

Washington Post ad tech platform aims at Google-Facebook duopoly

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The Washington Post is looking to share its ad tech platform with other publishers to counter the dominance of Google and Facebook in the sector

The Washington Post on Tuesday unveiled a new ad tech platform touted as a way to help newspapers counter the loss in online revenue to major platforms Google and Facebook.

The daily, which is owned by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, said the new self-service ad-buying interface called Zeus Prime would be offered to other newspapers as part of its Arc Publishing [platform](#).

"Through Zeus Prime, buyers will be able to easily execute an [ad campaign](#) by creating an ad format in a single click and targeting across a marketplace of trusted publishers," said Jarrod Dicker, [vice president](#) for commercial technology at the Post.

Dicker described the system as "a trusted alternative to platforms" that would be offered to newspapers and media companies starting in 2020.

The new system aims to give advertisers an

alternative to the "duopoly" of Google and Facebook, which control some 60 percent of US online ad revenues, according to research firm eMarketer.

It also looks to give newspapers better monetization and ad targeting to free them from dependence on the large platforms.

"There has always been a rally cry to build an ecosystem that pulls everything together, but oftentimes ends in a stumble due to the fact that performance is just easier and cheaper on platforms at scale," Dicker said. "However, this time it's different."

Zeus Prime is the latest in a suite of tech services being offered by the Post since Bezos bought the daily as a personal investment.

One element is Zeus Insights, an ad-targeting system that aims to deliver more relevant ads but without the invasive online tracking methods used by rivals.

This deliver ads based on content readers see instead of using tracking "cookies" which may follow a user around the web.

Dicker said the Zeus technology allows for a better connection with readers and ads that are aligned with appropriate content, avoiding the embarrassing juxtapositions seen in recent years.

"The Zeus technology suite enables this connection with brands, bringing revenue back to publishers, through an ecosystem that demands premium performance, highly-targeted data capabilities and seamlessness in buying across the board," he said.

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