ADMA Intelligent Marketing

Associatin for Data-Driven Marketing & Advertising

WHEN THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

E-GUIDE

This guide considers the factors in the demise of the third party cookie and how it will ultimately impact a brand's marketing strategy - including thought starters and action points.

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COOKIES GLOSSARY

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Anonymous data

Defined under GDPR as "data rendered anonymous in such a way that the data subject is not or no longer identifiable". The classification of anonymous requires that the anonymisation is irreversible.

API

Application Programming Interface. A methodology to allow data transmission from one platform to another. For a martech/adtech solution, generally refers to a documented set of functions by which other technologies can integrate for the purposes of inserting data or extracting data.

APPLE – AppTrackingTransparency

Apple mandates that the AppTrackingTransparency framework must be used if an app collects data for the purposes of tracking individuals across apps and websites. The framework prompts a user to opt-in before tracking is allowed. Some tracking methods are disabled at a technology level by Apple – the IDFA returns a value of all zeros if the user is not opted-in – while others, such as hashed email address, are mentioned in their User Policy and Data Use guidelines but not enforced at a technical level at this stage.

APPLE – ITP

Intelligent Tracking Prevention. Apple's methodology, used in the Safari browser, to block third party cookies and other tracking methods. In some cases, Safari will remove first party cookies and items from Local Storage if they deem they have been used to facilitate a tracking use case. See also Link Decoration and CNAME.

APPLE – SKAdNetwork

StoreKit Ad Network. Apple's methodology for privacy-first advertising measurement, using aggregate data instead of user-level data. SKAdNetwork will be the only compliant measurement methodology available for users that do not opt-in to AppTrackingTransparency.

ATS

A competing third-party cookie replacement standard proposed by LiveRamp and built on a similar methodology to UID 2.0 leveraging hashed emails as an alternative tracking identifier.

Attribution

A category of methodologies used to measure marketing & advertising performance, in order to determine the most effecting method of driving towards a campaign goal such as a mobile app install or an ecommerce purchase. Advertising attribution is typically reliant on third-party identifiers such as third-party cookies and MAIDs due to the nature of journeys that go across websites and apps.

Attribution window

A boundary of time within which a certain campaign is determined to have played a meaningful role in achieving the campaign goal. In the past, attribution windows have varied by vertical in alignment with their typical customer acquisition journeys, but Apple's restrictions have meant only short windows (1 day, or in some cases 7 days) remain feasible.

Authenticated

Refers to a logged in or known user state, where a set of data is available to identify an individual rather than a device – such as an email or phone number rather than a cookie or a MAID.

CCPA

California Consumer Privacy Act. Introduced in May 2018 with the goal of empowering California residents with data rights. While similar in many ways to GDPR, the philosophical goal of CCPA is to create transparency for Californian residents.

CDP

Customer Data Platform. A persistent, real-time, unified customer database that is accessible to other systems. Typically, CDPs have flexible integration methods that allow for data to be ingested from anywhere (via tag, SDK, API or in batch) and distributed to anywhere (via pre-packaged integrations or via API). Will also usually support both client-side and server-side data collection & distribution, removing reliance on cookies.

Client-side

Also referred to as "front-end". Refers to tracking, measurement or interactions that happen directly on a user's device, such as in the web browser or on their phone. Data is sent directly from a user's device through to the martech or adtech vendor.

COOKIES **GLOSSARY**

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CNAME

A Canonical Name record, used to map one domain to another. Used by some martech and adtech vendors to allow their cookies to be set as first party (e.g. analytics.yourbrand.com instead of analytics.vendorbrand.com). Recently identified as a circumvention tactic and targeted by Apple in ITP.

Contextual Targeting

A means of publishers targeting advertising solely based on their own first party data, and without the need to leverage advertiser data or third-party cookies. For example, allowing advertisers to target "Car Intenders" based on content consumed and on-site behaviour.

Cookie

A small packet of information, localised to your device, containing some piece of data related to your device or your behaviour.

Cookie – First Party Cookie

A cookie placed on a website directly by the owner of the website. There are many uses, including remembering user preferences/settings, shopping carts, and to tie together user sessions for the purposes of analytics.

Cookie - Third-party cookie

A cookie placed on a website by someone other than the owner of the website. Generally used for cross-site tracking, and in particular, adtech.

CPRA

The California Privacy Rights Act (CPRA) was passed into law in November 2020. It works as an addendum to the CCPA – strengthening the rights of California residents and tightening business regulations on the use of personal information (PI)

Data - First party data

Data collected directly by a brand about customers & prospects. Includes data captured through behavioural interactions, transactions, subscription data, social data and intent data from owned properties.

Data - Second party data

Data collected by another brand and shared via a data sharing agreement. Typically, the sources will be the same as first party data, with the caveat that it is owned and collected by another brand. Often used to increase data scale, reach new audiences and predict behaviours.

Data - Third party data

Data collected by data brokers & aggregators, collected by various means and made available for purchase. Typically, third party data is made available via marketplaces vs the bespoke relationship required for second party data, and the quality of the data sources may vary significantly depending how the aggregator sourced the data. Often used to increase data scale, reach new audiences and predict behaviours.

Data - Zero party data

Data intentionally and proactively shared with a brand. May include explicit preference centre data and other data provided by users with the expectation it will be used for a more personalised, relevant experience.

Data broker

A supplier of third-party data.

Data Lake

A repository of unprocessed data. Data may be of mixed types: structured & unstructured. Typically requires larger storage requirements and is more flexible than a data warehouse environment. A data lake provides avenues for exploration and data may be loaded without a specific purpose in mind.

Data Warehouse

A repository of structured, processed data built for a particular purpose. Typically serves specific business needs. Data is not loaded to the data warehouse until a use for it has been defined.

Deep linking

A methodology used to allow links to open an app and take you directly to the product / topic of interest. Used to ensure a seamless user journey from a user clicking on an ad through to being able to complete a purchase, rather than a broken journey where they need to manually navigate through to find the product / topic of interest. An additional complexity is added if the user does not yet have the app installed – this was previously possible through a technique called deferred deep linking, allowing the user to resume the journey once the app is installed, but has been impacted as part of Apple's IDFA changes.

Deterministic matching

Refers to the process of identifying a device or an individual based on a pseudonymous or known identifier like a MAID, cookie or an email address. A common example of deterministic matching is Facebook Custom Audiences, where businesses upload lists of customer email addresses in order to target them within the Facebook ecosystem.

Device ID

A generic term often used interchangeably with MAIDs. Sometimes used to categorise any pseudonymous identifier that represents a device, rather than an individual, including cookies and MAIDs.

DMP

Data Management Platform. Used to collect and combine behavioural and customer data for the purposes of segmentation and audience creation, which are then distributed to other platforms for the purposes of targeting. May support multiple identifiers, but typically rely on third-party cookies as the primary means of identifying users.

ELT

Extract-Load-Transform. Refers to a model of allowing the target system to do the transformation in place. Generally used for larger, unstructured or mixed structure data sets. Aligns philosophically with the Data Lake approach.

ETL

Extract-Transform-Load. Refers to a model of transforming data before loading it into the target system. Generally used for relational & structured data sets. Aligns philosophically with the Data Warehouse approach.

GAID

Google's equivalent to the IDFA – the Google Advertising ID. The GAID is a common device identifier that represents an Android device and is shared across all Apps used on that device, in part analogous to a third-party cookie. Currently, users are opted in by default, with the ability to opt-out at a device level in their phone settings.

GDPR

General Data Protection Regulation. Passed into law in 2016 with enforcement starting in 2018, GDPR was the first major change to data processing requirements worldwide and applies to the EU and anyone who processes data or offers good & services to the EU. Philosophically, GDPR prompts businesses to enact data protection "by design and by default".

Header bidding

A programmatic technique where all advertisers can bid simultaneously for an ad placement.

HEM

Hashed email. Generally used to refer to a process where email addresses are encrypted (usually via the SHA-256 algorithm) and used as match keys between an advertiser and a vendor. The hashing process is used to ensure plaintext email addresses are not exposed during the matching exercise. Currently, hashed emails or a variation of this methodology are being used as the backbone for many of the proposed third-party cookie replacements.

IDFA

Identifier for Advertisers. Introduced by Apple in 2012 to give users more control over their privacy. The IDFA is a common device identifier that represents an Apple device and is shared across all Apps used on that device, in part analogous to a third-party cookie. Previously, users were opted in by default, with the ability to opt-out at a device level in their phone settings, however from April 2021 all users are opted-out by default, with each App now needing to request the user to opt-in if they want to leverage the IDFA.

IDFV

Identifier for Vendors. The IDFV is an Apple device identifier specific to each App publisher, allowing them to support tracking & measurement use cases across their Apps. The IDFV is in part analogous to a first-party cookie, in that it can only be used by the owner of the App and cannot be shared across other vendors or advertisers.

JavaScript

A programming language used universally across the web to provide dynamic functionality. Almost all web-based adtech and martech solutions leverage JavaScript tags as their primary means of data collection and distribution.

Link decoration

The practice of adtech vendors appending a tracking code to a campaign that allows an individual click-through to be identified. Requires the same tracking code to be passed back to the vendor at the point of conversion. One of the mechanisms used to try and circumvent third party cookie deprecation that has since also been targeted by Apple in ITP.

Local storage

A more modern mechanic similar to cookies that is only 1st party, exists only on the local device/browser and cannot be leveraged for cross-site tracking. Allows larger structures of data to be stored in comparison to cookies.

MAID

Mobile Advertising Identifier. A categorisation that encapsulates IDFAs and GAIDs.

MMP

Mobile Measurement Platform. Typically used to provide mobile attribution by aggregating data across advertising networks. In some cases, also provides deep linking functionality.

Modelled Conversion

A methodology that allows anonymous data to be processed via machine learning in order to give a view of attribution in cases where traditional measurement is not possible. Google's methodology involves aggregating non-sensitive data such as historical conversion rates, device type and time of day to predict the likelihood of conversion events across the set of users who viewed or clicked on an ad. Google has indicated they will increasingly rely on modelled measurement methods moving forward.

PII

Personally identifiable information is any data that, when used alone or with other relevant data, can be used to identify an individual.

Pixel

See Tag.

Post click

Refers to a measurement methodology where a conversion is attributed back to a user having clicked on specific campaign advertisement.

Post impression

Refers to a measurement methodology where a conversion is attributed back to a user having seen a specific campaign advertisement, but not necessarily clicked. Reliant on cross-site identifiers like third-party cookies and MAIDs

Privacy Sandbox – FLEDGE

First "Locally-Executed Decision over Groups" Experiment. A revised Google proposal for privacy-first ad serving, incorporating industry feedback.

Privacy Sandbox – FloC

Federated Learning of Cohorts. Google's proposed privacy-first solution, where a user is not assigned an individual identifier, but any number of cohort IDs indicating interest and intent signals. Cohorts indicate a group of browsing activity, rather than a group of individuals, and cohort membership will change over time. Google has claimed that FLoC-based advertising will be 95% as effective as cookie-based advertising.

Probabilistic matching

Refers to the process of identifying a device or an individual without the use of a direct identifier like a MAID, cookie or an email address. Instead, other factors that in combination are likely to identify someone are used, such as IP address, location, screen size, browser version, language setting and more. Also referred to as "fingerprinting", this is one of the methods currently being targeted by Apple and is causing apps to be rejected from the App Store.

Pseudonymous data

Defined under GDPR as a substitution of the data subject. Pseudonymous data allows for re-identification, such as cookies or MAIDs that can in theory be tied back to an individual user, or an encrypted email address that could be tied back to a person with the right encryption key. Any data that through a reversible process can be tied back to an individual is considered pseudonymous

SDK

Software Development Kit. A software package integrated into mobile apps; in the martech & adtech context, provides the equivalent functionality that tags do on the web.

Server-side

Also referred to as "back-end". Refers to tracking & measurement that happens on the server of the website or mobile app owner. Data is sent from the server through to the martech or adtech vendor, rather than from the user's device.

Tag

A short snippet of code, usually JavaScript, that collects and distributes data client-side from your website. A common example is the Facebook tag, triggered after a purchase is completed in order to ensure revenue is attributed back to a Facebook campaign and allow for analysis and optimisation.

TMS

Tag Management System. A central hub for tags, providing standardisation, control, traceability and auditability of what data is being collected from your site and by which vendors.

UID 2.0

A third-party cookie replacement proposed by TheTradeDesk and championed by a range of adtech vendors and publishers. Reliant on hashed emails as an alternative tracking identifier.

UTM - Urchin Traffic Monitor

A campaign code standard adopted and popularised by Google after their acquisition of Urchin, providing a series of parameters allowing for tracking of traffic source, medium, campaign name, content and keyword term.