



CASE STUDY

## CoinDesk.com

“ Imagine taking a world class ad ops team, mixing it with amazing engineers, and add in all around solid people and you’ve got what makes Freestar amazing. Oh yeah...there is the absolutely insane increase in revenue that their software brings in.”

**Jacob Donnelly** — CoinDesk.com, Inc.

Director of Marketing

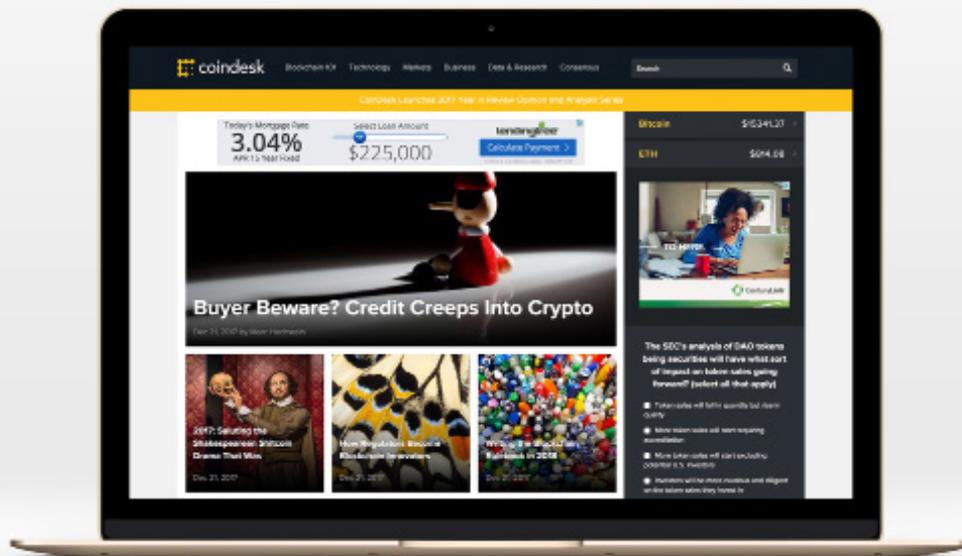


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## About CoinDesk

Founded in May 2013, CoinDesk is the leading online publication for the crypto asset and blockchain technology community. Their content aims to inform, educate, and connect the global community of digital currency enthusiasts.

CoinDesk is considered the authoritative daily news provider in the crypto space reaching over 10 million unique visitors every month. Across Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, CoinDesk has over 600,000 followers with 150,000 people subscribed to its Daily and Weekly newsletters.



## Previous Approach To Monetization

Prior to Freestar, CoinDesk was only utilizing AdSense and two other ad networks for monetization. The low-performance from these platforms in actual revenue coupled with the complete lack of data transparency left a lot to be desired from a monetization standpoint. In 2016 their site traffic was booming as the crypto-craze set in - yet revenue remained stagnant. With this in mind their small team knew they simply didn't have the bandwidth to handle a true programmatic advertising business and joined the Freestar family.

## Freestar's Strategy

CoinDesk joined the Freestar family in January of 2017. Over the past year we've audited various areas of the business to provide recommendations, products, and services to increase revenue including:

- Increased Demand (Header bidding + PMP strategy)
- Introduced Dynamic In-Content Ads
- Optimized both Mobile & Desktop Ad Units
- Increased Ad Viewability

## Implementation

### INCREASED DEMAND

The lack of competition for CoinDesk's inventory was a main factor contributing to the static CPMs and low revenue. Freestar's relationships with the top header bidding partners in the space allowed us to instantly introduce quality demand partners. This drove up competition and fill rates for CoinDesk's inventory, leading to a drastic increase in revenue in the first month alone. Additionally, Freestar's Demand Partnerships & Agency team, led by Scott Spaulding (former Head of Sales for North America at Quantcast), is leveraging their industry relationships and expertise to bring incremental demand via Private Marketplace deals to CoinDesk, providing an additional

### INTRODUCED DYNAMIC IN-CONTENT ADS

CoinDesk is known for their editorial prowess and routinely produces long-form content. This content, while engaging for site readers, was not working as hard for CoinDesk's bottom-line as it could have been. Freestar introduced our dynamic in-content ad product to CoinDesk which allows for a 300x250/320x50 px ad to dynamically load every few paragraphs. This ad unit maximizes the revenue of each article and improves the sites' overall viewability score, while still keeping in mind user experience.

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## OPTIMIZED AD UNITS

Ensuring ad units are optimized for mobile and desktop is a crucial step for monetization. Our team analyzed CoinDesk's ad units and added additional high-impact flex sizing (970x250 and 300x600 px sizing) to key ad units on desktop. For mobile placements, Freestar implemented a sticky footer unit to boost mobile viewability and CPMs.

## INCREASED AD VIEWABILITY

High viewability is arguably one of the largest factors influencing CPMs. The higher the percentage of viewability, the bigger the CPM. Our team analyzed the ad foot print across every page on CoinDesk's site and gave strategic recommendations to increase ad viewability. Additionally, we implemented lazy-loading ad units, which allows ads to load only when the ad unit is 100% in-view for readers. Lazy-loading ad units not only increased CoinDesk's viewability, but also decreased page load time.

## Results

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- In **February of 2017** CoinDesk was making less than a couple thousand per month on average off of their AdSense earnings.
- As of **February 2018**, CoinDesk has seen a **4,800% increase** year-over-year in their monthly revenue compared to **February 2017**.
- In addition, their eCPM has seen nearly a **200% increase** in the same timeframe.

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## In The Client's Words

When I think about why I work with Freestar I break it down like this - first they've got an amazing team, and then they make us (CoinDesk) a lot of money. The team at Freestar is super publisher friendly and it's very clear that if I've got questions, whether that's a weekend or during the day... they're super focused on making sure the publisher succeeds.



**"Mind-blowing" increase in revenue.**



**Focus on *quality* of ads ensuring the integrity of their website.**



**A true partnership - if the publisher succeeds so does Freestar, and vice versa.**