

Google abandons cookieless Chrome: Ad experts say 'industry will likely end up in the same place'

Article

[Google](#) put a lid on its [cookie deprecation plans](#) on Monday, proposing that rather than deprecate third-party cookies, it would prompt Chrome users to “make an informed choice” on how they share their data with [advertisers](#), according to a blog post from Anthony Chavez, vice president of Google’s Privacy Sandbox.

Google initially planned to do away with [third-party cookies](#) in 2022. Most recently, that [deadline was pushed to 2025](#), and now it seems the cookie may not crumble after all. Here’s a look at how marketers are reacting.

“**Google is prioritizing profit over privacy,**” said Michael Robbins, senior manager of paid search at Exverus Media, indicating that Google doesn’t want to compete with [alternative identifiers](#). “With most helpful resources coming from third-party entities, I think [Google] realized they’d lose the attribution foot race and the long-term impact on ad revenue,” he said.

The third-party cookie continuation is welcome news for marketers, no matter what Google’s motivations may be. “While many different options have been floated around, I don’t think there has been one ‘winning’ solution that has gained enough mass appeal that we could all rely on yet. Without that alternative solution, I’m glad Google has stepped away from the full phase out of cookies,” said Ryan Garland, senior director of digital media at Mower Agency.

Other marketers voiced similar satisfaction, but urged advertisers not to lose focus moving away from third-party data. “While this news brings a collective sigh of relief from agencies and marketers, we must remain focused on providing privacy-forward solutions for our clients that are based in strong first-party data collection strategies,” said Jeremy Dowdy, president of performance marketing at VML.

“Advertisers should proceed by continuing to leverage third-party cookies where effective, while simultaneously accelerating the development and implementation of innovative, cookieless strategies,” said Gareth Cleevely, executive vice president of business strategy at Dentsu.

Google’s plan to keep the third-party cookies around is still being discussed with regulators, per Chavez, which means the cookie could still get burnt in the long run. Even if the cookie gets preserved indefinitely, pressure to protect user privacy will still drive advertisers away from it, per the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB).

“The industry will likely end up in the same place. We’re just taking a different, potentially longer route to get there,” said Anthony Katsur, CEO at the IAB Tech Lab. “The advertising ecosystem still requires multiple solutions to safely and effectively target consumers, including alternative IDs, server-side solutions, Privacy Sandbox, and cookies. This isn’t materially different from what is happening today, as approximately 25% of the browser market is already cookieless, which requires solutions.”

Katsur emphasized that the real question will be how Google implements user choice when it comes to cookies. This is something **ad tech** professionals echoed, though some have a business interest in advertisers moving away from third-party cookies and toward alternative identifiers.

“Will Google ask consumers if they want to be **tracked** publisher by publisher, or will Google paint with the wide brush that Apple did with ATT (AppTrackingTransparency) and MPP (Mail Protection and Privacy) and effectively ‘lead the witness’ to opting out of everything as a blanket opt out,” asked Matt Keiser, founder and CEO at LiveIntent.

If Google is taking an Apple-like approach and leading users to opt out of cookie tracking, the effects will be similar to Google phasing cookies out entirely. “Google may no longer be ending third-party cookies by its own hand, but the slow march of progress will still see them rendered obsolete sooner or later,” said Chris Hogg, chief revenue officer at Lotame.

If Google does not nudge users toward opting out of cookies in this way, the transition away from third-party data will be less urgent but still imminent. “You still are going to need digital strategies that don’t rely on the third-party cookie. For anyone in digital marketing, their strategy should not change,” said Colleen Harris, director and product manager at Ansira.

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