

# Google turns off cookies for 30 million Chrome users, and that's just 1%

Article

**The news:** Google's long-expected purge of third-party cookies has begun. The company turned off cookies for 1% of **Chrome** users last week, amounting to approximately **30 million** users.

- After a series of delays, Google has said it plans to phase out cookies for 100% of Chrome users by Q3 2024.

**The context:** If you're a digital advertising professional, the end of third-party cookies is likely looming large this year. But for those who aren't aware, here's a brief summary of what cookies are and why they're going away.

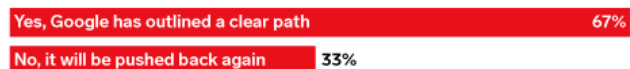
- Cookies are a method of tracking user behavior online that have been used for decades. Websites will often ask for permission to attach first-party cookies to your browser, which are used to monitor your activity and preferences on the site for future visits.
- Third-party cookies are those that are attached by websites other than the one a user is visiting, and they track browsing information and personal data for the purpose of delivering targeted ads. As concerns about digital privacy have grown in recent years, cookies have become a controversial mechanism that are now being phased out in favor of new, privacy-centric systems.
- First-party cookies are safe: Third-party cookies are the ones being phased out. Browsers like **Firefox** have already removed third-party cookies, but Chrome makes up approximately 65% of browser usage, making its pivot the most significant in the market.

**A long shadow:** Google has been warning advertisers about an end to third-party cookies for years, but as The Wall Street Journal puts it, they still aren't ready.

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**Marketing Professionals Worldwide Who Believe the Deprecation of Cookies in Chrome Will Occur in 2024, Aug 2023**

% of respondents



Source: ID5, "The State of Digital Identity 2023," Oct 31, 2023

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- It's true: Despite common knowledge that cookies are on the way out, advertisers haven't adopted new channels. According to 33Across, **cookies were used for 78% or more of programmatic ad buys** across industries as late as Q3 2023—many advertisers are increasing their cookie ad spend.

- Cookies' ubiquity is part of the problem. Third-party cookies are a personalization solution that work for nearly all advertisers, but there's no one option that's moving in to fill the void. Instead, advertisers will have to become accustomed to a number of systems and sources of data.
- Major post-cookie solutions are only just hitting the market. Google began rolling out the first step of its new tracking solution, dubbed "[Privacy Sandbox](#)," in [July of last year](#). That doesn't give advertisers much time to adapt, leading to speculation that Google might yet again delay the process.

**Our take:** Even if Google delays the end of cookies again—to put it frankly—the end is nigh. Advertisers who don't prepare for the change or embrace other sources of data stand to lose when the switch gets flipped for good.

- How can advertisers brace for the change? **Paul Verna**, our vice president of content, shared [three practices to prep for Google's cookie depreciation deadline](#) that include opening up to more diverse data sources and leveraging emerging tech like artificial intelligence.