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CHANGE YOUR COOKIELESS FUTURE TODAY

The imminent removal of third-party cookies in Chrome and Apple's IDFA identifier leaves brands who rely on them in need of alternatives.

THINK PRIVACY-FIRST

A complex ecosystem of websites, apps, social media companies, data brokers, and ad-tech tracks people, harvesting their personal data. This data is then pieced together, shared and used to target billions of advertising spend.

As the Firefox and Safari browsers already do, Google is removing the ability to use third-party cookies. At the same time, the Apple release of iOS 14 brings in privacy features that give people far greater control over how their data is collected and used.

These changes benefit us as consumers.

We'll no longer leave a data trail with every browse that unknown parties can use at will.

We get transparency, understanding and control over the data we volunteer and behaviourally leave on apps and websites.

For digital publishers, whose business model is to sell ads using third-party cookies to brands

to fund their content, this poses a significant threat to future revenues.

For ad-tech DSPs, who will be without a swathe of third-party data, there is still hope. They already offer many other useful targeting attributes, such as safelists, contextual categories, locations, time-of-day and day-of-week.

For brands who buy this digital inventory in pursuit of brand growth, traffic and conversion, your reach may initially fall, your ability to precisely target and retarget, will diminish, and your means of measurement will falter.

With multiple workarounds such as Trade Desk's Unified ID or LiveRamp's ATS and the effectiveness of Google's proposed alternative, Federated Learning of Cohorts (FLoC) yet to be proven, plus questions over its chances of meeting European GDPR regulations, it's on brands themselves to change as they see fit, to develop new ways to prospect, nurture and market.

WHAT IS A COOKIE?

A cookie is a tiny text file left on our computers that lets a brand identify and track people on websites. It remembers past behaviour, such as login information, browser settings and the actions taken.

What is a third-party cookie?

A third-party cookie is set by an external domain to the one you are on. This lets external parties track and collect data on people across different websites.

How are third-party cookies used today?

Data collected across different sites is used by ad-tech to deliver targeted digital advertising and for attribution using conversion actions. Imagine you can't wait to get away, so you browse holiday rentals in France. You peruse several websites, read reviews and check out the stunning photos. The next day it seems like you're seeing ads for rentals in France across the web. This is no coincidence. Your browser stored a third-party cookie and is using this to serve you targeted advertising. Every time you browse, third-party cookies leave an unintentional trail. A rich source of information that ad-tech uses to serve you targeted advertising.

ADAPTING TO A COOKIELESS WORLD

1. SEEK AND BANK YOUR KNOWN LEARNING

You already have the knowledge or the data to what works. Bank it and use it to revisit your digital media strategy. Discovering the third party audience segments, publishers, content and contexts that work today to drive your most valuable actions is a strong foundation to renew your approach. Analysing aggregate and log level data from your DSP can inform new hypotheses for choosing where, when and how to place your digital media.

2. INVEST IN FIRST-PARTY CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

First-party data, the data your brand collects directly, includes your own first-party cookies for tracking behaviors and actions taken across your website or app. It also includes identity data (such as email addresses), product, transaction, survey and feedback data.

Be clear on how you will use this valuable first-party data. Even if you already collect some

first-party data, now is the time to review what you collect, understand how you can use it, and then to invest in capturing additional and necessary attributes. Even better, commit to using your first-party data to get to know your customers better. In turn, you'll be better placed to create customer happiness and a healthier brand.

Ask yourself, where can you build a more personal relationship with your audience?

What else could be in your CRM or your Customer Data Platform (CDP)?

What if you use email and sms to remarket, brand build, engage and convert?

3. OPEN A SECOND PARTY DATA ROOM

Matching your first-party data to second-party (someone else's first-party) data offers a way to pay for accurate data for insight, targeting and measurements. With the correct first-party consents, this can be done in a privacy-safe way, using advanced tools such as InfoSum for identity resolution and securing second party partnerships.

4. PLAY IN THE WALLED GARDENS

The changes do limit the ability to track people across the internet and target their advertising on other domains. However, the big walled gardens platforms, such as Google, Facebook, Apple, SnapChat, Amazon and others all have lots of meaningful first-party data permissioned for marketing. Given people frequent these platforms multiple times each day or are constantly logged into free services like Gmail, brands still have plenty of opportunities to advertise and track within these spaces. For example, with Google Consent Mode, campaigns running on Google Ads, Campaign Manager, Display & Video 360, and Search Ads 360 will be able to continue reporting conversions – while respecting consent choices.

5. BUY THE CONTEXT

Like beer ads in a bar: go where your customers are. For consumers, contextual advertising, based on keywords or the webpage content, feels relevant and less creepy than third-party cookie-based retargeting. Going forward, effective contextual advertising will prompt publishers to update their site structure and content taxonomy to allow for clear and accurate targeting. What's more, whilst contextual isn't a new approach,

there are innovations that choose and adapt contexts on the fly using predictive AI models, such as Illuma Smart Categories. This approach automatically identifies and expands the types of pages that are working best, learns from your campaign and optimises while it's live. With these innovations, we may not see a fall in spend or reach, rather a reallocation to new contextual approaches.

6. INVEST IN BRAND AND CREATIVITY

Bottom of the funnel marketing has grown in recent years, in part because of the array of targeting and tracking options we've become accustomed to. Yet, if we are shifting our focus to start collecting more first-party data ourselves, we need to do a better job of making people want to give us their information in the first place. Focusing on impactful creative can help cut through generic less effective advertising; a way to get noticed and be remembered by the most relevant audiences. Creativity makes for a healthier brand and a healthier brand is more resilient, and more likely to have happy customers. In turn, people are more willing to give their information, become involved with, or open their wallets for a brand they know, trust and believe in.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE

It's not about technical workarounds, that misses the point.

From our perspective it's about happy customers with healthy brands.

For marketers interested in creating happy customers with healthy brands, the change is an opportunity to build new, better ways, to get, grow and keep customers.

If you're interested in exploring solutions to the coming changes, our door is always open at happycustomers@mcsaatchi.com



*Thank
you*

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