

accenture |  Adobe

Jumpstart the enterprise journey to privacy-first personalization



Sensitivities around consumer data privacy are at an all-time high. Stringent regulations have been introduced to control data collection and ad-tracking, from the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to the Brazilian General Data Protection Law (LGPD), and California Consumer Privacy Act. And most major web browsers have followed suit, with the last holdout, Google Chrome, [set to block the use of all third-party cookies by 2023](#).



Marketing on the brink of massive change

In a world where 82% of all digital ads use tracking cookies, this means marketers are on the brink of massive change – and this at a time when the art and science of marketing are immensely more complex than ever before.

Our research shows how a leading group of marketers (“Thrivers”) are transforming how they acquire and retain customers and redefining the role of marketing in the business. Rather than holding on to how things used to be done, they’re decluttering marketing to manage complexity, focus on what really matters and discard what doesn’t. And it’s paying dividends. 59% of Thrivers say their marketing organization is much stronger than it was last year because they’ve been pushed to think about marketing entirely differently.

The transition to cookieless coincides with and adds impetus to another profound change that’s already proved to be a tipping point for marketers: the shift in consumer behaviors caused by the pandemic.

Recent research produced by [Accenture Interactive](#) shows the impact that this is having, with marketing leaders using this pivotal moment to redefine how they operate, zeroing in on what their customers really want so they can serve them better, more intuitively and smarter.



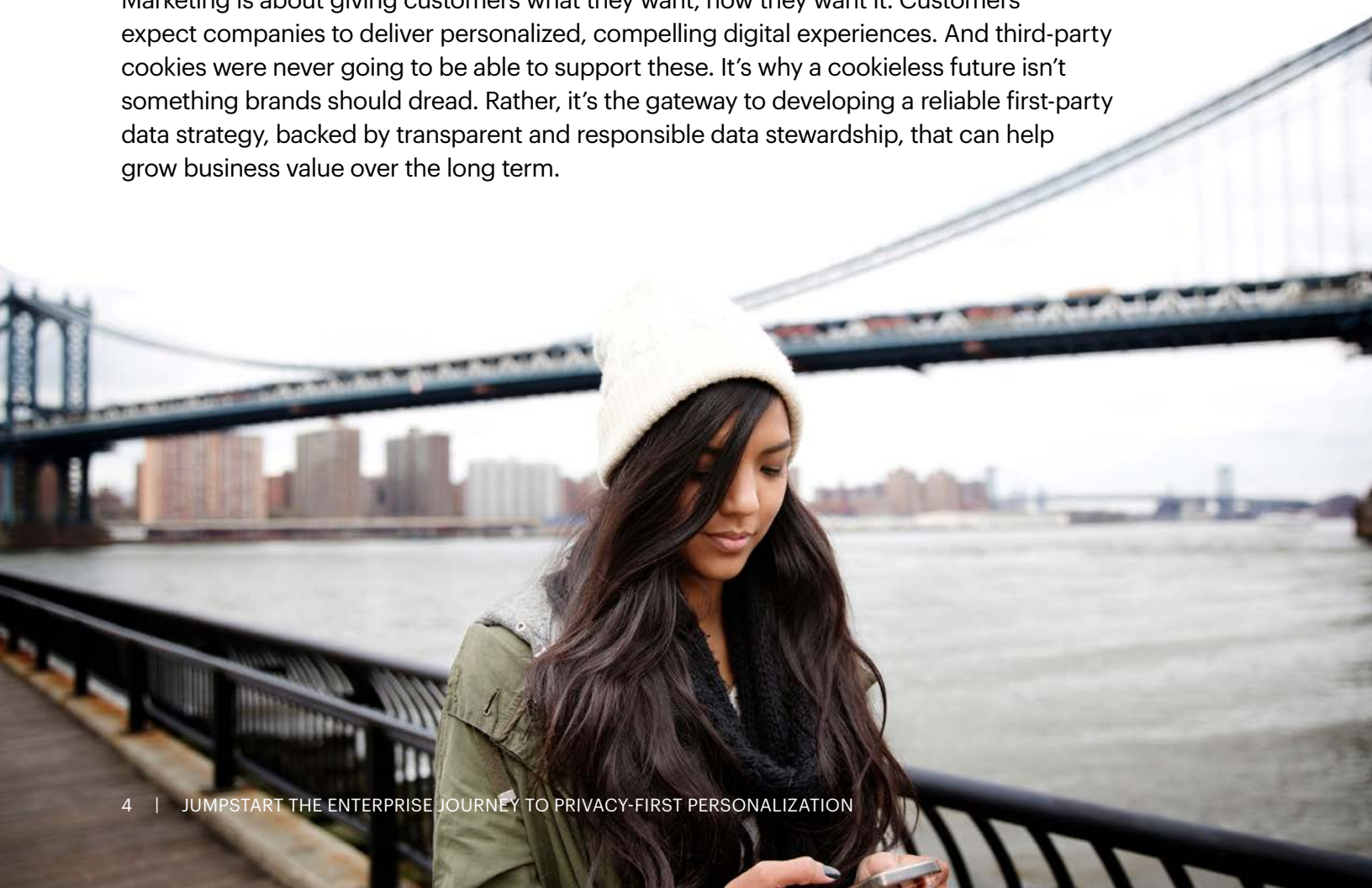
Others must follow their lead if they are to continue meeting their customers' needs. The bottom line: how companies acquire and retain their customers is already being transformed.

The advent of a cookieless future only compounds the scale of change to which markets have to adapt. The opportunity from here? Use this watershed moment to reimagine the whole of business through the lens of experience.

Seventy-seven percent of CEOs know their company must fundamentally change the way it engages and interacts with its customers. The leaders from here will be the ones that replace indiscriminate targeting with customer obsession – focusing the whole of the business on [building purposeful connections and providing hyperpersonalized experiences](#) that drive new growth.

The business of experience – moving into a new world of opportunity

Marketing is about giving customers what they want, how they want it. Customers expect companies to deliver personalized, compelling digital experiences. And third-party cookies were never going to be able to support these. It's why a cookieless future isn't something brands should dread. Rather, it's the gateway to developing a reliable first-party data strategy, backed by transparent and responsible data stewardship, that can help grow business value over the long term.



Getting started – **top five plays** to seize advantage from a cookieless future

From here on, brands must seek alternative ways to gather consumer insights, measure the effectiveness of their ad campaigns, and create and deliver exceptional customer experiences. Organizations know they need to reorient the whole of their businesses around these imperatives.

And to support them, Accenture and Adobe have identified the top five plays to put in place the right mix of people, technology, and processes to jumpstart the mission-critical journey to privacy-first personalization.

The goal? Unleashing the power of emotion, empathy and excitement at enterprise scale to create unrivalled experiences and, in doing so, accelerate businesses down the path to tangible value.



01

Assess cookieless readiness

The first step in any transformation effort is determining the starting point. To understand how changing regulations will impact their existing marketing efforts, organizations should ask themselves to what extent and how they currently depend on third-party cookies.

Factors to consider:



1. FIRST-PARTY DATA:

Does the organization have a centralized view of authenticated customers?



2. CONSENT:

How does it acquire customers' permission to use their data (beyond an "Accept and Close" popup)?



3. ACTIVATION:

Once they have that permission, how do they put customers' first-hand data to work?

If organizations currently rely on a third-party to answer any of these questions, it's crucial for them to invest in the technology needed to fill any gaps in the existing stack ahead of Google's 2023 deadline. One way to manage all of the above in a single location is through the [Adobe Real-Time Customer Data Platform \(CDP\)](#) – a unified system that enables organizations to view holistic customer data profiles and build connected, personalized experiences while maintaining privacy standards.

Of course, transforming processes and adopting new technology requires more than simply flipping a switch.

Experienced professionals can help organizations to assess cookieless readiness and break down the ensuing transformation into tactical, manageable pieces.

The ultimate goal is to consistently reduce reliance on third-party cookies to eliminate any drastic loss of customer relationships. These take time to establish and, once organizations have a forward-thinking strategy in place, they'll be able to derive more value from their data and develop much stronger customer relationships than they ever could through third-party cookies.

02

Determine first-party data strategy

Adopting a durable, consented first-party data strategy is crucial to create compelling, personalized user journeys without using cookies. Here too, marketers should look at this shift as a positive step in the long run. While stitching together third-party information based on a customer's device may have worked in the past, that approach has grown more and more unreliable in the world of smartphones and wearable devices.



[View source](#)

**Campaigns using
third-party cookies
overstate reach by**

89%

**and understate
display and video
conversions by**

41%

Since first-party data covers durable identifiers like email addresses or phone numbers earned through authentication, it allows organizations to create richer, more accurate customer profiles based on people, not non-durable identifiers. Every marketer knows that when the data at their disposal is more relevant and well-rounded, so are the experiences they can deliver.

Moving to first-party data requires reframing customer journeys around authentication. Organizations must decide the right moment

to ask users to authenticate and build trust up to that point so customers feel comfortable providing their information.

To make this strategy a reality, organizations must have infrastructure in place to centralize and analyze their first-party data. Platforms like the CDP allow them to build holistic customer profiles to streamline data management and power real-time personalization – all without third-party cookies.



03 Assemble the dream team

Just as important as implementing the right technology is having agile teams in place to develop and enact the organization’s new data strategies. Gaining comfort in utilizing first-party data is a new bench strength brands need to cultivate, while managing day-to-day tasks with lean resourcing.

External consultants and strategists can help organizations to adapt to this new dynamic by enabling them to assess skills gaps without bias and create mitigation plans. Questions that will likely need to be addressed at this stage include whether or not to hire in data scientists or cloud experts; whether to establish a Chief Data Officer role; and how to build executive buy-in.

It’s essential to answer these questions to ensure the organization is laying the right foundations for future success. Beyond making new hires, they can also upskill the existing workforce through learning programs. One obvious topic? Privacy legislation, so the organization can develop strategies that remain compliant well into the future.

The bottom line is that if teams are not trained to activate data responsibly at every point of the customer journey, any other infrastructure investments become null and void. Enacting long-term change requires everyone to be 1) aligned on the organization’s specific data strategies and goals and 2) to have the knowledge needed to enact them.

04

Build strategic partnerships

While first-party data is the ideal way to collect consumer information, it is not the only way to provide personalization while complying with new regulations. Organizations can fill gaps in their first-party data with data collaboration instead, with private partnerships enabled to expand reach and increase customer acquisition.

“Why Accenture is such a strong partner to Adobe is because it’s not just stepping through these activities. There are big changes that need to be made within a customer organization in terms of having the right plan in place, the right team, the right timeline, and the right processes to help all of these come to be. Accenture has proven to be a leader in helping clients realize the full potential of the Adobe platform to fuel transformation and accelerate value.”

Amit Ahuja

VP, Experience Cloud Platform and Products at Adobe

Enablers for data collaboration platforms include:



Private partnerships: Two companies sharing first-party data with each other in a closed-loop system (e.g., [Segment Match in Adobe Experience Platform](#)).



Data co-ops: Three or more complementary companies sharing first-party data.



Walled gardens: Companies naturally rich in authenticated users and first-party data that allow other businesses to use that data for targeted advertising on their platforms (e.g., Facebook and Amazon).



“You’re going to need to augment your data. This means a second-party data exchange, where you can work with other well-known brands – brands that matter to you or your consumer.”

Asa Whillock

Director of Product Operations and Strategy, Adobe

Source: Adobe, “Thinking beyond the third-party cookie,” 2021

When choosing a partner, to avoid any potential liability it’s important for organizations to ensure alignment of values around privacy and security. On a broader scale, they should also think about how their brands and data can complement each other. For instance, a hotel chain could develop a mutually beneficial private partnership with a credit card company since they both deal with highly sensitive information and could already have a strong pre-existing partnership.

Another compelling option is for organizations to look to their technology partner to support any data collaboration initiatives. They should be well placed to do something with the data that’s being collected (i.e. ingest it and leverage it for activation across channels). No matter which partner an organization chooses, they must be a good fit with overall enterprise data strategy and goals.

05

Establish trust through transparency

In a paradox that may be confusing for many marketers, consumers today want more relevant personalization and less data tracking, at the same time. The fundamental reason why? An erosion of trust. Leaks, cyberattacks, and breaches are a daily – often very public – occurrence, so it isn't hard to see why people are wary of irresponsible data stewardship. Trust becomes even more strained when customers weren't even aware they had shared their data with an organization in the first place.

The end of third-party cookies represents an opportunity to rebuild trust between companies and consumers by prioritizing transparency and consent. Beyond chasing government regulations, organizations must listen to customers' data privacy concerns and develop strategies for meeting them. Again, the key is bringing control and visibility back in-house. If organizations offload their customer data to a third-party, how can they ensure it is protected?

Organizations can consolidate governance of known and unknown customer data through the Adobe Real-Time CDP, as well as through [Adobe's patented governance framework](#). Keeping customer information in one place makes it easier to secure and gives customers more control over what information they share.

Another way to give consumers more control is to encourage authentication through special offers like loyalty programs, exclusive discounts, and personalized experiences. Clear value exchanges like these are the building blocks that encourage transparency and trust between brand and customer.



Creating unrivalled experiences, at enterprise scale

For over a decade, Accenture has delivered award-winning customer experiences powered by Adobe. Recognized as Adobe's most decorated partner, with specializations in Adobe Analytics, Adobe Experience Manager, Adobe Campaign, Marketo Engage, and Adobe Workfront, Accenture works with Adobe to design, build, and run transformative customer experiences without the use of third-party cookies.

The Adobe Experience Cloud, a connected suite of best-in-class, cross-channel, digital marketing solutions, powers the experience and puts brands in control of activation through privacy by design. Together, [Accenture and Adobe](#) help the world's top brands create purposeful connections that truly make an impact through a unique combination of services and solutions.

The Accenture + Adobe partnership advantage

Accenture and Adobe unleash the powers of emotion, empathy, and excitement at an enterprise scale to create unrivalled experiences for your customers that result in greater engagement, loyalty, and business with them. Together, we harness the very best of tech, data, creativity and innovation to accelerate the path to tangible value for our clients.

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About Accenture

Accenture is a global professional services company with leading capabilities in digital, cloud and security. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries, we offer Strategy and Consulting, Interactive, Technology and Operations services—all powered by the world’s largest network of Advanced Technology and Intelligent Operations centers. Our 624,000 people deliver on the promise of technology and human ingenuity every day, serving clients in more than 120 countries. We embrace the power of change to create value and shared success for our clients, people, shareholders, partners and communities.

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