

Marketron Integrated Media Specialist Empowers NRG Media to Triple Their Third-Party Digital Ad Revenue

Background



[NRG Media](#) operates 38 radio stations in nine markets in Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin. Their stations reach millions of

listeners. They provide advertising opportunities for OTA (over the air) and digital for local businesses in each market. Erica Dreyer, director of integrated media, recently shared the company's successful implementation of the Marketron Integrated Media Specialist (IMS) program.

The Challenge:

Lack of Digital Expertise Slowed Digital Advertising Revenue Growth

Before engaging with Marketron, NRG Media had a healthy digital advertising business. While they were hitting their budgets, they realized there was still a significant opportunity for growth. "Prior to the IMS program, third-party digital revenue made up less than 20% of our digital revenue," Dreyer explained.

They faced obstacles in engaging advertisers to be aware of their entire portfolio of ad options. This was often because there wasn't a "digital expert" in the market. Some sellers didn't have the confidence to present these solutions to advertisers, so the dollars went elsewhere.

What their account executives did have were relationships. "We work in small and medium-size markets, where our AEs meet with clients every day who are looking for solutions," Dreyer said. Because of those relationships with both audiences and advertisers, expanding digital knowledge was the key to growing revenue.



What Is the IMS Program?

When sales teams struggle with selling digital advertising, training and resources are difference makers. In concert with Marketron's philosophy of educating and empowering customers, the IMS program was a natural fit. A dedicated media specialist embeds into an organization, delivering:

- Cross-channel sales training related to the sales cycle and in-depth digital tactic knowledge
- Client strategy and support through one-on-one meetings to develop approaches to prospect, propose and present to advertisers
- On-demand resources to ensure continuous learning in the dynamic ecosystem of digital advertising
- Turn-key, white-labeled marketing material

The Solution:

IMS Program Was Perfect Fit, Based on Long-Term Relationship

Relationships matter to NRG Media, as noted above. So, it comes as no surprise that when they wanted to increase digital advertising literacy, they turned to Marketron. “Due to the long-standing relationship and trust with Marketron, we didn’t consider anything else,” Dreyer shared.

NRG Media was the beta partner for the IMS program, a service Marketron had dabbled in over the years as a result of the expertise on the company’s team. In developing the program, the collaboration between Marketron’s team and NRG Media was imperative.

With the program launch, considerable planning went into delivering training, strategy support, resources and more. “Our specialists came in with a 90-day roadmap for training. Everyone knew what to expect,” Dreyer said.

Engaging sellers with different levels of acumen was also a consideration. It wasn’t a cookie-cutter approach. As a result, AEs had more “comfort and confidence to start a digital conversation,” per Dreyer.

The ability to have these discussions with advertisers that already knew NRG Media allowed sellers to have a deeper understanding of their clients’ businesses and goals. Now, they can offer integrated campaigns that tap OTA and digital, delivering better results.

AEs are now set up for success when they go into a customer meeting based on what they’ve learned from the media specialists. It’s not just that they know more about digital; they have also increased their knowledge of the different industries they prospect.

These synergies and relationships have delivered substantial results.

Regarding the second round of training NRG Media completed, Dreyer commented, “We used the resources from the IMS program to craft our own DAP (Digital Acceleration Program) training. Now that we’ve brought the second group of sellers through the program, we have on-demand trainings led by NRG Media team members that we’ll use for onboarding new sellers.”

The Results:

Third-Party Digital Advertising Now Accounts for 40% of Digital Revenue

Since the program launched, NRG Media has experienced exciting growth. The numbers are impressive, with third-party digital accounting for 40% of total digital revenue. As a result, Dreyer said, “We’re only halfway through 2022, and our third-party revenue is already three times higher than all of 2021!”

While the numbers are impactful on their own, there's more value. The NRG sales team now has the skills and resources to thrive. "The biggest wins we've seen with the program is our ability to sell long-term and higher-value proposals. They are able to identify needs better and create strategic multiplatform solutions for our clients," Dreyer commented.

NRG Media continues to make big gains with digital and is pivoting to a train-the-trainer model to scale faster internally within each market and support new salespeople. They were also recently awarded an RFP for a multimillion-dollar building materials company.

They launched successful campaigns for recruitment with a company that wasn't a traditional radio advertiser. Protzman relayed that the campaigns performed well but that the company paused them, thinking they weren't necessary. "Their candidate pool dried up when they stopped spending, so they came back."

Other big wins for 2022 included a \$100,000 client they acquired that will be back to spend in 2023. These achievements give them momentum for the year ahead, with a goal for digital revenue to be around 20%-25% of their total budget.

Key Metrics

Third-party digital revenue increased from less than 20% to 40% of total digital revenue.

By midyear, third-party digital revenue outperformed 2021 numbers.

NRG closed numerous deals with new advertisers.