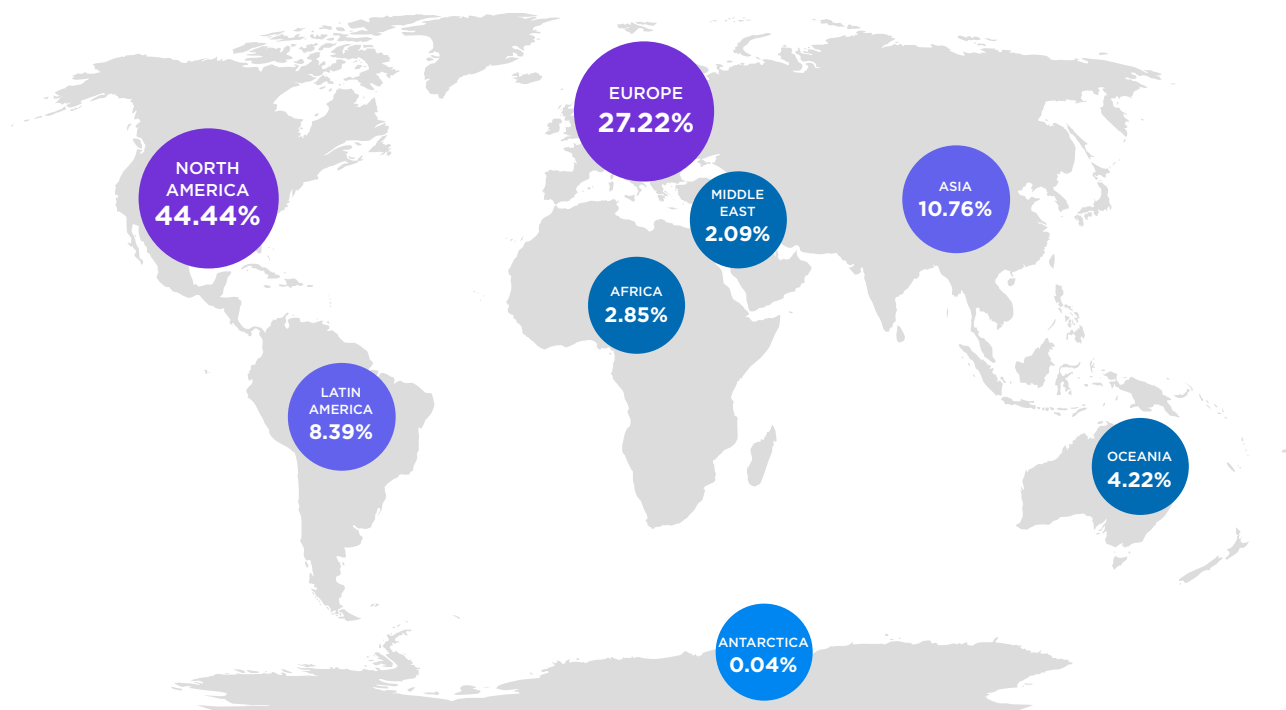
Grindr advertised the service on their own App. Advertisers responded immediately by signing up by the hundreds in a few days.

The number of sign ups and campaigns launched has kept growing steadily ever since.



Direct reach worldwide

After launch Grindr had achieved unprecedented global reach and had connected and sold inventory directly to advertisers in over 120 different countries, across all continents. For the first time geographical location, time zone and language were not barriers for running direct campaigns. Additionally, the service provided Grindr's sales team with new leads.

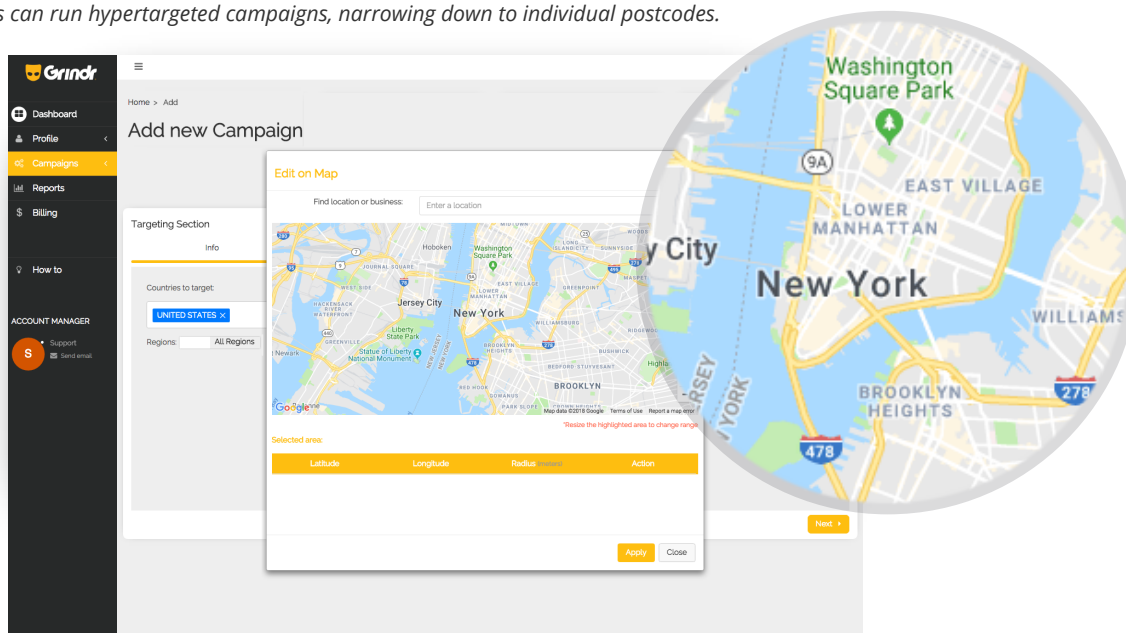
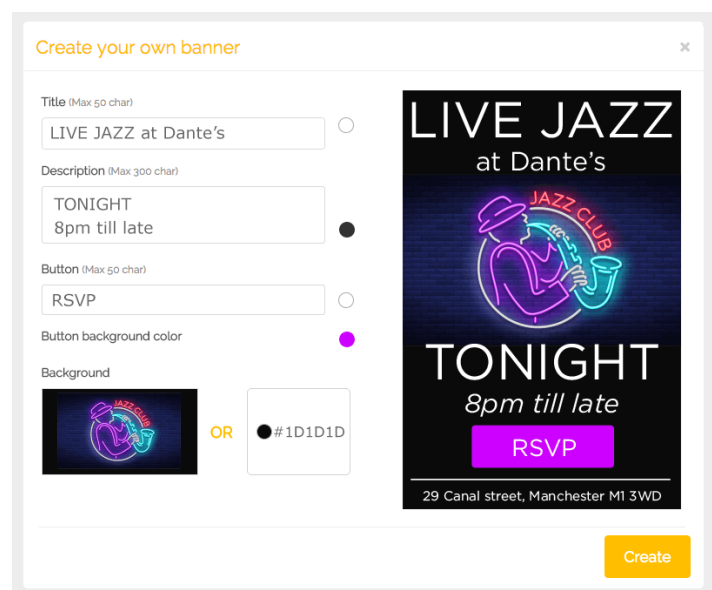


With local relevance

With the new service, smaller, regionally remote advertisers are now setting up their own direct campaigns. The platform allows them to target specific regions, cities, postal codes and even certain lat-lon radius. This feature has been incredibly valuable for hyper localized campaigns that promote local businesses such as events, shops, and entertainment venues.

Smaller advertisers running campaigns on Grindr has also created a better experience for users as they are seeing more ads from local businesses they know which brings a more relevant and personalized feel to the app.

Advertisers can run hypertargeted campaigns, narrowing down to individual postcodes.



No creative? No problem!

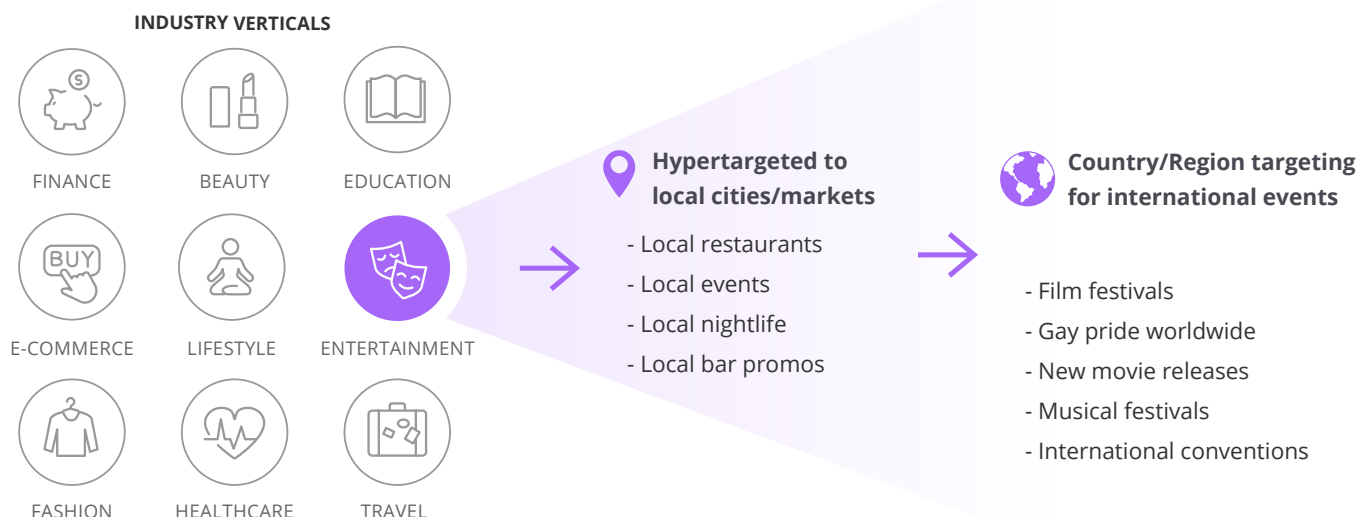
Directopub offers an easy to use ad creation tool that enables advertisers with no design experience to build beautiful creatives.

This has been especially important for smaller advertisers who don't have budgets to hire graphic designers.

The easy-to-use interface enables advertisers with no design experience to create ad units.

Serving more verticals

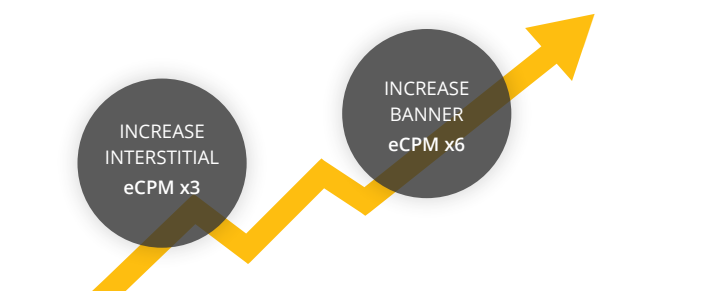
Before Directopub, direct Grindr campaigns were dominated by companies with large advertising budgets across a few known verticals. Now, the door has been opened for other industries, adding diversity to the products and services advertising on the App.



Elimination of costly revenue shares

Selling directly and eliminating the ad tech fees has increased margins for Grindr.

Looking at eCPMs alone, Grindr has seen large increases on eCPMs compared to what they were getting via the ad tech companies.



"We are very happy with Directopub and to partner with the Bucksense team. They were able to put together a fully customized platform and service for us in a very short period of time. This will enable us to grow, keep more of the revenue, and serve our users with better and more localized experiences, which is what we do best."

- Nico Zhang, of Grindr.

Directopub

Directopub is Bucksense's whitelabel solution for publishers who want to sell ad inventory directly and at scale.

Directopub gives publishers the ability to serve advertisers globally, at rate card, and without costly revenue splits to third party ad tech companies. It empowers publishers to monetize untapped revenue with a self-branded, self-serve platform that reaches advertisers of all sizes, budgets, skill levels, and locations.

Part of Acotel Group SpA (ACO:IM), Bucksense was founded in 2012 and is currently the programmatic platform of choice for 350+ agencies worldwide. For more, visit www.directopub.com