White Paper

Post
(third-party)
cookies era

How to prepare?

Preface

This white paper is devoted to the incoming changes consisting in third-party cookies disappearing from our browsers.

The most important things to remember about the current situation that form the basis of this report are:

- The advertising market is consistently progressing towards a greater respect for user privacy, therefore, third-party cookies will have to disappear within the next few years. **Some browsers, such as Firefox and Edge, have already been blocking these type of cookies, while Chrome – the world's most popular browser – is currently phasing them out.**

- For the world of digital advertising, it is important to note that the changes to Chrome (60% of browser market share) will not be suddenly and immediately introduced as the default setting. **The extended time frame in which the new rules of digital advertising are to be introduced allows advertisers and web publishers to prepare for the new reality.** During this period, the suppliers of technology can work on solutions aiming at effectively replacing cookies which relate to third-party data.

- We are now awaiting Chrome's next move, counting on some more information regarding Privacy Sandbox. Google intends to create a technology that would allow us to retain capabilities such as user segmentation and personalized advertising messages, but would also be safer for the browser user.

- Aside from the above-mentioned, Google has recently introduced the so-called Consent Mode. **It is a new API which allows for measuring the site traffic and conversions, while remaining fully complaint with the provisions of GDPR.** This way, even if a user does not consent for their personal data to be collected and then used for remarketing and ad personalisation purposes, we still will be able to measure conversions from ad campaigns; this, however, will take place at a more aggregated level.

- Facebook has already discovered a method to limit the use of third-party data. Two years ago the company launched their own Pixel-connected cookies, referred to as first-party cookies. These are code snippets created by the website that the user is currently visiting, while third-party cookies are codes created by an external entity and put on the website. If the website contains a Facebook Pixel, the cookie can be added to the user's browsing activity.

- Despite all the challenges it is currently facing, the advertising market is not expected to suffer much loss. The newly introduced changes may initially incur some costs resulting from the necessity to adjust to the new reality, however, time will be our ally and the advertising companies will soon gain something much more valuable – a greater trust of the Internet users.

The report focuses mainly on presenting a more strategic overview of the challenge described above.

Our experts consider the possible direction in which the advertising market can develop in the future and analyse the possible impact of these changes (including changes within the field of technology) on advertisers. Read their advice on what actions the companies should be taking at the present time with regard to their marketing strategies. We also questioned some of the leading e-commerce players about how they are planning to prepare for the post third-party cookies era.

You are kindly encouraged to read our report – it is full of interesting facts and practical tips. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact us.
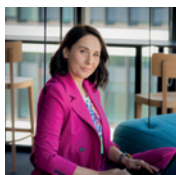
Magda Euejda
Digital Strategy Manager
Bluerank

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Introduction

TCF – Transparency & Consent Framework – how it all started

TCF - This is where it started. What is TCF 2.0?

The vision for TCF v2.0 is to provide enhanced transparency and choice to consumers and greater control to publishers. The Transparency and Consent Framework (TCF) is a best practice voluntary EU privacy compliance standard, developed by a prominent group of stakeholders within the digital ads ecosystem. It consists of Policies and Technical Specifications that assist companies in the digital advertising supply chain to meet transparency and user choice requirements related to data processing. Like TCF v1.1, TCF v2.0 is designed to standardise the collection and transmission of user choice and transparency on digital properties so that the digital advertising supply chain can align with GDPR and ePrivacy requirements. TCF v2.0 takes better account of Publishers' needs as well as the evolving legal requirements and expectations from regulators.

What was the purpose of the work and introduction of TCF 2.0?

The Transparency and Consent Framework (TCF) was created to help all parties who display and manage digital advertising and develop targeted content comply with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and ePrivacy Directive (ePD) when processing personal data and/or accessing and/or storing information on a user's device.

The user is, therefore, the principal focus of the TCF, which is designed to give them both transparency over the use of their data and control over how their data could be used if consent is given. In each instance of the development of the TCF, the user remains central to its objective.

Successful management of technical frameworks requires continual consultation with its users and the broad base of stakeholders. For the TCF, that includes publishers, advertisers, media agencies, and technology providers. During the development of TCF v2.0, stakeholder feedback has been sought, most notably from the publisher community, which has provided valuable feedback on how the framework can be improved to better serve the community. This has driven the creation and purpose of TCF v2.0. In addition, feedback from regulators on the TCF was sought and incorporated.

- What has changed and for whom? What actions should be implemented and who should apply them?

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Commission, etc.), leading to an escalation of the conflict for which we, the consumers, will ultimately pay.

Tomasz Sąsiadek,
Co-Managing Director, Bluerank:

These changes will translate into improved targeting of users, including cross-device targeting, while, at the same time, privacy rights will be respected, and applicable laws complied with. They also mean a continued rise of the leading players on the market – Google and Facebook – as holders of large volumes of user data, and the increased importance of publishers as holders of quality first-party data.

It seems that after the years of behavioural targeting being the focal point of advertising strategies, we are, in a way, returning to our roots, i.e. contextual advertising. Is this what the future will look like?

Jarosław Miszczak,
Client Service Director, Bluerank:

There is no doubt about the fact that contextual advertising will become more important, however, this does not necessarily mean that advertising based on the users' online behaviour will disappear completely. It will still be possible to track user activity, albeit this will be done in a different manner. The possibilities of our using this data will also be limited. Let us keep in mind, however, that global companies such as Google, Facebook and Amazon will still be able to collect quite a comprehensive set of information about their users and use that data for advertising purposes.

And what impact will these changes have on the users? Will they create new consent habits?

Maciej Gałecki,
CEO, Bluerank:

Considering the recent experiences relating to the introduction of GDPR, I would not expect a significant change in the behaviour of Internet users. A vast majority of them would like to get what they want at a given moment (content, responses provided by the search engine, etc.) with the least amount of effort – and in this sense it is very probable that they will accept additional consents or information obligations to obtain what they need. I do expect to see more determination to assert their rights with the use of the new tools among certain groups of users; nevertheless, they will be a minority.

What costs will the companies have to incur to adapt to the new situation? What exactly they should do or what changes should they introduce? What will they gain from the users' greater trust in the digital world?

Jarosław Miszczak,
Client Service Director, Bluerank:

For many years now, there has been much talk about the importance of owning your own data, including marketing data. However, numerous companies still do not treat this issue particularly seriously. The post third-party cookies era should trigger a change of attitude within this field. Soon, owning your own data will become a necessity for effective marketing efforts. Mind you, this will require not only introduction of some changes in technical infrastructure and acquisition of new tools, but also – most importantly – a change in the mindsets of relevant decision-makers. From the perspective of a user or customer, companies

that can boast of appropriate security of collected data are perceived as more reliable and therefore are more likely to be chosen.
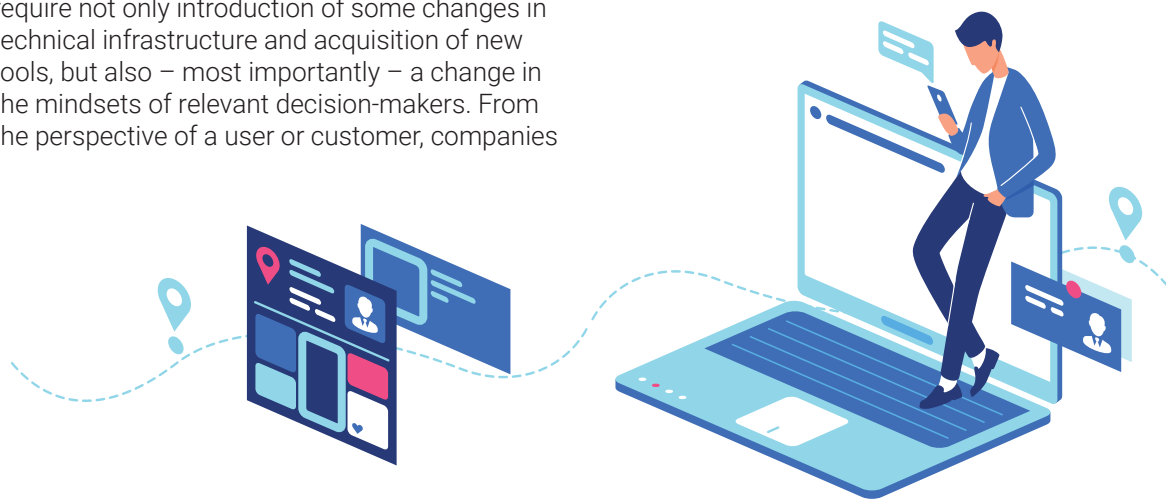
Maciej Gałecki
CEO
Bluerank

Jarosław Miszczak
Client Service Director
Bluerank

Tomasz Sąsiadek
Co-Managing Director
Bluerank

Rafał Trąbski
Performance Marketing Director
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What does the introduction of these changes mean for e-commerce?

In early 2020, when no one was yet aware of Covid-19, Google announced that it would stop using third-party cookies in Chrome. The approaching zero hour at the end of this year and the constant evolution of the Internet and its tools will irrevocably change the existing methods of improving user experience and collecting data for the purpose of targeting ads to the right recipients. While explaining the grounds for its decision, Google stated that consumers demand more privacy, and, more specifically, to be given a choice and control over the manner in which their data is used. Chrome has thus joined the group of browsers that are dropping tracking technologies which are not fully GDPR compliant. Although Firefox and Safari have been gradually relinquishing third-party cookies for years now, users of these browsers are still subjected to tracking and personalization. We should be aware of the fact that the end of third-party cookies is not synonymous with the end of tracking. Brands that aim at communicating with their customers on an

extremely personalised level will be forced to obtain genuine end-user consent to process their personal data. This process of building our own consumer databases was launched a few years ago, gained momentum after the implementation of GDPR and will be continued after third-party cookies are relinquished and replaced by new technologies. After all, third-party cookies are not the only available method to continuously and universally track users online. The existing technologies that track users in a manner that is similar to that of third-party cookies include solutions that allow for browser data to be stored on a user's device. Among the most popular of these we can list Local Storage, IndexedDB and Web SQL, which – generally speaking – behave pretty much the same as cookies. As you can see, the subject is not exactly uncomplicated. What is more, in my opinion, it is quite controversial, to say the least. On the one hand, the users will supposedly gain better protection of their privacy. However, they may suffer some loss in the area of comfort and user experience, as they may perceive the new situation as similar to the fairy-tale about the Iron Wolf or even analogous to Orwell's Big Brother concept. Unfortunately, when it comes to privacy, the vast majority of Internet users will publish online every piece of information about themselves, and yet still believe that their data is absolutely secure.

At Tradedoubler we have been a big proponent of First Party Tracking long before the third-party cookie browser backlash. With a more privacy-oriented user behaviour, the rise of ad blocking and browser privacy solutions clearly

Zbigniew Nowicki
Co-Managing Director
Bluerank

Tradedoubler: We analysed the impact on browsers. The results are rather interesting.

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Łukasz Szymula
CEOCountry Manager
CEE & Poland
Tradedoubler

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Empik Group: Increased advantage of awareness leaders of the market with strong organic traffic.

The end of the third-party cookie era is a serious challenge for the Polish e-commerce market. The most obvious implications for market players are the increased advantage of awareness leaders of the market with strong organic traffic. Players who cannot be referred to as awareness leaders in given categories will have to rely to a much greater extent on paid sources of traffic acquisition, which will consequently affect the margins of particular channels or categories. Another challenge that many companies are facing is the issue of technology and analytics, including comprehensive solutions for managing your own data (first-party cookies).

This change, as well as the long-awaited entry of one of the world's leading e-commerce companies, may turn the rankings of leaders in various industries upside down and rock the boat of Polish e-commerce market.

Obviously, all the transformations enforced by the market have an impact on the Empik Group. Our e-commerce business is based on one of the healthiest (in terms of quality) traffic in Poland (strong "organic traffic"). We are proud to have a number of loyal and returning customers. Nevertheless, we have been preparing for this change for a long time.

In the upcoming new reality it will be more difficult to reach out to people who are not yet convinced to the idea of making purchases via our e-store. We are therefore significantly increasing the scale of our e-commerce through the very successful launch of our marketplace platform and its spectacular growth. Empik's physical sales network also remains an important element of its competitive advantage, arming us with additional omnichannel assets we can make use of in the new reality.

We have been working on developing our online presence for nearly a quarter of a century. Empik is an institution, but even as a player with a high and formed level of awareness, it has to fight as hard as its competitors in the e-commerce space. This is why we are expanding and improving the qualifications of our online teams within the organization and investing in our analytics and data science capabilities. A key area in countering the effects of third-party cookie blocking will be the strength of the organic traffic and implementation of SEO best practices – we are taking this task very seriously, combining internal expertise and resources with external partners. Qualitative, wisely distributed content that supports the offer is the basis for an effective response to market changes.

What is more, we are investing in analytics and keeping an eye on market developments, particularly in the context of opportunities to reach our own customers outside of CRM activities or, what is equally important, to look for customers with similar online behaviours.

Artur Malinowski
Digital Marketing Division Director
Empik S.A.

Traffic Builders: The customers' journey will remain the same, but strategizing and optimising campaigns must adapt to the new circumstances.

Arnold Bax,
Digital Strategy Consultant, Traffic Builders:

The loss of third-party cookies and the reduction of the cookie lifetime bring about major challenges with respect to campaign management. Whilst a customers' journey will remain the same, marketeers will lose a substantial amount of data points and targeting options.

A grave danger due to the lack of cookie data is that marketing expenses are cut and campaigns are toned down due to their inability to drive (measurable) conversions. Strategizing and optimising campaigns must adapt to these new circumstances, as we will lose the ability to attribute value to separate marketing channels used in one's marketing mix.

Traffic Builders' REAN framework enables marketeers to create synergy between all channels and phases in a customer journey. The key to a sustainable marketing strategy is to link, report and optimize all channels to their correct and corresponding KPIs and steer away from a rigid focus on conversions and assisted conversion value.

Talitha Zwagers,
Managing Director, Traffic Builders:

Powered by the strength of our Datahive 360 platform, Traffic Builders developed an easily accessible dashboard which allows a client and/or every website owner to instantly view which portions of their data and campaigns will be affected by the cookieless era.

We often see that clients are aware of the cookieless era but, as its background is highly technical, it is difficult to comprehend, and the extent to which this affects clients is unclear. On average, clients will lose 80% of their data(points). Our dashboard is helpful in creating awareness and a sense of urgency in end clients to start creating their roadmap towards a sustainable data collection system that is future-proof.

Key to a successful transformational process is an agency's ability to create awareness and provide steady guidance in such a manner that highly technical information and custom solutions are presented to the end client in an easily comprehensible manner.

Sem van der Klauw,
Digital Transformation Manager, Traffic Builders:

Traffic Builders works closely with all clients to ensure custom technical and strategic solutions are implemented.
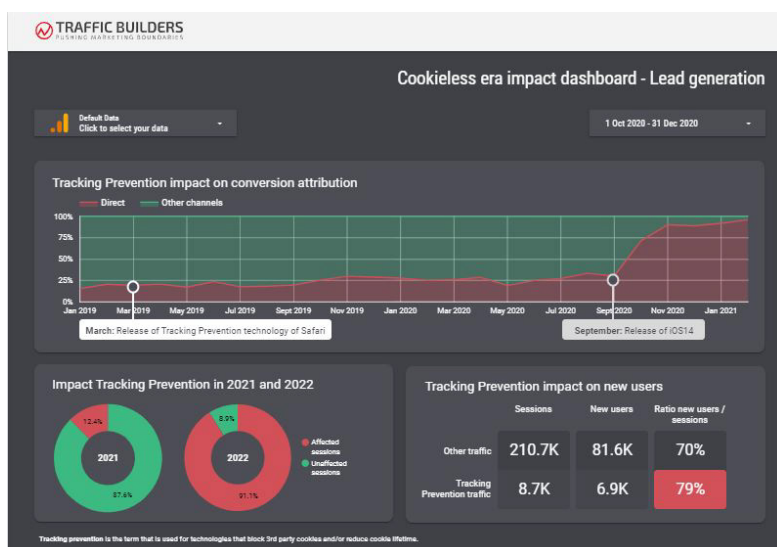
A first step in any advertiser's future-proof marketing strategy is to focus on increasing first-party data collection. The more advertisers grow accessibility to first-party data – e.g. CRM and behavioural data - the less vulnerable they become.

Another important solution concerns server-side tagging. Server-side tag management provides an infrastructure where a cloud-based server is situated within an advertiser's domain. As this pertains logging data from browsers directly to an advertiser's server, this is viewed to be first-party data.

Therefore, browsers' tracking prevention systems will allow these data streams.

The server processes and pushes data further onto external platforms allowing advertisers to exert full control over the collection, processing and distribution of data.

Server-side tagging entails that advertisers are responsible for protecting privacy and security of visitors and refrain from misusing Personally Identifiable Information.

Sem van der Klauw
Digital Transformation Manager
Traffic Builders

Talitha Zwagers
Managing Director
Traffic Builders

Arnold Bax
Digital Strategy Consultant
Traffic Builders

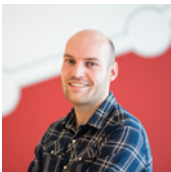# Sleeping Giant Media: Privacy centricity and the challenge for data collection
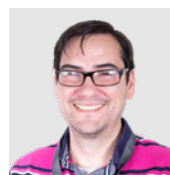

The speed at which privacy-centric systems have moved came as a bit of a surprise for many of our clients. As an industry (Digital), we have trained ourselves and our clients to expect to see very granular data. All the way down to being used to see so much of any user journey. The GDPR was not the start of privacy centricity – along with ITP, other iOs initiatives and numerous browsers taking privacy more seriously, this does seem to have been a bit of a catalyst for a world where cookies are something we will need to live without. There are some interesting tools out there to help support advertisers in a cookieless world; Ads Data Hub, GA4, Aggregated Event Management, Turtle Dove (Ad Delivery), Cohort and Federated Learning are all there to help, but there is still some way to go before we will know what the future looks like.

We are excited to see what Google and other large providers make available not only to the enterprise advertisers but also to the SMBs that will need a lot more help. The large platforms have done so much to make what would have been million-dollar data stacks available to the SMEs at affordable prices

(what once would have been a million-dollar infrastructure can be achieved for a few thousand).

I cannot help but expect a lot of changes both in the available tools and in how we will be able to answer some questions we have had very easy access to in recent times. 2021/2022 is likely to see more significant changes than we have seen in some time.

The nerd in me finds that exciting. I can see how some might be concerned with the pace of change. Learning how to adjust our reporting and collecting/surfacing data to help make decisions is going to bring its challenges. There will be some questions we may not be able to answer at the same level of granularity, but there will be no shortage of data – just a different kind of it. We will need to learn some new ways to interpret and explain this to decision makers.

Chris Hirlemann
Head of Data
Sleeping Giant Media

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Increasing use of creative solutions by creating useful tools and assets for users; the customer journey will have to be better covered, so do not just think about the final conversion, whether it is purchase or lead generated.

One of the common questions I often get from clients and prospects is: will ad personalisation still be possible?

Simone Luciani,
CEO, RichClicks:

Yes, ad personalisation will still be possible with first-party data, location and time-based messaging, and contextual targeting across all the main digital channels (display, video, social, search). And this is a good thing.

What will happen soon after the implementation of the cookie ban is that most third-party audiences will diminish in size due to cookie expiry until they are no longer sufficiently large to be used for targeting purposes.

Advertisers and agencies will need to develop new strategies for prospecting and rely more heavily on other tactics. In some way, UX and UI will become even more important, as websites will need to effectively incentivise data collection through forms.

Advertising data processing and selling organisations will need to develop new ways to collect and aggregate audience data that does not require third-party cookies; this is the biggest challenge, but the industry is mature enough to find solutions.

As an agency, we are investing in CRM-based strategies, helping our customers understand how to collect and ethically use first-party data for targeted marketing.
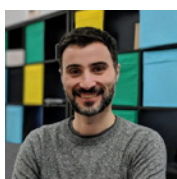
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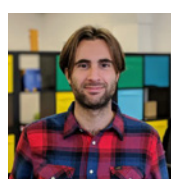
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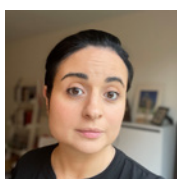
Cecilia Venettoni
Senior Digital Marketing Consultant
RichClicks
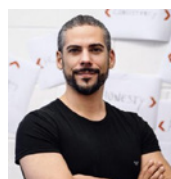
Riccardo Francesconi
Senior Digital Marketing Consultant
RichClicks

Vasile Afloarei
Performance Media Executive
RichClicks

Blauer USA:
Build and retain trust through transparency.

Blauer. USA

Google's announcements on the Privacy Sandbox and Apple's iOS 14 (AppTracking Transparency framework) seem likely to revolutionise the digital ecosystem and thus the market as we know it. This is a move by the big tech companies - engaged in a war of dominance over the use of data - disguised as "protecting the privacy" of users and which could have a major impact on the performance of those who use these platforms for their business.

Our approach in this period of change will be to focus even more on our customers: better understanding who they are and their needs, and improving their brand experience digitally. This means 1) making greater use of first-party data, increasing both the volume and quality of data; 2) turning this data into fuel for our campaigns and product development.

Only in this way will brands like ours be able, in the medium term, to be less dependent on third-party data, developing strategies based on trust (direct brand-consumer relationship) and transparency in the use of consumer data.
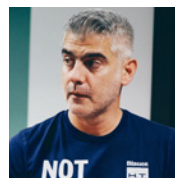
Giuseppe D'Amore
CEO
FGF Industry SPA (Blauer USA)

Edrone: The value proposition for logged in users will expand.

The biggest change will occur within the manner in which online stores are functioning **– more and more stores will insist on tracking consents, creating accounts and logging to them during every visit. We will see "shop without registration" options less and less often, and the value proposition for logged in users will only expand.**

At Edrone we currently use third-party cookies solely for the purpose of identifying users when they click and open emails. We identify all other users through first-party cookies and local storage.

It is customers who are undergoing the process of integration that will be most affected. Until now, online stores have identified their users by means of sending their initial email campaigns.

And how do we prepare for the new reality? In fact, we do not need to make any drastic changes – the majority of the identification is made through first-party cookies and local storage.

First and foremost we are now awaiting Chrome's next move, counting on some more information regarding Privacy Sandbox – MarTechs around the world are closely watching and taking notes. Increasing the share of identified users is a process that we have been a part of from the very beginning, e.g. we analyse data for selected stores and look for anomalies that will help us improve the existing models.

Maciej Mendrela
Engineering Lead
Edrone

Decathlon: Communication based on previously built relationships.

As far as e-commerce and Internet users are concerned, the Internet will become a friendlier place. This is hardly surprising. In recent years there has been more and more talk about issues connected with privacy, data and security. These are very important topics for sure; moreover, there is no denying the fact that the Internet is evolving rapidly and sometimes some of its areas are left unregulated. Safari and Firefox blocked third-party cookies some time ago. Still, I think some major changes in these areas are yet to come. **One thing I am certain of: this trend is progressing and soon everyone will be affected, which is not necessarily bad as it aims at improving our experience as Internet users.**

At Decathlon we place a strong emphasis on personalisation and presenting the users with dynamic content. We also collect data about our customers in order to guarantee a better shopping experience.
 Will these changes affect us in some way? I do not think so. For years now Decathlon has been focused on building relationships with customers that are based on internal communication channels and tools.

Driven by this principle, we collect data about our customers and their behaviour through various internal channels. A great example of that is the Decathlon Membership Card – by giving many functionalities to our customers we also learn a lot about them, get to know their behaviour and preferences. **All of this translates into data that we collect and this will allow us to continue to communicate with our customers on the basis of previously built relationships.**

Wojciech Zięba
Dyrektor E-commerce i Omnichannel
Decathlon

...g Platform. We already have the data – now what?
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with a whole range of possibilities within the scope of creating user segments and targeting online ads.

Putting up your own DMP is a very expensive investment. That is why the advertisers can use some of the available ready-made solutions, such as Campaign Manager 360, which is part of the Google Marketing Platform. With data feeding Campaign Manager 360, we can effectively optimize marketing campaigns in accordance with the information silos we aggregate. Campaign Manager 360 integrates seamlessly with the other tools that are a part of the Google Marketing Platform, so the segments we have built can be used for more than just Real-Time-Bidding campaigns. Moreover, being a tool devised by Google, Campaign Manager 360 also works with the Consent Mode interface.

Another way to find our way in this new reality is to use Customer Data Platform. CDP a software that takes data from multiple sources, cleans and combines it to create a single customer profile.

Databases constructed in such a way are made available to marketing systems. Customer Data Platform is most often created on the basis of the company's own CRM or transaction system. If we want CDP to live up to our expectations, integration of many different systems is crucial. Most often they are related to the transaction system and databases used by a given store or website.
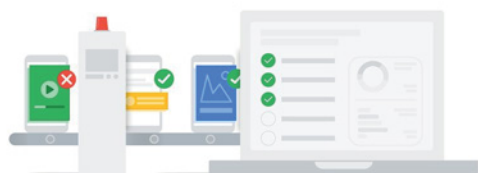
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What are the differences between DMP and CDP?

DMP collects data anonymously. CDP platforms collect information that is associated with an identifiable individual. It is easier for CDP users to use this data for personalized advertising messages.

An interesting, relatively young product deserving our attention is the Ads Data Hub. It enables personalized data analysis that aligns with your business goals, while respecting the users' privacy and Google's high standards with regard to data security. With Ads Data Hub, you can upload your own data into BigQuery and join it with Google event-level ad campaign data.

Results from the Ads Data Hub are aggregated for a group of users, allowing Google to provide more complete information while maintaining end-user privacy.

ADH allows you to analyse data at the display level, i.e. aggregated through DMPs such as Campaign Manager 360, and combine it with events on the advertiser's website.

All in all, the post third-party cookies era will not be as scary as it is being presented – provided we prepare for it early enough, of course. The use of technology, i.e. DMP or CDP is not a novelty in the field of digital marketing. Keep it in mind that it takes some time to deploy these solutions correctly. Nevertheless, the benefits are considerable and can take your marketing to the next level.

Marta Kusowska

Senior Google Marketing Platform Consultant
Full Stack Experts

How to stay competitive in the world without third-party cookies?

Google has announced that within the next two years the third-party cookies support will be phased out. Some browsers, like Safari and Firefox, have already implemented these limitations. In the following article I would like to introduce three new issues:

- what this change means for marketers and major online players

- how to prepare for a world without third-party cookies

- what other market players will do and where to look for inspiration regarding marketing activities

What will be the biggest challenge on this field?

We already know that not supporting third-party cookies means limiting our ability to target behavioural ads and, consequently, find new potential customers. When implementing programmatic activities, we used third-party data providers (based on cookies) to find recipients interested in a purchase or a given service. Once restrictions are imposed, such segments would become unavailable to us. The same goes for retargeting software that performs advertising campaigns – as far as browsers are concerned, the software has to deploy third-party cookies. If we have been working with publishers through the advertising platform, and they provided us with user segments, it may not be possible for us to continue to do so without changing our approach and adapting to the new regulations. It is not only targeting that is problematic – this is also applicable to capping and correct conversion attribution.

At this point, it is worth mentioning that the biggest challenge we are facing now is the problem of storing and transmitting user data with their consent, not the data itself; in the near future it will become the axis of the change.

Let us take a closer look at the concept of the Walled Garden. To put it simply, it is a closed ecosystem, accessible to logged in users – some kind of a small, private world. The largest entities of this type are Google, Facebook, Apple and Amazon – collectively called "GAFA" (from the first letters of the company names). Why am I mentioning them? These entities are able to operate with a user ID that is additionally recognized across multiple devices. By the same token, if we target our ads on the basis of such IDs, we can almost be certain that the message will be delivered to a specific person, regardless of which device they are using at the moment. In other words, the implementation of GAFA's systems for the purpose of advertising will not be much of a change... or at least not a terribly inconvenient change. Let's consider Google – the

company collects data by logging on to, for example, mailbox, maps, and YouTube (after getting consent from users), so that it can continue to offer us its audience segments, which we will then use in Chrome or another browser. **To sum up, storing and transmitting data in the form of a user ID or first-party cookies does not collide with the regulations that are currently being introduced (that is, after obtaining appropriate consent from the user, of course).** It is most likely that these segments will be reduced, while, at the same time, they will become filled with users that gave their informed consent to process their data e.g. for advertising purposes.

How to prepare for change?

Marketers often work with multiple entities that execute advertising campaigns and related activities on their behalf. Those include media houses, online marketing agencies, affiliates, retargeters, publishers, etc. These entities in turn often conduct their operations using external data as well as our first-party data. In the case of external data, we should ascertain what specific data our partner is using, how this data will be used in the future and what they are planning to do if such data will no longer be available. Our partners should be able to communicate to use their plans with this regard, so that we could ensure that marketing operations will be performed continuously and without any loses in the field of quality. In most cases, some of our questions will be answered in the near future, however, it does not change the fact that our partner should assure us of their watchfulness and innovative approach!

Most people commenting on the upcoming changes agree on one thing: first-party data will become extremely important. I will devote this paragraph to the matter of its protection.

We should do a quick self-examination and think about who, besides ourselves, is collecting data about our users. It may be an SEM Agency running campaigns on its own Google Ads account or a media house running display campaigns with the use of its own tool, the codes of which are embedded in the website, etc. Whenever possible, we should strive for technological independence and move operations to our own accounts and servers – with our partners sharing only space to operate. Tools like Google Ads, Facebook Business Manager, Display & Video 360 (for programmatic campaigns), or Campaign Manager 360 (often used for direct media buying) can be used by multiple entities simultaneously and without collision.

What are the implications of reaching a higher level of independence?

- We are devising the appropriate structure of tracking and measurement codes ourselves; it is identical for all participants. This structure is under our constant control. If we decide to change partners, we will not lose historical data, we will not have to create user segments from scratch and campaigns will continue uninterrupted.

- We control how the first-party data is used depending on the user's consent. There are several solutions - I recommend you to acquaint yourself with Google Consent Mode.

- This solution ensures transparency of operations and full control of technology costs. There are more benefits, but taking care of data ownership is an ideal introduction to creating a strategy for collecting, analysing and using our user data. You can read more about it in Marta Kusowska's article **"Google Marketing Platform. We already have the data – now what? Integration, communication, measurement, effect. How to create and use advanced first-party segments?",** to be found on pages 23-24 hereof.

I consider my own marketing data to be one of my company's most valuable assets. I believe that every move – even a small one – towards a more thoughtful use of data will bear fruit in the future. It is good to work in small steps, but have a clear outlook on the future.

What is next? A new version of online advertising

The search for the Holy Grail has commenced – the Holy Grail being a universal ID that can be used by numerous online market players to provide the same services as before, but in compliance with the new regulations and, most importantly, with respect for user privacy. Several of such solutions are mentioned, for example The Trade Desk's Unified ID, The IAB Tech Lab & DigiTrust ID, ID5, etc., but it is uncertain whether they will prove themselves useful in this area. Meanwhile, Google has announced that they will be working on the so-called Privacy Sandbox, a new initiative, the aim of which is both to enhance user privacy and satisfy advertisers with access to data that would allow them to tailor ads to the needs of specific users

One thing is certain, the users will have to log in more frequently, since this is the easiest and most reliable way to identify user IDs and link them to consents, we have in, for example, our CRM. It is suggested that publishers should make more content available only to people who are logged in or that companies could grant users small gifts in exchange for the provision of their data. Much will be gained by those who already offer services like VoD, e-mail box, subscription, loyalty program, etc. This will give us even more knowledge about our users and, with their consent, we will be able to better adjust our offer to their needs. Relationship marketing should gain in importance – and in this context, users are likely to benefit from the upcoming change.

When I think about the landscape of online advertising in its new version, I imagine activities such as:

- use of first-party data from publishers. The rather high-profile case of Yieldbird and Adform, related to the use of first-party cookies in a programmatic campaign, gives us hope for the future. In my opinion, the publishers have a powerful weapon in their hands, and they need to learn how to make it available in brand new ways.

- Walled Gardens and advertising using their data. Apart from the most obvious ones, it is worth mentioning the rising star – TikTok. More and more brands are considering their presence on this platform and the variety of its users increases constantly. I also cannot leave out Amazon: not only because it will enter the Polish market soon. Amazon, because of the nature of the service it provides, is in the possession of unique sales data that would definitely help us to promote products placed on this platform.

- advertising using mobile data and via apps. Here, the correct tagging and processing of user data is the most minor of the problems. There are entities that offer interesting campaigns, for example by using information about visited places or their own user segments. I should also mention mobile operators, who have an abundance of options to reach out to our potential customers, for example via text and multimedia messages (SMS and MMS).

I deliberately did not mention the obvious means, such as contextual, weather, and location-based targeting – it will not cease to exist, but I feel it should serve only as a supplement to other actions.

As always, the key to success will be integrated measurement, analysis, conclusion drawing and making sound decision-making with regard to marketing. **The right, controlled tools, consistency in executing our marketing strategy and trusted partners will help us along the way.**

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Summary

The post third-party cookie era is likely to be a strong catalyst for changing attitudes towards owning one's own user data. Soon, owning one's own data will become a necessity for effective online marketing efforts. In fact, the process of building private own consumer bases has already started in many companies a few years ago, soon after the GDPR came into force. For those who have procrastinated the task, this is the last call to get it right!

Not only will the technical infrastructure or marketing strategy have to change, but also – more importantly – a change in the mindset of marketers and business owners will be required; right now they are used to the convenience of third-party cookies. Each company will be forced to obtain informed user consent to process personal data. Not much will change from the users' perspective, other than the firm belief that their data is now more secure.

However, it should be again emphasised that the disappearance of third-party cookies does not mean the end of tracking and targeting.

More activities will be performed on the basis of user ID, which has the benefit of enabling recognition of the same user on multiple devices. One of the implications is that the users will have to log in more frequently, since this is the easiest and most reliable way to identify user IDs and link them to consents, we have in, for example, our CRM. Certainly, it will be a greater challenge to reach people who have not yet had contact with our brand or e-store. However, giants such as Google and Facebook will surely come up with some solution that will make it easier for all of us.

To sum up, the post third-party cookies era will not be as scary as it is being presented – provided we prepare for it early enough and stay up to date with the latest trends.

Thanks for checking out our white paper! Should you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

Magda Euejda
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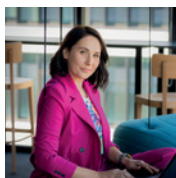
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