

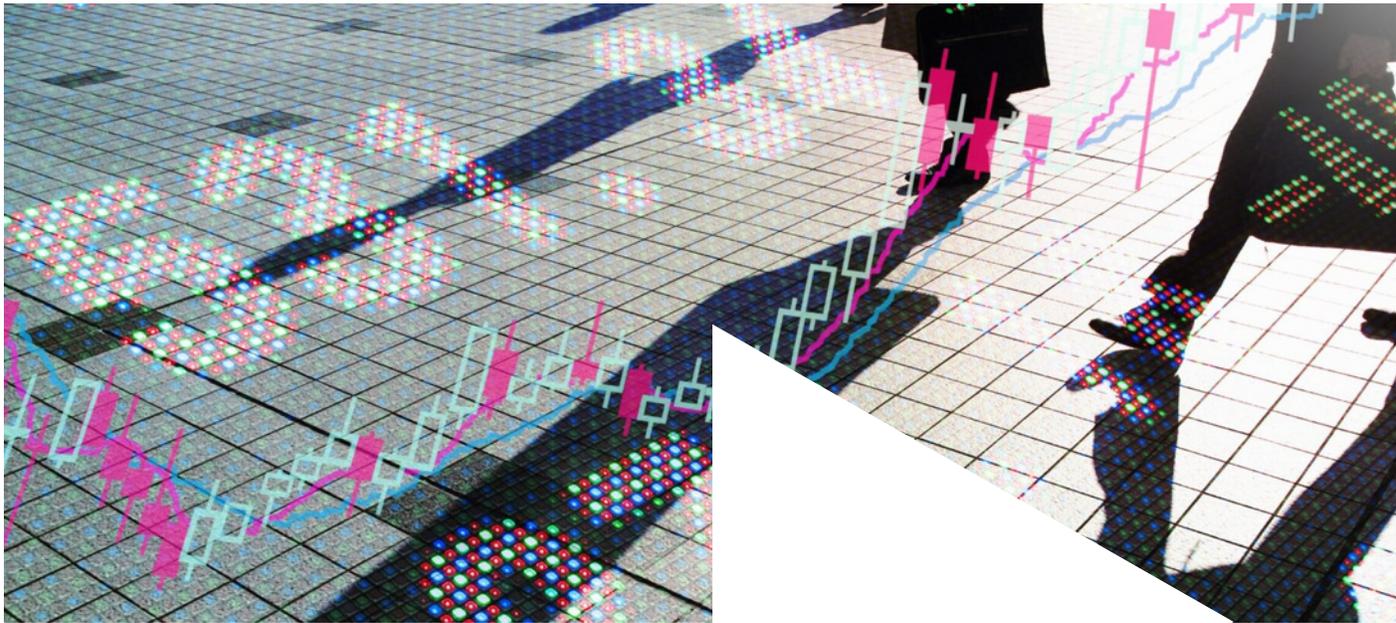


2024 Report

The Future of Audience Solutions

For Privacy-First Marketing in the Post-Cookie Era

amsive



Overview

As the marketing landscape evolves past reliance on cookies and IDs for targeting, many marketers feel unprepared to effectively reach their audiences at scale. Over half of marketing executives rank this as their top concern, yet [41%](#) say they are unfamiliar with alternative methods beyond third-party identifiers.

This confusion stems from the complexities of emerging solutions. Each solution offers potential pathways forward while presenting some challenges:

- Cohort-based solutions enable precise targeting but may introduce bias
- Universal IDs allow cross-site tracking yet require universal adoption
- Seller-defined audiences leverage interest and demographic data but may overlook valuable customers

While working with these audience solutions, it is important to also understand the emerging role of data clean rooms used by marketers to help them make smarter decisions. Data clean rooms provide insights from these three solutions, securely aggregating data in a privacy-safe way to do further analysis and more precise measurement. Only some agencies currently use data clean rooms to their full potential.

Marketers must skillfully navigate these nuances and understand each set of limitations to succeed in a post-cookie world. Doing so requires a solid understanding of how to leverage audience data, integrate new solutions into the marketing tech stack, mitigate potential downsides, and measure impact. Learn how to master the identity shift from cookies by focusing on your best customers and with a clear roadmap to unrivaled ROI.

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Marketers are concerned about reaching their target audiences.

In today's world, digital marketing has become a crucial tool for businesses to build new connections with their target audiences.

However, despite these potential benefits, marketers often face significant challenges in reaching target audiences efficiently at scale. One of the most pressing challenges is the integration of marketing data. According to a recent report, **77% of marketers say they don't have the quality audience data they need.**

This lack of integration makes it difficult for marketers to gain a comprehensive understanding of their target audiences and to effectively tailor efforts to meet those audiences' needs.

77%
of marketers **strongly agree** they don't have the quality audience data they need to make the most of their media budgets.

27%
of marketers report that their marketing data is **fully integrated** with their systems and tools.

The principles of direct marketing provide a roadmap to better performance in the digital marketing ecosystem. This approach focuses on well-built, known target audiences applied to a robust multichannel strategy. To build stronger customer relationships, increase brand awareness, and ultimately drive sales, all marketers must invest in audience strategies to efficiently and effectively achieve their goals while growing ROI.

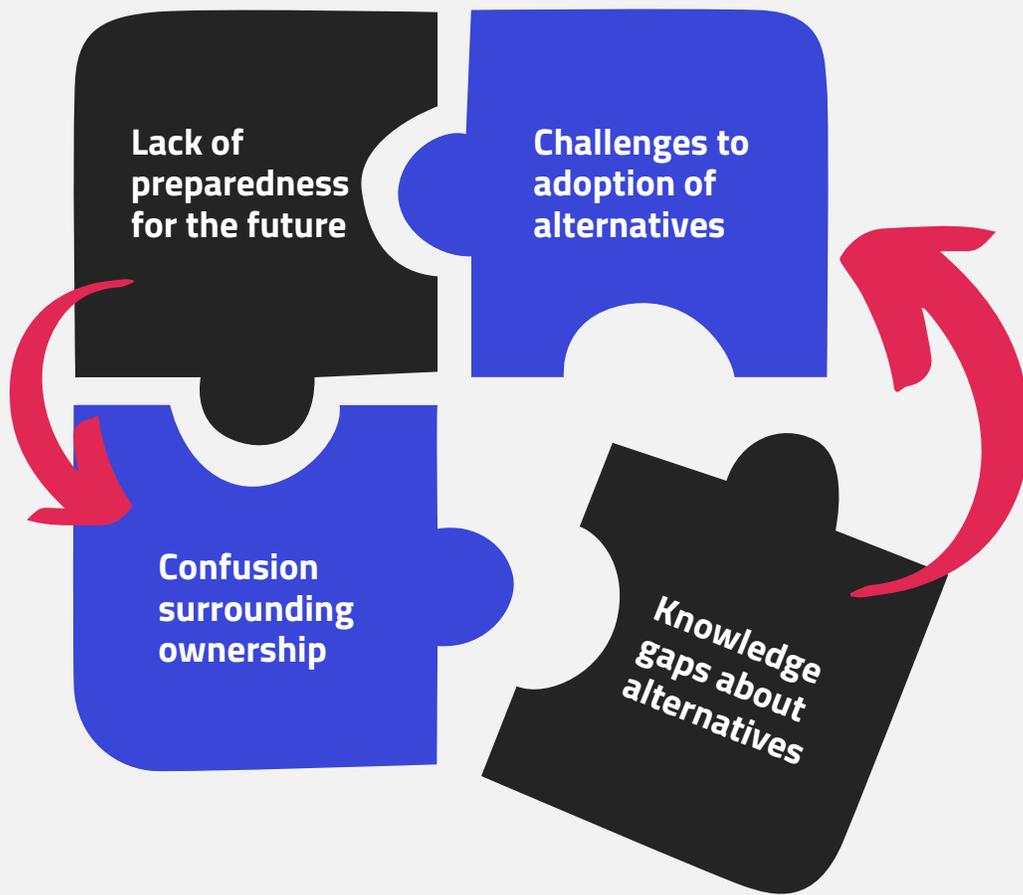


“The data that you need to know what’s working (*and what’s not*) lives in many places —first-party databases, walled gardens, and with data partners, to just name a few.



Inna Zeyger
Sr. Director, Digital Media





Many executives aren't prepared to adapt their audience solutions.

As third-party cookies and IDs are phased out, many executives and marketing leaders find their teams unprepared for this shift and face barriers to adopting alternative targeting and measurement solutions. Many advertisers lack familiarity with post-cookie methods, and some still believe the impact will be minimal, indicating a disparity in awareness. Companies have taken a reactive approach, assessing the ecosystem of potential solutions without clear-cutting an exact path through the confusion.



Some executives want to wait and see, thinking their revenue will not be significantly affected. However, time has run out to stay ahead of the curve. Whether trusting ad tech to decide for your team or first-party data alone to pick up the slack, lacking a clear audience strategy in the post-cookie era can keep you behind.

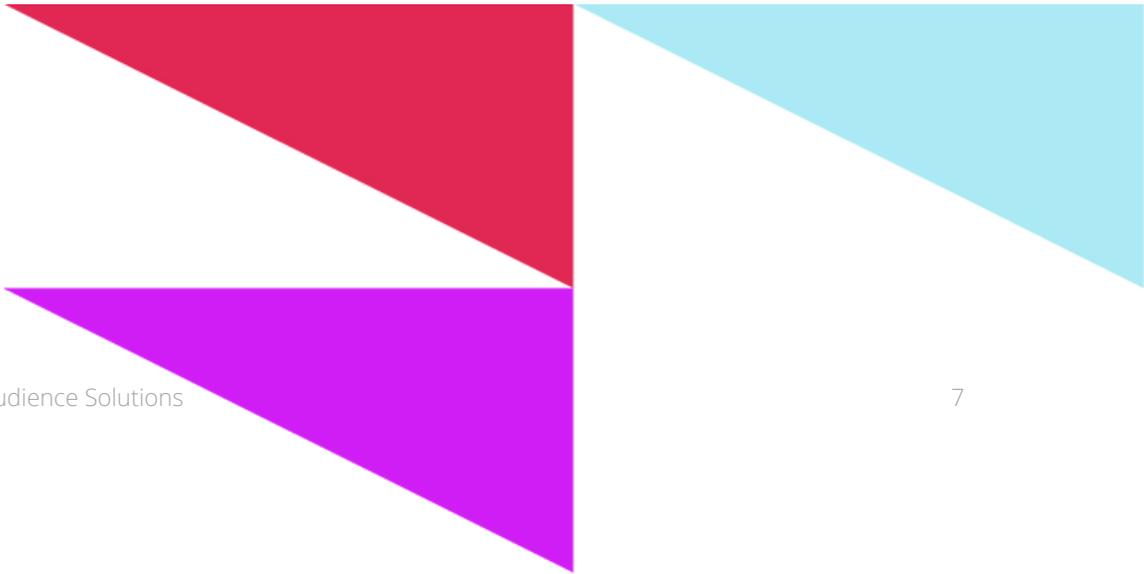


Executives also face adoption challenges, including navigating the technical complexity of various solutions. From privacy compliance to integrating multiple data sources, prioritizing adoption and investing in implementation sets up long-term success.



Ruben Quinones
SVP, Client Strategy

// If you think it's broken now, without tracking, it's going to be much worse. First-party data is only as scalable as the data you already have. You need a sizeable known audience to activate.



Types of Audience Solutions

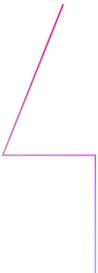
What audience solutions are businesses prioritizing? Which ones are best as cookie tracking goes away? We analyzed three solutions, sharing the opportunities and potential pitfalls to avoid within each one.



**Cohort-based
solutions**



**Universal ID
solutions**



**Seller-defined
audiences**



Consider cohort-based solutions

Cohort-based audiences define specific groups based on shared traits and behaviors from data sources into an organized format, allowing more personalized messaging and offers to your best segments.

Cohorts' shared attributes allow you to tailor content and experiences to match the distinct interests and needs of each group. For example, organizing every purchaser in the last 30 days vs. the last 48 hours. Marketers typically use a data management platform (DMP) to enhance and/or manage cohorts. They can also be uploaded to publisher platforms directly from CRM, CDP, or other managed data platforms.

Pros of cohort-based solutions



Cohorts allow you to define specific audience groups based on shared traits like demographics, behaviors, and interests from your DMP. This enables precise communication tailored to the attributes of each cohort.



Since cohorts have common attributes, you can craft personalized content and experiences designed specifically to resonate with the distinct needs of each group. This drives higher engagement.



Cohort modeling tools help you identify new audiences similar to your best customers. You can then reach these new "lookalike" segments, expanding your addressable market.



A huge benefit within a DMP is accessing the thousands of in-market intent signals. Once the modeled or lookalike audience is built, specific online activities can help identify and prioritize those that are closest to a purchase decision. Intent signals are an important function of a DMP and should be blended with other profile variables for campaign activation.



Analyzing how different cohorts interact with your brand over time offers valuable behavioral insights. These can inform data-led decisions to optimize marketing strategies.





Cons of cohort-based solutions



Deploying cohort solutions like customer data platforms (CDPs) and data management platforms (DMPs) can require extensive cross-departmental coordination and executive alignment. This complex process makes implementation time-intensive for enterprise organizations.



Leveraging cohort analysis demands developing specialized data science acumen. The steep learning curve poses adoption challenges for marketing teams without advanced analytics talent.



Though insightful, cohorts may fail to account for nuanced B2C and B2B buying behaviors outside defined attributes. This can restrict the development of holistic customer profiles.



Investment in an enterprise-level DMP is not for the faint of heart and can strain budgets if not utilized effectively or generating a greater return on marketing spend.



Build offline

Resolve

Build online

Understand universal ID solutions

A universal ID is a single identifier assigned to each user that allows their information to be shared with approved partners. It provides a shared identity to pinpoint the user across the supply chain.

Universal IDs are used in the digital marketing ecosystem to recognize users and associate information with them across different websites and devices. They are seen as a solution to siloed and entangled data, offering a single source of truth for a user's journey. Universal IDs can be authenticated or inferred, with authenticated IDs using unique pieces of user data.

Pros of universal ID solutions



Universal IDs create a persistent identifier that allows you to connect and synchronize data across multiple devices like desktop, mobile, tablets, and more. This provides a view of customer journeys.



Universal IDs enable you to seamlessly track users and coordinate messaging across different sites, apps, and platforms. This allows for consistent experiences.



By connecting behavioral, transactional, and other data across contexts into a unified ID, you can gain a more holistic view of each customer to enable more tailored and relevant personalization.

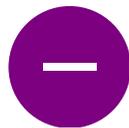


Universal IDs provide an alternative persistent identifier to third-party cookies that will allow continued cross-site tracking and audience identification as cookies are phased out, future-proofing your marketing.

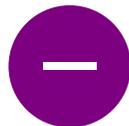




Cons of universal ID solutions



Yet, developing, integrating, and maintaining a Universal ID system necessitates upfront investment and ongoing costs, which gives some brands pause.



Implementing Universal ID technology requires extensive integration work across diverse sites, apps, devices, and platforms. This complex process can be resource-intensive.



Universal IDs require the highest levels of privacy and security with businesses needing a reliable privacy-compliant business partner to achieve this work.



Refine seller-defined audiences

A seller-defined audience (SDA) allows publishers to create custom audience segments that buyers can target with ads, introduced by IAB Tech Lab.

The publisher defines specific audiences based on its own first-party data like site behaviors, purchase history, and other proprietary signals. Buyers can then purchase access to target these audiences across the publisher's owned-and-operated media.

SDAs provide value by giving buyers access to the publisher's audiences in a privacy-safe way without sharing underlying data. This can address the loss of third-party cookies, as SDAs rely on contextual data within the publisher's domain rather than external tracking.

Pros of SDAs



SDAs utilize the publisher's own robust, proprietary first-party data on their users and customers that is not available anywhere else.



Buyers can target niche audiences without getting access to any raw data, keeping user data private and protected.

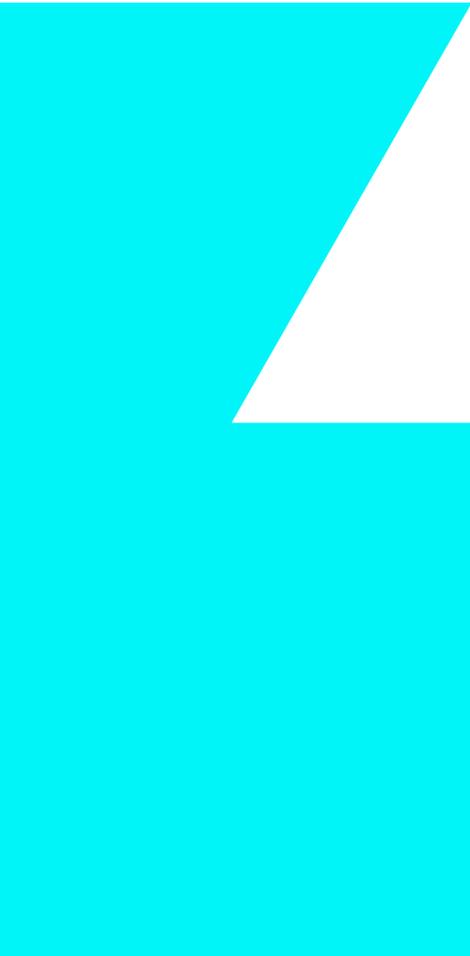


SDAs rely on contextual signals and behaviors on the publisher's owned properties so they are cookieless and privacy-friendly.



Publishers can partner to make their SDAs available across many sites, enabling buyers to scale targeted campaigns.





Cons of SDAs



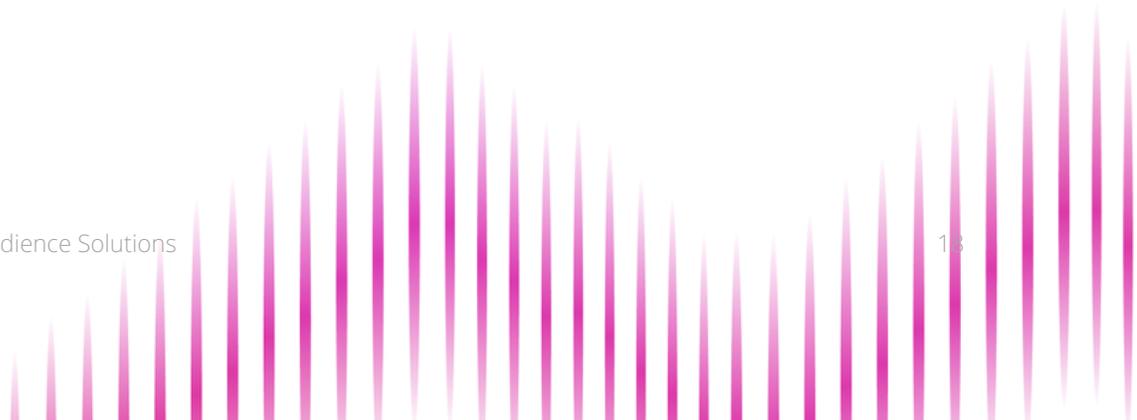
However, SDAs only include users on the publisher's properties, so reach is limited compared to third-party data.



SDAs keep audiences siloed within each publisher's ecosystem versus sharing data across sites. This perpetuates walled gardens.



Unlike third-party segments, advertisers have less visibility into the composition and performance of SDAs since underlying data isn't shared.



Privacy in audience solutions

There are **differences and nuances to consider** in order to understand how to navigate the new consumer data protections that were recently implemented in California, Virginia, Colorado, Connecticut, and Utah. Reviewing and making adjustments to ensure your business is compliant needs to be a key step – if you aren't already compliant, there are tools available to help ensure compliance with even the strictest of these new laws.

Beyond ensuring you meet the base requirements for compliance, what extra steps is your business taking to protect consumer privacy? How are you setting yourself apart from your competitors? Implementing and enforcing stringent consumer data protection practices can signal to consumers that you're serious about their privacy. Exactly how you implement this can vary, but establishing transparency with your business's data collection practices and surfacing how that information is being used can go a long way toward earning consumer trust.



Amsive has a long history of protecting consumer data privacy and follows strict industry compliance standards. This is just business as usual. It's just a few more flavors that we have to pay attention to.



Ray Owens
EVP, Customer Intelligence



Understand the role of data clean rooms

A data clean room is a secure environment that allows organizations to collect and analyze customer data from various sources while maintaining privacy and enforcing security controls. For the three audience solutions presented, data clean rooms offer a space for analysis and can unlock new levels of insight to strengthen marketing strategies.

This is particularly useful for companies with sensitive or regulated data, as it allows them to collaborate and share insights without compromising privacy. Data clean rooms enable the measurement of customer performance without the use of personally identifying information (PII) data, which has been replaced by an anonymous ID that can be used for various data analysis purposes.

Dig into data clean rooms



Data clean rooms allow secure and private data sharing and collaboration between parties without exposing raw data.



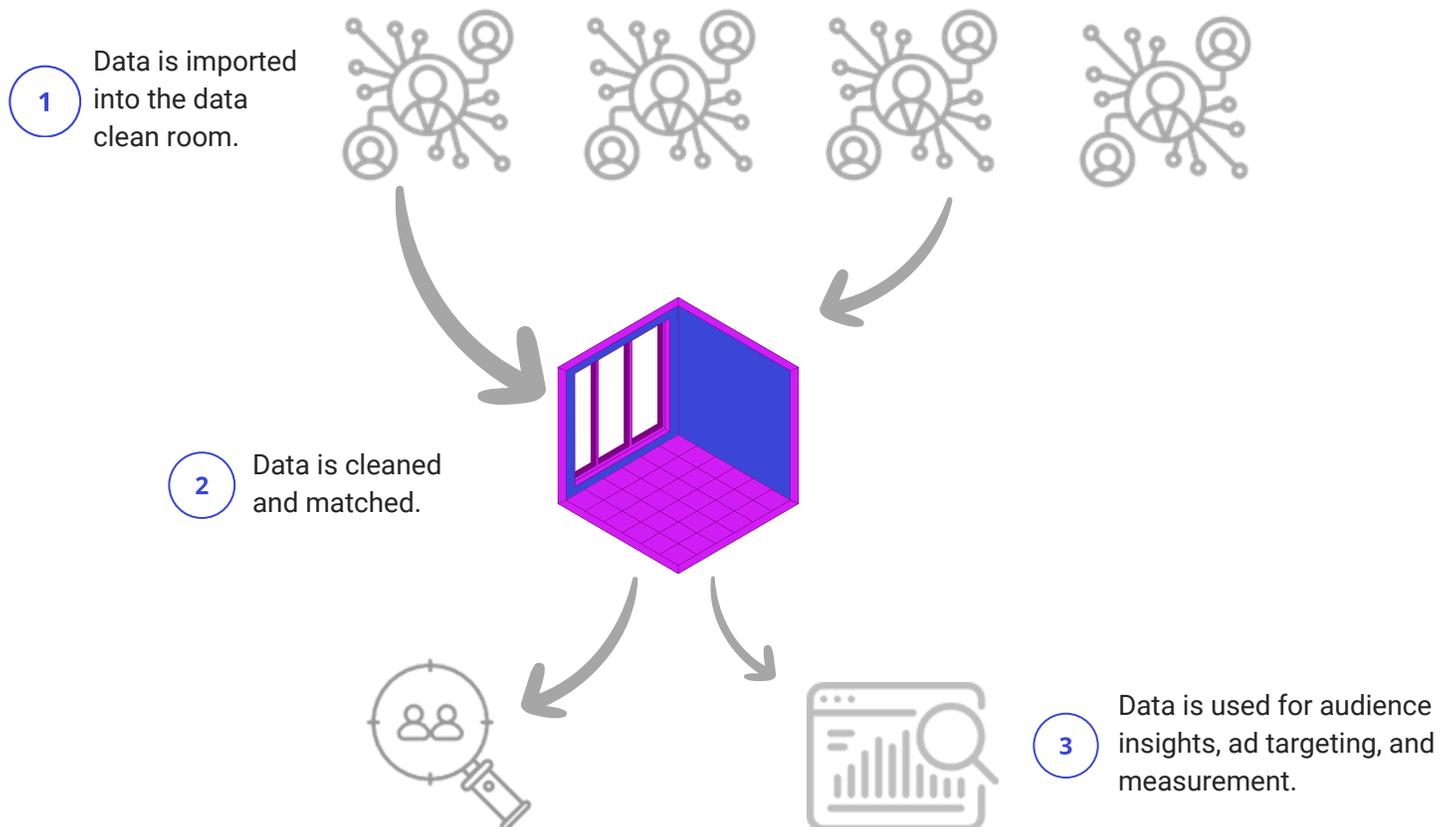
Brands can gain insights into their customers and prospects by matching their data with partners' data.

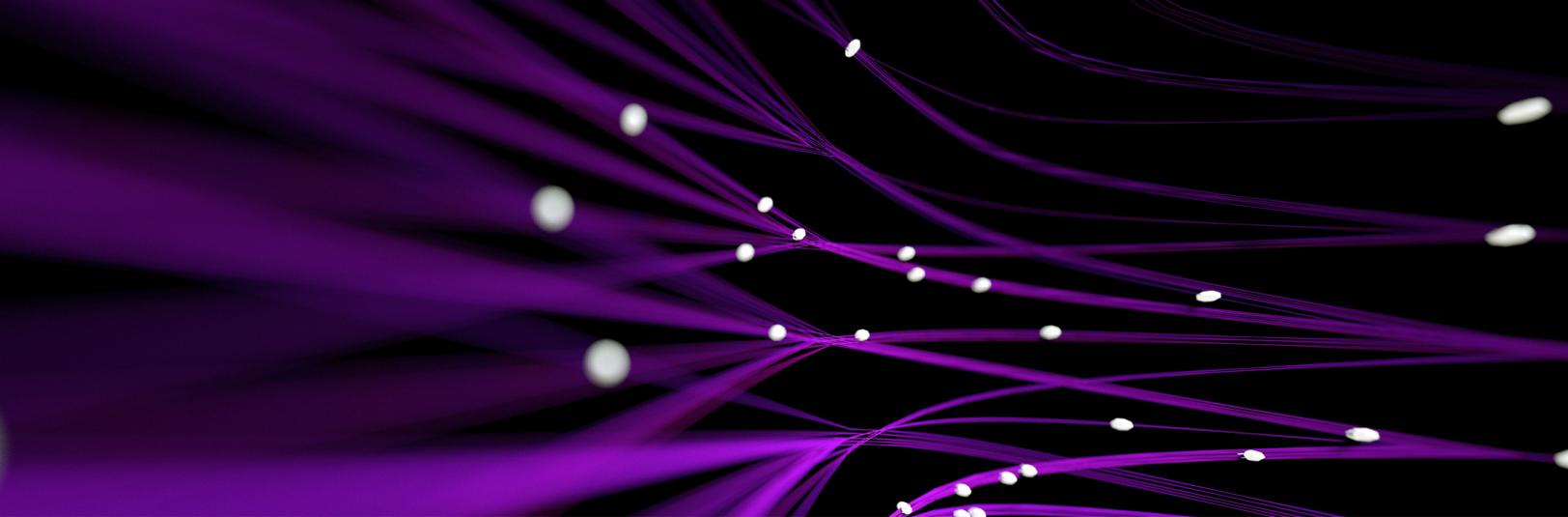


Data clean rooms keep brands' and partners' data separate while allowing match rates against shared attributes.



After being cleaned and matched, data is used for audience insights, ad targeting, and measurement, sharing data in a secure and compliant manner.





Considerations for data clean rooms



However, developing clean room collaborations involves coordination across many teams like legal, data, and media.



Although they share audiences, clean rooms still face walled garden limitations around measurement, identity, and inventory.



Each clean room collaboration is unique, requiring separate setup for broader partnerships.



“ Why would you want to waste your marketing dollars on someone who doesn’t want to see your messaging in the first place? ”



Allison Olson
SVP, Media Analytics



Audience Analysis Matrix

Consider the following questions as you weigh the right audience solutions to improve your marketing performance.

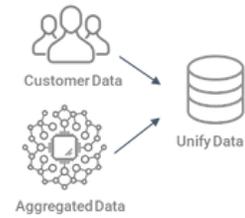
<p>What are our key marketing objectives and KPIs? Different solutions excel at different goals like acquisition, retention, engagement etc.</p>	<p>What level of identity resolution do we need? Do we need to track users across devices and contexts?</p>	<p>How much access to third-party data do we require? Or can we rely more on first-party data?</p>
<p>What are our technical capabilities? Can we implement and integrate complex solutions?</p>	<p>What marketing channels will we need to target audiences across? Some solutions have broader reach.</p>	<p>How important is consumer privacy and consent? Some options raise more concerns.</p>
<p>What is our budget? Certain solutions require significant investment.</p>	<p>How quickly do we need to implement and see ROI? Some require lengthy setup.</p>	<p>Does our current marketing partner support the solution? Adoption can impact success.</p>
<p>How will we measure performance and optimize? Solutions vary in measurement capabilities.</p>	<p>How will we measure performance and optimize? Solutions vary in measurement capabilities.</p>	<p>How sensitive is our customer data? Some solutions like clean rooms are more secure for regulated data.</p>

Your answers to these questions can help develop your audience strategy. Regardless of which audience solutions you use, the use of data clean rooms offers unprecedented insight that can uniquely strengthen your strategy and unlock new levels of marketing performance.

With experience and expertise in data clean rooms, Amsive can draw out insights and apply them to actionable strategy, while helping to determine which set of audience solutions is best for your business.



What's next for your audience strategy?



As third-party cookies fade into the past, the identity solutions emerging to take their place each come with unique opportunities and limitations. Navigating this complex landscape requires consumer intelligence expertise, strategic digital prowess, and a performance marketing mindset for strategic testing and optimization.

While challenges await, the identity shift also offers possibilities to strengthen consumer trust through privacy-focused strategies. By evaluating new options like cohort modeling, Universal IDs, and seller-defined audiences and understanding the role of data clean rooms in audience strategy and analysis, you can determine the best approaches for your brand.

No solution is one-size-fits-all. But with careful navigation informed by your best customers and prospects, you can effectively adapt ahead of the post-cookie era. Approach identity with your accurate target audiences in mind, and lean on experts while keeping your data strategy focused on driving measurable performance.

As cookies crumble, brands have new opportunities to understand, develop, and improve connections with their best customers, unlocking greater value and unrivaled ROI.

Plan for the privacy-first future. Power results with Audience Science™.

Customer Intelligence

When using a clean room environment ensure consumers' data privacy and security for industries with highly regulated data.

Audience Development

Develop more accurate segmentation and predictive models. Amsive does this with our multi-sourced agency data platform Xact™.

Measurement Solutions

There's customer intelligence outside of your current data limits and licensing, regardless of how much 1P data you have. With the right agency partner, you can go further.

Unique audience insights can fuel superior marketing performance — and unrivaled ROI.



A case study in amplified enrollment.

The right combination of audience solutions, marketing strategy, and channel tactics lead to amplified ROI. Using Audience Science™ and targeted creative strategies, we helped a Midwest Regional Plan surpass national benchmarks in the highly competitive Medicare Advantage market, achieving unparalleled campaign performance and efficient conversions.

Unrivaled enrollment and campaign performance in the most competitive AEP season yet.

Our audience strategy and multichannel execution included TV, radio, direct mail, search, digital media, social, and more.

Amsive's unique approach revealed unprecedented results compared to national benchmarks, exceeding the Midwest Regional Plan's enrollment goal by an additional 25%.

With lower costs and higher conversions, our approach set a new bar for marketing performance across the entire Medicare Advantage marketplace.

400%

higher conversion rate than the industry benchmark

2X

more households enrolled from leads than the industry benchmark

90%

lower cost-per-acquisition than the industry benchmark



Ready to meet your best customers?

Amsive is a data-led performance marketing agency that enhances marketing ROI.

As a full-service agency, Amsive enables growth by leveraging digital and direct-native expertise, with dedicated teams shaping powerful strategies, creative executions, direct mail, and digital marketing, including SEO, paid search, media, and performance measurement.

At the core of Amsive's success is Audience Science™, a unique approach to audience building and analysis, channel activation, testing, and measurement, which navigates today's marketing complexity to develop optimal audiences and surpass performance objectives, always focusing on the next best customer.

Learn more about Amsive.

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