

## Audience

The audience of the manifesto is the publisher's C-level executives who shoulder the responsibility of taking the organization forward in the turbulent times when revenue, brand equity and business models are under constant threat.

The manifesto aims to put forward an in-depth analysis of the threats and opportunities that a publisher needs to understand and prepare to cope and thrive.

## Dependence on Google

To start with, DFP for publishers is a really good system. Unfortunately, it is very complex, like any SSP system, and makes no effort to bring any transparency for the publishers.

**The top 5 indicators that will say if the publisher is over-reliant on Google are as follows:**

1. Do you know the advertisers who are buying the media? Moreover, can you estimate the price that advertiser is ready to pay?
2. Do you have reason to believe that the shift from second-price auction to the first-price auction has given satisfactory incremental revenue?
3. What is the revenue hit if advertisers don't buy media via PMP(Private Market Place)?
4. How do you trade media and audience and hence make revenue on both?
5. A publisher who is content-heavy publishes content with various context regularly. What are the steps taken to make the bid request brand safe for the advertiser?

## Deprecation of 3rd party cookies

Google announced that Chrome will not support 3rd party cookies from 2022. Unfortunately, the issue is much larger. Safari, in default mode, does not support 3rd party cookie beyond a time window.

This means that DMPs, exchanges, DSPs and tracker platforms that rely on 3rd party cookies will not be able to perform audience tracking or targeting. Many of the universal Id systems that work in this scope would stop to work.

The situation can go further south if Google and Apple decide to hash the device id at the API level. This will bring device id and cookie in the same bracket of anonymity and will make the user targeting a history for web, mobile web and app-based user targeting.

## GDPR is just the beginning

User privacy concerns were for the first time addressed at the international level by accommodating GDPR at Europe and UK level. By all accounts, this is just the beginning of complex data privacy regimes. The US is beginning to release privacy regulation at the state level. This has already begun with the release of CCPA from 1-Jan-2020. Australia, Japan, Thailand, India and many other countries are beginning to formulate and implement data privacy policies. They have varieties of contradictions and similarities making compliance a daunting task.

**This resonates into the following:**

1. The digital publishing business that was usually considered to be global businesses now needs to look at this at the regional level for user data compliance.
2. In Google world where data is always hidden, the compliance can become very hard to attain.
3. There is not much of a choice but to own the data, control it and may even monetise it.

**Other things that happened but went unnoticed:**

1. Google's switch from second-price auction to the first-price auction didn't give the publisher the revenue uplift that was being expected.
2. Facebook newsroom, gives ad revenue but makes a dent on the publisher's brand equity since the publisher loses the user. What happens in the absence of FAN based revenue.

3. Google search gives 30-50+% organic traffic to publishers. What happens if Google forwards this search to say Google newsroom; a publisher would lose on revenue and user both. They are already taking mobile traffic to Google AMP.
4. In the media value chain where everyone involved is paid by media %, no one has any incentives to pay more to the publisher. A scenario, where a publisher loses the sight of the buyer would mean a questionable sturdiness of the revenue line.

#### **Things that need to be done:**

It's one thing to be ready for what you see is coming and second to hold a strong ground and be ready for whatever comes. I prefer the latter scenario.

A good way to think in an audience-centric manner. Rest everything can be looked at the activation channel. For example, CDP can hold all user data by collating data from CRM, web site user tracking, auction logs etc. The ad-server, exchange, consent gateway, audience activation etc. can be looked as activation channels. The thought process works by consolidating all C level approaches of ROI, business sustainability, technical manageability and compliance.

This boils down to two primary components and its various data lineage that they bring to the table. They are as follows:

#### **A publisher needs to own the CDP**

1. A user consumes most of his/her content from the publisher. The best user profiling can be done by the publisher. A publisher needs to capture user behaviour and make it accessible to the media buy process.
2. A CDP can host a variety of data for better user targeting.
3. A CDP can also host a variety of AI algorithms for increasing eCPMs.
4. A CDP can be connected to processors, multiple consent gateways, exchanges and bidders to manage data privacy in all in varieties and contradictions.

#### **A publisher needs to bring an exchange in its periphery of control. This will help with the following:**

1. An integrated exchange eliminates the need for 3rd party cookie for audience-based ad serving.
2. An exchange in the periphery of publishers will enable them to constantly reach out to advertisers directly and giving them the best possible revenue scenario.
3. An exchange exposes auction data to the publisher which provides buyer price transparency and the details of interested buyers
4. A hybrid exchange should also be able to work in tandem to DFP and give a viable alternative to the Google ecosystem.
5. An exchange backed by CDP can effectively work to increasing the eCPMs.

#### **Somethings that are technically attained but driven by the business are as follows:**

1. A publisher needs to connect to the advertiser and/or its agency and plan to make the relevant footwork and its adjoining paperwork an in-house process.
2. The programmatic ecosystem is heavily influenced by the duopoly. The above two components become even more critical and doable. It's just the matter to figure out the right flavour.