



Before you get personal, get relevant.

When third-party cookies go away, the most important marketing data remains.

Imagine you're at a dinner party and a friend starts a conversation by congratulating you on the house you recently purchased. She then suggests her favorite shop she often visits downtown that has quirky, affordable furniture. Now imagine that you're on vacation at the beach, and someone you've never met walks up to you and offers the same felicitation and advice. Chances are, you'd appreciate the insight from your friend and be annoyed—if not creeped out—by the stranger.

That latter scenario is similar to what consumers experience every day from advertisers on the internet. **The proliferation of data available to advertisers about users that they don't actually know has led to a misapplication of personalized messaging that is overfamiliar and, in many cases, unwelcome.**

Underlying this strategic misstep is a simple, decades-old technology: third-party browser cookies, which allow advertisers to target individuals based on past browser activity and other contextual information collected across the internet. Because they are placed, connected and analyzed by third-party ad networks rather than by advertisers or publishers, third-party cookies have increasingly given advertisers information that wasn't directly or intentionally offered to them by consumers.

With this tantalizingly detailed data at their fingertips, many advertisers lost track of some fundamentals. They mistook *having access to data* about someone for actually *having a relationship* with the person. They jumped from "hello" to "I do" with a click.

As an industry we have over-indexed on the personalization of acquisition-oriented advertising, to the point that some practices are now being outlawed by governments or blocked by technology.

We can do better. In fact, the most important data for forging genuine, human connections with new customers is still abundantly available and requires no consumer consent to collect or use.

Less cookies, more relevance.

The rise of performance-based advertising in recent years has led many marketers to focus their customer acquisition efforts on narrower, more nuanced audience segments in hopes of driving more immediate, measurable results. That trend has both inspired and been motivated by the advances of ad networks, which have unlocked new ways of using data collected via third-party cookies to build detailed user profiles for ad targeting.

The trouble is, this has all happened with little to no consent from the audiences that advertisers

aim to reach. And now, consumers, legislators and browser-makers are making it clear: That's no way to make new friends.

By 2022 no major web browser will support third-party cookies. The California Consumer Privacy Act treats most cookies (both first- and third-party) as "personal information" that is subject to the regulation's requirements for disclosure, consent, and other consumer rights such as the right to delete or opt out of the sale of information.¹ And regulations including the European Union's General Data Privacy

Regulation put additional onus for disclosure and consent on companies that collect or use personal digital information.

It's not enough to meet these changes in letter; we need to meet them in spirit.

That means recognizing that relationships of trust and value can't blossom when we use people's data without their consent. Rather, such relationships begin when we articulate relevant stories about ourselves in ways that fit the context of consumers' lives.



DESTINATION: RELEVANCE.

A company in the travel industry wanted to connect with new customers in dynamic and relevant ways. So we helped it match location data accessed through each individual ad call with popular upcoming travel dates, local weather data, and hotel and airline price and inventory data—all of which fed an engine that dynamically created digital video units in the moment.

Getting creative in context.

We have all the data we need to resonate through relevance. Even without third-party cookies, there is still a trove of third-party data at your fingertips—information that your audiences know, but don't feel uncomfortable with you also knowing:

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA.

Location- and season-based information such as weather, traffic, gas prices, local attractions, upcoming holidays, etc.

TREND DATA.

Topics of broad interest such as national news, celebrity culture, popular TV shows, memes, hit songs, etc.

CONTEXTUAL DATA.

Information related to the specific context of engagement, such as sports scores on a sports news app, video game style and content in a console environment, article keywords on a news website, etc.

GET IN TOUCH

Michael Barrett

President, Heat
Principal, Deloitte Consulting LLP
mike.barrett@thisisheat.com

Alex Kelleher

CMO, Hux by Deloitte Digital
Managing Director, Deloitte Consulting LLP
akelleher@deloitte.com

A sunnier forecast for ad effectiveness.

Let's return to the beach, and to the stranger who offered up casual conversation.

If she were to open by saying, "Don't you wish you could just live on the beach?" you might feel comfortable sharing that actually, you just bought a house. You might then wind up in a conversation about a shared love for quirky furniture. Eventually, you hear from this new acquaintance about a certain shop downtown ... and you think: I should check that place out.

The brands that will thrive in a world without third-party cookies are those that recognize the simple human truth in this scenario: **You earn the right to be personal by first being relevant.** And you prove you are relevant by

clearly articulating an idea in ways that connect you, your audience and the shared context in which you intersect.

People who see value in your brand's message and its connection to the context of their lives are likely to share their personal information with you. In fact, more than half of surveyed consumers say they welcome personalized experiences based on prior purchases or communications.² Once they show that willingness, you can begin personalizing messaging and offers in ways that reflect your deepening connection and trust—without the need for third-party cookies, and with the consent of each individual.

SOURCES

1. Joseph J. Lazzarotti and Mary T. Costigan, "CCPA FAQs on Cookies," The National Law Review, August 29, 2019, <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/ccpa-faqs-cookies>.
2. Deloitte Digital, "Exploring the Value of Emotion-Driven Engagement," <https://www.deloittedigital.com/content/dam/deloittedigital/us/documents/offerings/offerings-20190521-exploring-the-value-of-emotion-driven-engagement-2.pdf> May 2019.

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