

Cookies, Consent and Content Rule the Marketer's New Playbook



TODAY, DATA IS ESSENTIAL to our success as marketers. Data improves customer experience; enables businesses to advertise more effectively; is needed for measurement and optimisation; and AI, machine learning, and automation, all require data. And so, it's reasonable to expect that the recent changes to the existing data collection ecosystem have made marketers apprehensive about their strategies in a privacy-first world.

However, contrary to popular belief, privacy-first marketing doesn't inhibit a businesses' ability to get to know its customers accurately or provide improved services – it makes it even better. Because in a privacy-first world, creating and maintaining relationships directly with your customers is the only way to truly connect with them. Also, staying on top of data security and privacy regulations is just as important as leveraging customer data in the first place. While data privacy laws differ by region across the world, they share some commonalities that can help marketers understand and address data privacy in a comprehensive, proactive way. For example, both GDPR and CCPA give consumers the right to access, delete, and opt out of providing their data. Hence, complying with laws and maintaining consumer trust is now the domain of marketers who today, more than ever before, are collecting data via a dizzying array of touch points, devices, interactions, and channels.

WHY IS IT RELEVANT FOR MARKETERS?

Data privacy and security are especially relevant to marketers today, because not only is it against the law to misuse customer data, doing so is also detrimental to business. Collecting unnecessary data beyond the absolute essentials also makes customers view the brand as 'creepy' which can irrevocably damage a brand's

reputation. Businesses that put data privacy at the front and centre of their operations, and practice transparency, good communication, and governance will be well equipped to respond to key developments that impact data privacy, such as the phasing out of third-party cookies.

The demise of third-party cookies is particularly relevant for marketers who have thus far, for the last two decades, relied on this method of tracking to create targeted ad campaigns. Without third-party cookies, marketers will be unable to create audience targeting or frequency capping. This will reduce campaign efficiency and effectiveness. But if marketers have put in place relevant and effective first-party data practices, then they should be able to customise and target their ads, perhaps even more successfully than before. A cookieless world is an opportunity for brands to connect, build trust and encourage users to share their preferences with an affirmative per-

mission. At the same time, it enables brands to capture customer data and preferences with affirmative permission and thus, allow personalisation to become even more meaningful, and useful.

THE 1P ADVANTAGE

Purchase history, user profile and preferences, past interactions, loyalty programme information and all other such data about a customer that's collected and controlled by a business is first-party (1P) data.

Experienced marketers understand that first-party data is differentiating (because it is proprietary), relevant (because it directly relates to the business and its customers), and is also consistent and high quality (because it comes directly from the source). They know that first-party data is critical to better understanding consumer behaviour, segments, and trends; and is key to delivering more tailored and meaningful

messages to customers; and is the best tool to measure effectiveness at multiple touchpoints along the customer journey.

Research has shown that less than a third of marketers are consistently effective at accessing and integrating data across channels, and very few are good at using data to create better outcomes for customers. And this is where tech differentiation is key. The most advanced marketers connect all relevant data sources, online and offline, to define their target audiences and build a more complete picture of customers. They may do this by employing various tech tools such as customer data platforms that can help companies create a persistent, unified customer

To thrive in a world of consent-based advertising, businesses must expedite when, where and how they collect, aggregate and deploy first-party data. They will also need to incentivise customers to share first-party data, and then deploy superior data and analytics (D&A) management capabilities to handle the data itself

database by pulling data from various sources and then cleaning it and combining it into one single "source of truth." Or customer experience platforms that trace every customer interaction so that marketers can design and implement better customer interaction goals.

The advantage of a CXP is that it connects actual customer interactions with automated rules to deliver relevant, personalised experiences across all touch points. There are also 2nd Party Data Enrichment platforms such as private data exchanges and marketplaces that enable businesses to enrich first party customer data and create more targeted campaigns without relying on third party data.

Fundamentally, first-party data best practice is a two-way value exchange: the business gains the ability to deliver a better customer experience and more effective marketing, and the customer gains useful information, assistance, and offers. Ultimately, marketers that effectively use their first-party data stand to generate 2X the incremental revenue from a single ad or outreach and improve cost efficiency 1.5 times over businesses with limited data integration. **BW**