MAU [Talk]

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A CONVERSATION WITH:

STASH

KATE PALMER

DIRECTOR OF GROWTH

MAU[Talk] 00:01

Hey guys, welcome to MAU Talk, a podcast from MAU Vegas. The premier mobile acquisition and retention summit. In this episode, Adam talks with Kate Palmer, director of growth at Stash to discuss different mobile fraud implications, iOS 14 challenges as well as development opportunities for quick based activation. Over to you, Adam.

Adam Lovallo 00:21

Kate, welcome to the podcast. We are recording this in early March. So our industry is I think, undergoing as much change or turbulence as literally at any point since the app stores have launched, at least my opinion. So it's an exciting time. But thank you for doing the podcast. And welcome.

Kate Palmer 00:44

Yeah, thank you so much for inviting me. I'm glad that we finally made this happen.

Adam Lovallo 00:48

I know. I know. I think I had I think I had roped you into speaking at what was to be MAU 2020 we're gonna postpone, postpone now to the year 2021? So, yeah, glad it worked out. So firstly, I have a suspicion many people in industry will know you. But just for the record. Could you talk us through your history and mobile, like where you are now? You know, time to jump ramp, etc?

Kate Palmer 01:16

Yeah, sure. I started in the mobile industry. I guess that was 2015 at Jump Ramp Games, where I started off as the acquisition manager. And I very quickly moved into director of acquisition and like, kind of built out the team underneath me. I was there for two years. And then I went to 1010data, which is not mobile, but I wanted to keep my it was my vacation job. I needed a vacation job. And I wanted to keep my foot in the mobile door. And so I consulted on a few apps, you know, like very, very, very small, like very early startup B kind of apps. And so I consulted with them on just like early onboarding, and, you know, like early ad design and stuff like that. And then when I heard that there was an opening at Stash, I had been a longtime Stash fan. And so I yeah, so then I came to Stash. And I started here in October of 2019. So about a year and a half ago.

Adam Lovallo 02:19

Okay, amazing. And remind me Jump Ramp had like a variety of apps, but the main thing was like a free lotto thing and then offers behind it.

Kate Palmer 02:28

Right, plastic, it's free scratch cards, where you can actually win cash and even when you know, instant cash, and even when you didn't win cash, you would accrue tokens that you could then you know, cash in for gift cards or sweepstakes entries and contests and things like that. Super fun. And honestly, that was a big reason why I went there because I love scratch offs.

Adam Lovallo 02:50

Okay, amazing. And I assume and there's a long time ago, but I assume there's a lot of paid UA to fuel that in that doesn't strike me as something that people are seeking out in the app store, you know, passively at a crazy high rate. Is that a fair assessment?

Kate Palmer 03:05

Yeah. When when I was at jump ramp games, paid acquisition was probably 80% of all users.

Adam Lovallo 03:14

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, that makes sense. Okay, so um, you're at Stash now. And most of my questions, I'm going to keep kind of at a bit of a higher level. So first of all, we've got this iOS 14 stuff, it is a mess.

Kate Palmer 03:31

Yes, it is a mess.

Adam Lovallo 03:32

Yes, such a mess. So like, I'm curious, going forward, do you envision more or less everyone in the ecosystem continues to have like MMP slash attribution, third parties in the mix? Or do you think that all of these changes, sk ad network, etc, like, are kind of gonna make people reassess the rates they've been paying for attribution for years and years and years? Like, what's your what's your general take on that?

Kate Palmer 04:05

I think people are always going to use mmps, especially if only because they are on the front lines have all of these kinds of changes?

Adam Lovallo 04:15

Yeah.

Kate Palmer 04:16

I have been working really closely with appsflyer for the last six to eight months. I don't know when did they announced this originally, like, a year ago or something?

Adam Lovallo 04:23

Yeah, like a year. Yeah.

Kate Palmer 04:25

I've been working really closely with them on, you know, like what we can be doing to prepare for this ahead of time. And they were really at the they were really in the front line. So I mean, I know I will always still work with an MMP for mobile attribution. I don't really foresee anybody else doing it better than an MMP, you do bring up an interesting point about the the rates of like how much we're paying for an image.

Adam Lovallo 04:55

Yeah.

Kate Palmer 04:55

That's, that's an interesting point that I hadn't really contemplated at this point. But I mean, just from like a general knowledge standpoint, and just like functionality, I can't see any other products doing a better job than what they're doing right now. I mean, of course, it hasn't launched yet. So like, we'll see what we'll see if my answer would change in like three months from now. But.

Adam Lovallo 05:18

Yeah, totally. I mean, I read the like, Facebook docs and like, if you just use the Facebook SDK, do this, if you use the Facebook SDK and use an MMP SDK do this, if you just use an MMPs again, like, who out there is just using the Facebook SDK? Like, that's crazy, like it's so the risk of messing it up seems so high, you pass the wrong values as like complete mess. Okay, so another another iOS 14, this is like probably prognostication. So forgive me. But there's a school of thought that says, well, performance advertising is going to be really severely impacted in the mobile space, specifically, but maybe the mobile web too, therefore, you know, cpms, by definition, are going to fall in a lot of these platforms. And measurement might get tougher, but you know, the rights might get might get better. And they've, at least my experience been increasing quarter over quarter. And then there's another school of thought, which says, Yes, we agree with all of that, except we think that the companies that are best prepared or maybe that have the, an easier time with measurement, and don't need the granularity that like conventional tracking would provide, they're going to dump a bunch of money in and get really aggressive. So it's like, oh, casual games and stuff, they're just gonna go, they're gonna go crazy. And so that, basically, rates will stay the same, you know, some demand is going to go away, and some demand is going to come in. So I'm putting you on the spot, like, what is what is your read? Do you think post the change. So probably end of March early April? Seems like do you think we all have the channels, but especially Facebook, and Google, do you think the prices are going to change meaningfully for people or no?

Kate Palmer 06:59

I mean, I've been having a lot of conversation, we work with a lot of different vendors. And I've been having like pretty extensive conversations with all of them over the last couple of months around these kinds of things. What I have been hearing a lot from other growth people, I've been hearing that a lot of people are actually going to be pulling a lot of their iOS spend for like the foreseeable future, like pulling back on it for the next couple of months. And like letting things kind of like shake out, let the dust settle. And I mean, like, I had never even occurred to me to do like, that seems a little crazy. But you know, please do it if you want to do it. But I mean, like, to me, that seems like very crazy. But I have noticed that there has been increased competition on Android. lately. I would say just in like the last like two or three weeks, there has been increased competition on Android, which I was like, huh, this is interesting. I wonder if like, we're starting to see that switch now of people being afraid of rates going up, or being afraid of like the attribution issues and starting to, you know, push more of their spend towards web or towards Android.

Adam Lovallo 08:06

Interesting. Okay. Very interesting. So let's talk about web for a second, I read an appsflyer blog post that's like, basic gist was mobile web onboarding, will become even more important. Because, yes, there are still limitations when it comes to tracking. But obviously, you're not dealing with these mobile identifiers, anyways. And I think the subtext was, if you could capture things like email or phone number, use those as the keys, and then kind of do your own attribution once people get into the app experiences. Like, that would be maybe a more attractive path to the straight up app

install stuff. What's your take on that? Like what do you. Yeah, like, like, have you seen a lot of mobile web stuff? Or has your career only really been, you know, super app install focused?

Kate Palmer 09:03

Up until stash, it was native only. But stash is a web platform as well. And so we already do a fair amount of web campaigns, and specifically, like mobile web campaigns. So yeah, I can, I can attest that, at least for us, they do work well. And so like, if we do start to see any major craziness across iOS campaigns, like that is an avenue that we already have in place, and that we can like very swiftly, you know, very quickly pivot to.

Adam Lovallo 09:39

But it's not, I mean, for me, it's not central to the mix today. I mean, if I go on that ads library, I'm not gonna see a ton of that or any of that even.

Kate Palmer 09:47

Um, no, I mean, like on Facebook, we are running both web and native. Yeah.

Adam Lovallo 09:54

Okay, okay. Um, okay, so next thing I want to hit still kind of in this IOS halo world is fraud because I know you've you've done a lot on the front side. I mean, I've even seen you speak at conferences or podcasters on I know, I've heard these frauds.

Kate Palmer 10:08

I love frauds. Yeah.

Adam Lovallo 10:10

You're a fraud. I know your progress. So, um, first of all, say you're an app developer person out there. Do you recommend or have you had luck with like fraud monitoring slash detecting software, incremental costs stuff? Or do you have your own rules of thumb and or safeguards internally to try to detect fraud and, you know, clawback? Or, or at least identify like, what's your take on the, like, fraud tooling out there?

Kate Palmer 10:41

Yeah. So when I first got into the mobile industry, it was something that really interests me. I think I watched a i, it might have been, it might have been appsflyer. They had like, sent out this video about, about device farming, or something and this is before they even had a tool in place. And I remember watching this and being like, Oh, my God, this is fascinating. And it led me down like a YouTube hole, where I just watched like, 17 hours worth of videos about how to commit mobile fraud. And this was like, five years ago, right? So I mean, this was like very rudimentary compared to like, what is going on today. And so I already before there was like any, like real tools in place, I started like writing into my iOS when I was at jump ramp, you know, okay, like, basically, like, if I say it's fraud, it's fraud, like, you have to sign this. But I had a lot of thresholds in place in terms of click to install time. And, you know, like the Ctr, like I had, I had a bunch of like, very specific thresholds in place where, you know, even before we had any kind of like fraud monitoring, I was able to say, like, Okay, well, like you sent me 10 bazillion clicks this month, and I got seven installs. So like, that tells me that, like, you're this isn't like, super great, and I don't want to run with you anymore. And then appsflyer came

out with what is now protect 360. At the time, it was like in beta. And so I was a beta user for that. And at that time, it was like super manual, you know, you still had to pull everything, you still had to send it to the partner and like, you know, go fight with them and go back and forth. I'm like, No, this is fraud, this is fraud. And then since I've been here at Stash, you know, they got the protect 360, which is like the full version of it. And I mean, it's great. It's so robust. I love that it blocks, you know, it blocks basically all fake traffic in real time, which is great for like any campaign where you are paying on, you know, CPM, or install or something like that, it blocks all that fake stuff in real time. And then it gives you all the post attribution stuff on the site ID level. So it's not even just like, Oh, you know, you sent me, you know, 200 installs this month. And this is just saying that, you know, 50 of them are post attribution fraud, because they're like, Well, that doesn't mean anything. Now I can go in and send them a report by site ID, and be like, block these and give me my money back. Like, I'm not paying for this traffic. So I'm a big believer in the fraud tools. And then I've also worked a lot with my data team internally, where we have incorporated all of that data into, from protect 360 into our own systems, which has helped us to, you know, just like better optimize our portfolio.

Adam Lovallo 13:35

Do all of the sources, I've couple questions, do you know, if somebody is on protect 360 or the equivalent from like, an adjuster, whatever, due to all of your sources even give you the site IDs, or that level of granularity so that you could then report back? Like, is that always available? Or are there some channels slash campaigns that it's just like, yeah, it's just like channel equals x, and there's no specificity beneath that.

Kate Palmer 14:03

Um, I would say probably 90% of the mobile channels are giving you performance on a publisher level, I know, that's something that I look for when I'm onboarding new partners, like when I'm talking to them for the first time, I make sure that that is something that because I, I'm a control freak, and so like, I like to be in the weeds, and I like to see what's going on. Now every now and again, you get some of those, like, especially some of the larger networks where, you know, you'll just have like one line that just says like, exceed site ID limit and like most of the traffic is coming out of that, which is fine, but you work around it, you know.

Adam Lovallo 14:41

Convenient, isn't it? And what about this was not a leading question, because it's been a long time since I've dealt with this personally. For this self attributing networks, Facebook, Google, I guess, Snap, etc. Does appsflyer tooling, the fraud tooling give you any any insight into that traffic? Or is that like, just not to be, you know, not included not to be addressed, like not measured in the same way? Those sorts of sources?

Kate Palmer 15:11

It is measured. It is measured, but I would say like the percentage of fraud that you would see from most of those networks is just significantly lower. I mean it Yeah.

Adam Lovallo 15:22

Yeah. Got it. Okay.

Kate Palmer 15:25

So there's a reason why people will just take their entire budget and spend it on Facebook and Google, and you know, like Snapchat, you know, because it is super clean, and like, you don't have to worry about it. But that's like a whole thing. I can get into that, it annoys me.

Adam Lovallo 15:40

Yeah, yeah, yeah. So let's, we know that that IDFAs are going away, do you? And I'm sure you've been thinking, I mean, you're a fraud person, I'm sure all over this. Like, I've seen random people on LinkedIn and stuff, posting of frauds, any words whatever, like, what's your what's your what's your, again, your prediction on that? Like? Do you think that it'll be easier to commit fraud, and therefore there will be more of it? or? Yeah, same as always, basically?

Kate Palmer 16:10

Well, so what I'm most worried about with fraud in the new iOS 14 world is that Apple, and they actually just announced this like a couple of weeks ago, where they said, well, we're not going to send back every post back, we're actually there's going to be like a threshold of like, traffic per site ID that has to be hit in order for us to even send you those post backs. And, you know, like, probably you work with, like, a lot of mobile networks, you know, so like, even if you're only running like $1,000 a day, they'll be running that across, like 150 site IDs, and maybe each one of those site ideas is only driving 20 installs a day or something like that. So my big concern is that like, if you are running like, like, what are all these networks going to do if they are not hitting these posts, you know, site ID thresholds, which, by the way, they have not. Apple has not disclosed what that threshold is so completely arbitrary at this point. But it's like, what are they going to do to optimize? And then also, if the post backs aren't going back, like, how are the fraud tools, going to detect anything? If they're literally only getting clicks and nothing else? You know, like how we're like, even like with the naked eye, how are we supposed to say like, well, there's clearly click flooding going on here or by right, that's, that's my biggest concern. So I am worried about fraud in a in the Apple iOS 14 Universe.

Adam Lovallo 17:43

Yeah. Yeah, I think I, it seems like, and I'm sure this is a strategic decision. And you know, Apple's got TV campaigns about privacy and stuff. So this is coming from the very top, but like, it feels to me like the mobile fraud, either enabling or discouraging, not really consideration of any of this. Like, it's like, not on anyone's radar, maybe it's on the radar, and no one cares or not on the radar, which feels more likely to be because I feel like every time I read an Eric super blog post, he's like, pointing out some like fatal flaw with like, whatever is being blab. So yeah, it's a pretty, pretty wild rollout. And it seems like the Google side is maybe coming soon to be astonishing if their rollout wasn't more advertiser friendly, though, given the nature of their business relative to Apple's. Okay, so let's talk about, again, not Stash, but industry wide. So we established that the self attributing networks, a cleaner on average, they're gonna have their own challenges with iOS 14, opt outs, and all that kind of stuff. So that's universal. Do you think that all of this stuff, just like further concentrates spend in the I don't want to call them the core channels, but you know, the big players? Like does it make it harder for say, a midsize advertiser like a jump brand, but you know, when you're there to like, put into work to go run, other sabinal flew in and lift off, you know, other stuff? Or not like what I've heard different takes on that specifically, like basically, do you see more or less channel concentration, in general?.

Adam Lovallo 17:45

I think more people are going to be funneling more money into you know, as you call them, like the core channels, if only because they are self distributing and worse comes to worse, they can just go off of the data that they're seeing within the platforms.

Adam Lovallo 19:42

Yeah.

Kate Palmer 19:43

Now that it that hurts my heart because like, I'm a big fan of like, my, my strategy has always been to like really have a very diverse portfolio. I mean, you should be running all over the place anywhere that's efficient, because you know, as you, that's the only way you're gonna scale, right? Like any individual campaign is going to hit its point of diminishing returns at some point, right? So I mean, like, sure, okay, like, so now you're taking, you know, you have a, let's say, a million dollar budget, and you were spending 300,000 on Facebook, and now you're going to be spending 700,000 on Facebook, that's not going to get you the same performance, you know, he's going to hit that point. And now you're just going to be paying incrementally more for every user. And so first of all, that's a very inefficient way to run things. So I do worry about all the smaller all the smaller people, it's not my plan to, to do that. Because like, I hate being in a position that like, if Facebook has a bad day, I have a bad day. I like I like a nice diverse portfolio. So that way you can scale or even like scale down, but you can scale up while keeping like your bottom line and your you know, your performance, like pretty stable, because then that way you're I forgot that you can't see me or but I talk for all you listening out there, I talk a lot with my hands. But you know, like when you have a larger portfolio, it's very easy to be fluid with your budgets and be able to just like very, you know, smoothly move money around to what is performing that week. And, and then that way you keep your performance very stable. But if you don't if you have all of your budget in like three channels, okay, well, like what are you doing Q4, when they all when Facebook and Google and everything gets really expensive. Okay, so then you're just gonna have a really inefficient, inefficient couple of months. That's not good.

Adam Lovallo 21:36

Yeah, that's it. And actually, that dynamic is not totally unique, but kind of unique to the mobile app. And so I'll say it's like, there are categories, like DTC e commerce, for instance, totally different industry. Super channel concentrated on Facebook, Google TV, that's it, like the fact that you have the app Levin's and Bumble's and whatever of the world that are big companies like crazy big, surprisingly big companies really surprising to me, is it's unique. But yeah, I do wonder how, you know, if it, if everybody just puts it more into Facebook and Google like that, it's probably not, I don't think it's good for the overall ecosystem, basically, for people.

Kate Palmer 22:15

I don't think it's good for the ecosystem. And then, you know, like, I've had long standing relationships with most of like, the smaller to mid level companies, you know, the lift off the jump ramps, the add actions add colony, you know, like, all these companies that I've been working with for a long time that are great, you know, the, the quality is good, the traffic is good, and they definitely just, they already, like, don't get as much play as, as Facebook and Google anyway. And I just, I just worry about, like, what's going to happen to all these companies and all the people that are have been part of our industry for years, I already got it. I worry about it. And so that's why I'm doing everything in my power to make sure that we are set up in the best way possible. So that you know, come iOS 14, whenever that will be, you know, that we're still getting result, we're gonna figure it out.

Adam Lovallo 23:06

Yeah, well, you got, a lot of people are gonna listen to this and be like, wow, we love her. Because I'm sure. I mean, there's a lot of question marks like this. But you know, on the plus side, do you read anything from liftoff or you read anything or look at any of these private equity deals or whatever, like, apparently, a lot of really smart people think that a lot of these companies will be fine, and maybe they're going to be great. So that's the glass half full perspective. Okay, a couple more things. I'm also sort of on the same topic. But, you know, a lot of what we're talking about, particularly in MMP context is basically predicated on last click attribution. I mean, a lot of the mobile app install ecosystem is predicated on relatively basic click based attribution. And I know some of them have pseudo multi touch models and stuff, some companies, but by and large, it's basically the last click, which is fine. I've been reading a lot and you know, there's a lot of industry chatter about, you know, other approaches to measurement, like Eric's big thing as well, media mix modeling, so much more abstracted, you know, really not predicated at all on anything on MMP,

but he's saying, well, media mix modeling, that's going to be a requirement for everybody, like, you know, because you're, the clickbait stuff is not going to be nearly as useful or in other people in industry saying, well, incrementality measurement, kind of in the same vein is going to be even more important IE, turning on and off the channel and then looking at the performance overall, you know, for example, how have those those sorts of like, got basically like other approaches to measuring efficacy? How do you see those fit in to like a large at scale growth program and do do you? Do you think that that could, that could change you know, inspired by this iOS 14 stuff?

Kate Palmer 24:55

When you have a really large portfolio where you are not just running on native. Where you are running on web, and native and out of home and all these other things like you, you kind of have to build, you can't rely on just an MMP or just like a DCM or something, you know, you have to have at least one person preferably more than one person internally who's going to help you connect all of those data points. And so in cases like that, you really need to have the MMP and the DCM basically this is where I'm my whole point is this is where data science really comes to the rescue. And I have worked with a lot of data science people over the years creating our own internal models that help us to determine it's like, Okay, well, last click yeah, this channel might not look super efficient, but I can actually see that it's assisting, you know, these 17 other things. Yeah, that's, that's, I guess all I will say on that. You really have to lean on your your own data science team, every company is going to be very different in your media mix, and how you're measuring things, but your own data, no one's going to know your data better than you internally. And so like, if you don't have a data science person or team like that, I feel like that is going to be unnecessary investment in the world.

Adam Lovallo 26:27

Yeah. Okay. I love it. One last topic that I just wanted to hit on. So keep me honest here but Google introduced UAC's maybe two years ago, question mark, something like that?

Kate Palmer 26:41

I used it at Jump Ramp so I had to have been at least like four years ago.

Adam Lovallo 26:44

Okay. Wow, that's that. So a while ago? And you know, consolidated all the options, and everybody got really mad, and you know it now it is what it is. Again, that's, that's specific. But what's your what's your take on that? Like, Google went all in right as UAC? Is or nothing? Do you foresee a world in which Facebook gets to that same point? Potentially even other channels too, like Snaps and TikTok's and stuff of the world? Or for whatever reason? Do you think the Google case is unique in that they kind of took away a lot, a lot, all of the controls? But the other stuff. The other channels are different enough that they they likely won't go to that same level of automation?

Kate Palmer 27:30

Yeah, it's an interesting question. I don't know if I don't know if Facebook or Snapchat would ever take those options away completely. Because I think that is still such a huge draw for for Facebook specifically. So I don't think they will ever take that away completely. However, I think for everybody else, I could see us moving into a world where, yes, that becomes the norm where it's like, I hate using the term like set and forget because it goes against everything I believe in. But I do believe that, that especially like in a post idfa world where there will be more privacy that this will be the norm. I think Google did it because they were like, we're Google like, what are you going to do not advertise with us? Right?

Adam Lovallo 28:19

Yeah, I think they had a lot of that was completely me from the outset, they had a lot of inventory that was super attractive to mobile app install advertisers, YouTube, and then a lot of other inventory that may I think just wasn't getting as much love as they wanted it to whether whether reserved for their display stuff or whatever. And so just to force advertisers to adopt everything across the board. They smash it all together. That's just my, my take from the outside was Facebook, like, I mean, you're running automatic placements, you know, if you're on like, you're already hitting a lot of the inventory. It's not like you're not like that's normal. So maybe it's less of a less of a strategic imperative from a monetization perspective on their side. Um, okay. This has been amazing. I propose we conclude there. If people wanted to find you, for whatever reason, maybe to read your blog posts or whatever. Are you a LinkedIn person? Are you the Twitter person? I know you're on the liftoff mobile heroes thing, because I was googling that. So you're there. But where's the best place for people to find?

Kate Palmer 29:23

Yeah, I would say you could definitely find me on on LinkedIn. Kate Palmer. That's probably Yeah, that's probably the best way to reach me.

Adam Lovallo 29:32

All right, awesome. Um, well, Kate has been awesome. Appreciate it, especially after we had a fair amount of scheduling challenge. And, well, perhaps, fingers crossed, maybe even later this year. I'll get you on stage at MAU and you can talk about something maybe the ramifications of all of this idfa stuff if we're lucky. If we're lucky vaccine.

Kate Palmer 29:51

I hope so. My fingers are crossed. I miss everybody. I want I want MAU to be back in person again. I missed it so much last year.

Adam Lovallo 29:59

Yeah, me top, me too. Okay, well, thank you again and I look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas.

Kate Palmer 30:04

All right, sounds good. Thank you so much, Adam.

MAU[Talk] 30:08

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