

# THE HUMAN BEHIND THE IMPRESSION RETURNS



**How The Privacy Imperative makes People the Priority.**

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**Privacy has been on the industry agenda since 2016, and the latest Google privacy update is just one in a recent flurry of updates from large publishers and platforms. When Google announced that in 2022 it will stop targeting ads based on browsing data as people traverse the web and only rely on anonymization or aggregation of data, brands saw the choices in how audiences can be created and measured across addressable channels significantly reduce.**

### **THE RISE OF DATA ETHICS**

This most recent update shows us that privacy is now becoming a human right. The message to people, publishers, advertisers, and agencies is clear; data ethics is going to become paramount in the next few years.

Data ethics fundamentally asks three major questions; Is the value provided to the con-

sumer worth the data being collected? How is data being collected? What kind of data is being collected? In the coming years we will see moves from a desire for a large quantity of first party data, to an approach that is rooted in thinking about the quality of first party data and how brands are using it. Brands and agencies alike must start investing more in the reason why data is being collected in the first place.

The evolution also means that publishers themselves will need to become increasingly more transparent in sharing how they collect their data, and the type of data they're collecting. Moving forward they must show consumers that they are respecting their privacy in the most upfront way possible. A best-in-class example of this is how Apple will execute this across iOS 14, with a strict consent framework, one that forces developers to ask for permission to track consumers.

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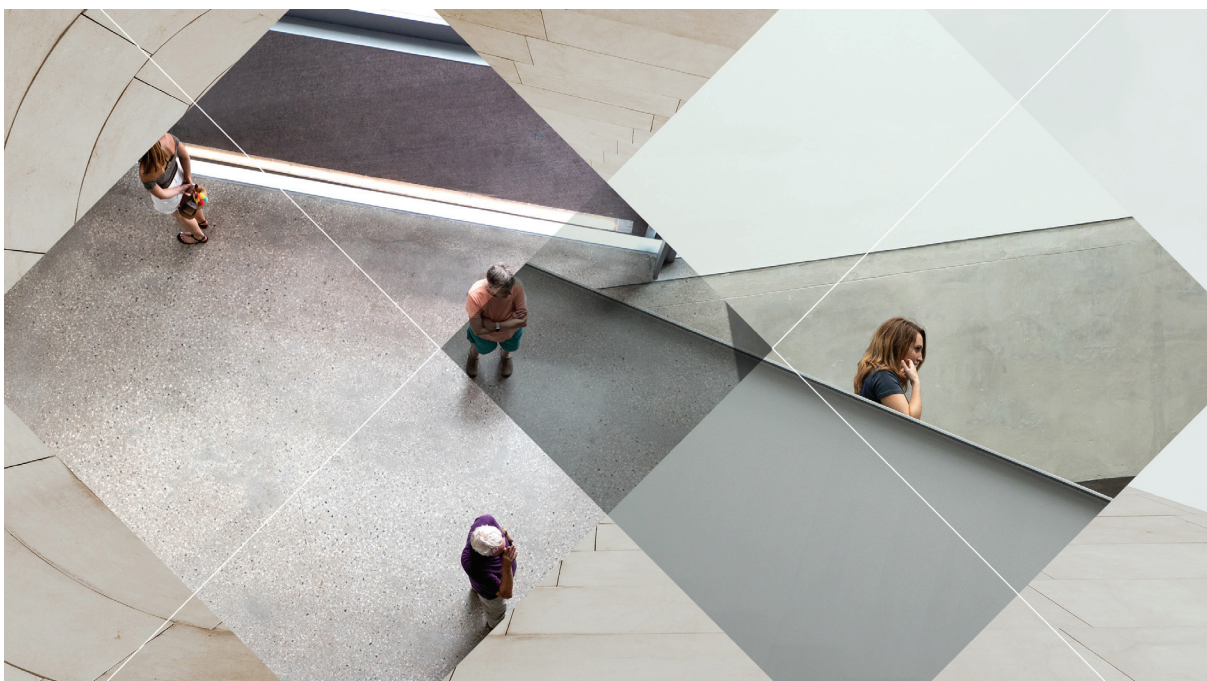
With Google becoming more of a walled garden in the same way as Facebook, Apple or Amazon, additional ethical considerations may come into focus with Big Tech now being able to define the rules of privacy and to make profits from the new system in place. From a first party data perspective, Google will only use their collected data within their own environment. They will no longer share their first party data with third parties, which raises a lot of questions within the technology space, specifically increased scrutiny of how DSPs will react. DSPs will have to adapt, and quickly. While immediate DSP response is unclear, we may potentially see them trying to find alternative solutions, moving away from first and third-party data, and only using contextual data or cohorts.

Ultimately, we will see brands and agencies returning to a notion of what has always made advertising so special. Brands must

now focus on their immediate chance to build and increase brand affinity with their consumers. The choice for advertisers is now going to be based on relationships, the chance to build emotional relationships, and have more meaningful conversations with their consumer. Will brands continue showing product ads that follow users around the web, or are they going to use their impressions to build relationships and have important conversations?

### **TACTICS MUST TRANSFORM**

Retargeting and remarketing will be tactics most severely impacted by privacy updates moving forward. Retargeting will now only be able to take place in a closed environment, where first party data can be leveraged, such as an owned grocery store domain. We will see many “abandoned baskets and abandoned carts” messages and strategies





disappearing from a performance perspective. Tracking moving segments from one platform to another is going to become increasingly difficult, which Google's Federated Learning of Cohorts (FLoC) aims to solve by proposing a new way for businesses to reach people with relevant content and ads by clustering large groups of people with similar interests. While today many brands use companies such as Liveramp to onboard their first party data on another platform, this is going to be increasingly difficult within the Google environment. An additional factor brands will need to consider is understanding what the real need of data management platforms or consumer data platforms are. While there will still be a role for them, this role will be different and potentially limited too.

With these limitations however, come opportunities. Strategy and planning will emerge

strengthened as a result. Relevancy, and creative effectiveness will become more important than ever. With one-to-one marketing becoming increasingly less of an option, we will see a return to the wisdom of the masses. This evolution only reinforces how important context will become, and it is here that brands need to invest. Brands may need to reinforce their analytics teams and build those that work hand in hand with their media team, to ensure they have a better understanding of what the campaign results are telling them, and what has not yet been uncovered. A key consideration for brands and agencies alike is the fact that as consumers become increasingly educated about privacy through regular prompts, they may become less and less inclined to share contextual data such as location, so strategies must be identified to circumvent this.

## CONTEXT AS A CHANCE TO CONNECT

Propensity modelling, the process of identifying consumer segments with a likelihood of taking a desired action based on predicted tendencies, becomes a strong example of context where there is no need for first party data to understand the propensity of consumption of a product. By being able to identify regions that have high propensity versus regions those with low propensity, brands can adapt messaging in that area. Conversely in regions with low propensity, brands may add more or different USPs, or have a more complex message for people to understand what the brands offer, which may lead to more test and learn opportunities.

The rise of context will bring change, and powerful change. We will witness what an increase of emotional messaging, delivered at scale can mean for consumer experience. Digital advertising will see a return to the es-

sence of building a stronger consumer-centric relationship. Through an increased focus on relevance, we will see digital marketing feeling less intrusive, less personal, but just as efficient. Signals will be leveraged without feeling invasive but allowing brands to stay relevant. If brands can understand that people go to the supermarket more often on a Saturday, what are they going to do with that and how can signals be used to influence creative? Context will provide brands more opportunities to connect to culture, sentiment, reviews and more, in real time, to truly deliver in moment advertising.

The battle will now become one for relevance and attention, and ultimately creativity and experience will triumph. Brands and agencies now have the opportunity to turn digital into a form of seductive media. The experience of the consumer, the human behind the impression, must always come first, and this evolution places that firmly back in priority position.



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