

How Customer Data Platforms Are Banking on the GDPR

One marketing tech sector is capitalizing on data regulation

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Ross Benes

One company's Armageddon is another company's sales pitch.

Customer data platforms (CDPs) are **having a moment**. According to MarTech Today's **industry landscape**, there were 25 CDPs in 2017, up from 12 in 2016. The demand for CDPs is being bolstered by **the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**, which becomes enforceable in May and stipulates that people's data can only be used if they give a company explicit permission.

There is a fair amount of overlap between CDPs, data management platforms (DMPs) and customer relationship management platforms (CRMs), which are all used to store people's data. CDPs' main point of differentiation is that they deal exclusively with **first-party data**, whereas the other types of platforms tend to specialize in third-party data. While many marketing tech companies are likely going to get slapped by the GDPR, CDPs' pitch is that they are less likely to be at risk of getting fined because of their first-party focus.

Meanwhile, other vendors—like **retargeters, location data companies, demand-side platforms (DSPs)** and **DMPs**—are caught in the GDPR crosshairs because they often rely on **third-party data**. This makes it difficult for them to get users' consent, since vendors of third-party data don't have a direct relationship with the end-user whose information they are profiting from.

"For us, [GDPR] is more of an opportunity than a threat," said Martijn van Berkum, CTO of CDP BlueConic.

Roughly 60% of BlueConic's prospective customers in Europe are led to it by their GDPR curiosity, van Berkum said. The company expects that percentage to rise as the deadline nears.

The GDPR is driving marketers to first-party data handlers at a time when anxiety is high over the new regulation. In a spring 2017 survey from **Veritas**, 32% of business decision-makers worldwide were concerned that they didn't have the right tools in place to monitor data as they prepared for the GDPR.

Leading Concerns About Getting Their Business Ready for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) According to Business Decision-Makers Worldwide, March 2017

% of respondents

Not having a way to determine which data we should save or delete based on the value of the data

42%

Delete data from our systems that may have proven useful in the future

39%

Inability to accurately identify, locate and manage personal data during an internal search

39%

Not having the right tools in place to monitor data in real time

32%

Not being prepared to protect personal data from breach, loss or damage

30%

Note: n=900

Source: Veritas, "2017 Veritas GDPR Report - Chapter 1: Fears of Brand Damage, Job Loss, Company Livelihood Surface as Businesses Try to Come to Grips with GDPR Compliance" conducted by Vanson Bourne, April 25, 2017

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Marketers are also flummoxed by the regulation. In a December 2017 [survey by Warc](#), 24% of brand marketers said that consumer data regulations like the GDPR will be one of the industry's biggest concerns this year.