Google

The publisher's playbook for navigating today's privacy environment

A guide to help content creators and digital storefronts evolve their monetization strategies

What's inside

At a glance

Growing user concerns about privacy have set in motion a series of changes that will reshape the digital advertising ecosystem for years to come. Managing a digital advertising business can seem a lot more complicated these days, especially with the added pressure and uncertainty that many are feeling due to COVID-19, but there are several opportunities for publishers to turn these changes into new opportunities. By testing new strategies and evolving their business practices, publishers can sustain and grow their revenues — while respecting people's preferences for privacy.

To do this, publishers should:

Build direct relationships with your users by offering them valuable services that enhance their experience.

Collect and manage user data responsibly by providing clear privacy policies and ensuring that you offer users transparency, choice, and control.

Use your data to segment your audiences and monetize effectively across both ads and other revenue-generating solutions.

Consolidate and secure your data in the cloud so you can use machine learning to predict outcomes and optimize revenue without compromising user privacy.

Above all, publishers should invest in building expertise and deploying the necessary technology to accomplish their goals in privacy-forward ways. By shifting your approach in key areas you'll be better prepared to respond to whatever changes come next.

In this playbook we address the realities of changing privacy demands, showcase how Google solutions can help you navigate the landscape, and share examples from leading publishers who are finding success today.

The changing privacy landscape

People are consuming more content than ever before, but sustaining your growth and revenue in today's world is increasingly difficult, especially with the disruption caused by COVID-19. Part of the challenge for publishers is balancing the opportunities afforded by data-driven approaches with users' increasing privacy concerns.

+50% In fact, searches for "online privacy" have grown globally by more than 50% year over year.*

Currently, the ad industry is shifting to address these concerns. Plus, multiple countries have already passed user privacy regulations, while others are working to expand existing laws. And technology platforms, such as web browsers and mobile operating systems, have announced or implemented policies that restrict the use of data.

These changes create important considerations for publishers and their advertiser clients as they look to position themselves for the future. For instance, the ways publishers and advertisers currently use third-party cookies for personalization and measurement are expected to change, and have already stopped working on some web browsers.

Creating audience lists and personalizing ads. Between regulation and platform changes, there's now heightened attention to, and more limitations on, the sources of data that can be used to package audiences and personalize ads.

Managing ad frequency. Restrictions on third-party cookies have made it harder to manage how many times people see the ads you serve. As a result, you risk irritating users — and damaging your brand — when you show them the same ad too many times.

Measuring performance. Cookies and other identifiers are used to attribute conversions to digital media. So when these measurement tools are constrained, it becomes harder to accurately report on and evaluate how your ads are performing, especially for view-through and cross-device conversions.

Some of the techniques industry players are using to address these challenges don't meet user expectations for privacy. Take fingerprinting for example, which combines very specific information about the user's browser or device (down to the screen resolution and installed fonts) to identify and track an individual user, without providing the user with meaningful information about the practice or a means to control it. Adopting these practices - or using vendors who do so on your behalf - could risk damage to your reputation and may carry potential enforcement consequences in the future as regulations continue to evolve.

With so much in flux and so much at stake, it's critical you have a playbook for how to navigate today's environment so you can maintain audience growth and revenue while respecting and protecting the privacy of your users.

01

Build direct relationships with your customers

Even in a landscape of evolving user expectations and regulations, publishers still need to know who their audiences are, package their inventory to add value for users and deliver results for advertisers. As users continue to embrace different ways of engaging with, paying for and consuming publisher content, there are more opportunities than ever before to form meaningful, trusted relationships with them.

We recommend publishers:

- ✓ **Offer users products and features that enhance their experiences**
- ✓ **Provide users transparency and control over how their data is used**
- ✓ **Work with partners who also put users first**

Offer users products and features that enhance their experiences

When people engage directly with your content it's an opportunity to learn more about who they are and what they're looking for. The data that can be collected from these direct interactions is considered to be first-party data, a reliable source of information to help you deliver relevant ads and experiences.

When your audiences give you permission to use their data, they expect to get something in return. Creating a fair value exchange by enhancing their experiences is critical to growing and developing deeper user relationships. The primary value most publishers provide their users is original content that's entertaining, informative, or helpful. And there are several ways that publishers can connect users with their content, while also building out their first-party audience data.

Offer **paid subscriptions** with **free trials** that provide access to premium content.

Create **membership** and/or **email newsletter programs** to offer audiences early or exclusive access.

Host **free virtual events** that offer unique opportunities for your users to engage with your content in new and different ways.

Develop **reward programs** with exclusive promotions, deals, or coupons from you or your advertiser clients.

Tell customers to download your **mobile app** and offer services and experiences that can be appreciated on a mobile device.

Send **alerts and notifications** to let audiences know when content they like has been published.

This is a small sample of the creative ways you can add value and build better relationships with your audiences. Once you have identified which of these strategies you intend to use, you'll need to take the necessary steps to ensure you are collecting, managing, and activating your data in privacy-forward ways.

How it works with Google

Use Subscribe with Google

Subscribe with Google is a suite of products that help news publishers build sustainable digital businesses by growing direct consumer revenue streams through subscriptions and user retention.

When users subscribe this way, they can use their Google account and payment methods, eliminating the need for account registration, memorizing new passwords, or entering credit cards. Google manages the subscription, but publishers choose what to offer and manage the customer relationship.

Subscribe with Google also helps existing subscribers and members enjoy your content more easily. Users who register through Google will stay logged in to your properties across devices, and be able to quickly access your premium content across Google touchpoints, like Search and Google News.

Case study | **REFORMA**

Grupo Reforma boosts conversion rates by 43% using Subscribe with Google

Grupo Reforma, a news publisher in Mexico, has always sought new ways to attract readers and remain relevant amid a constantly changing publishing landscape.

In 2003, they launched a paywall, becoming one of the first news organizations to prioritize online reader revenue in their business model.

Seeking to attract a younger demographic and an international audience interested in news and editorial opinion from Mexico, Grupo Reforma became a launch partner for Subscribe with Google in 2018.

Just months after adding a Subscribe with Google option to their premium content paywall, Grupo Reforma saw **conversion rates increase 43%** compared to the traditional buy-flow. They also saw that their Subscribe with Google **users consumed 13% more content** on average compared to their direct digital subscribers.

"For the user, Subscribe with Google is an attractive and direct way to buy a digital subscription, avoiding friction and confusion. It helps readers use their time to read your work, instead of struggling to get access to it."

Juan Pardinas, Publisher of Grupo Reforma
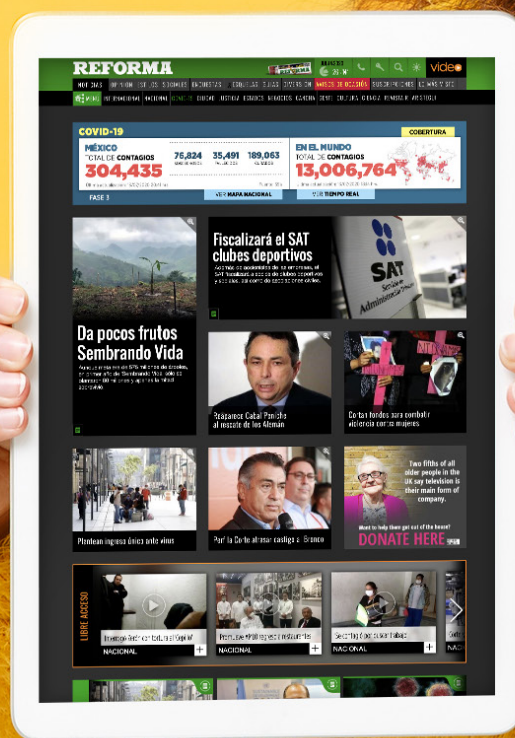
Provide users transparency and control over how their data is used

Around the world, government policymakers are developing regulations that support people's rights to control how sites and apps use their data. Beyond Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), similar regulations are currently in place in Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and Australia, expected to take effect in the coming months in Brazil and Thailand, and are being considered in India as well as dozens of U.S. states.

Here's what we recommend publishers do now so they can be prepared as new regulations go live in the coming months and years:

Work with your legal team to ensure your privacy practices meet the requirements of the current laws, and work to better understand how future regulations may impact your business around the world.

Be transparent about data collection and usage and make sure your privacy policy is up-to-date with your latest practices. Consider explaining the contents of your policy in a way that uses simple language and minimizes legal terms where possible. Make it easy for people to understand what information is collected, how it's going to be used, who it may be shared with and why, and what value they're going to get should they give you permission to use their information.

Implement a Consent Management Platform (CMP) where appropriate to ensure your users have transparency into and control over how their data is used. While publishers with specific needs have the option to build their own consent solutions, using a CMP often makes it easier for publishers and developers to gather and manage consent from their website and app visitors, so that they can deliver personalized ads, provide a better user experience, and continue to monetize their digital content.

How it works with Google

Use Funding Choices

Google's Consent Management Platform, Funding Choices, is a free and easy-to-use messaging tool to help publishers communicate with users to gather consent or opt-out requests required by privacy regulations like GDPR and CCPA, or to recover lost revenue from ad blocking users. It's integrated with Google Ad Manager and Google AdMob, and is certified compliant with the IAB's Europe's Transparency and Consent Framework (TCF) v2.0, offering an industry-wide standard to communicate consent between parties.

Note: Currently Funding Choices offers features for only GDPR and CCPA privacy regulations. Visit the Ad Manager or AdMob help center, depending on which product you use, to find out how to get started with Funding Choices. Funding Choices plans to integrate with AdSense later in 2020.

Use Advanced Consent Solutions

Funding Choices is a simple, easy-to-use platform, but publishers with significant first-party data or use cases beyond personalized advertising should determine which compliance solutions make the most sense for their business. Publishers using Google's advertising solutions may choose several different paths to obtaining consent from their European Economic Area users to comply with Google's updated European Union Consent policy. Publishers can also leverage our CCPA solution to help with their compliance needs.

Work with partners who also put users first

Publishers often need to work with external partners to help bridge technical gaps in their privacy and first-party data strategies. It's important to ensure that the partners you choose to work with share your values, and also prioritize user privacy.

Here are some questions you might want to ask when vetting current or potential partners:

Do they explain to users the types of data they collect and for what purposes?

Do they have the right systems to record user preference and consent?

How do they offer users control over how data is collected and used?

How will they show that they're meeting the applicable regulatory requirements?

Have they also assessed and approved their partners' approach to data and compliance?

With so many different laws being introduced around the world, you'll want to invite legal experts to weigh in on whether practices comply with local laws for collecting, using and sharing data. This includes what choices you and your partners are required to offer people by region.

It also makes sense to be wary of practices and partners that don't offer users enough transparency or control, or those who try to work around people's choices. These techniques may seem like convenient workarounds but can pose a significant risk to your business, both in terms of reputational damage and regulatory consequences — especially as governments continue to evolve their definitions of what's permissible.

How it works with Google

Increased user demand for privacy continues to result in additional privacy regulations. Google is working to help our partners comply globally, as it relates to our products.

GDPR

As part of Google's commitment to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), we provide publishers using Ad Manager, AdMob, and AdSense with controls to select which ad technology providers are allowed to serve and measure ads in the European Economic Area (EEA) and the UK, to support ad delivery, ad measurement, and other functions.

We have also built solutions that allow publishers to offer non personalized ads (NPA) to their users in the EEA and the UK.

CCPA

With the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) taking effect in California on January 1, 2020, Google introduced Restricted Data Processing (RDP) which allows advertisers, publishers and partners to restrict how data is used with Google's ads products. Subject to the terms of the CCPA service provider addendum, Google will act as a company's service provider with respect to data processed while Restricted Data Processing is enabled.

02

Be flexible with how you use data to segment and monetize your audiences

With the use of third-party data facing new restrictions across the ads ecosystem, collecting, analyzing, and activating your first-party data to improve and optimize your monetization strategies is critical to your future success. To ensure you are earning the most from your content and audience engagement, you should get comfortable using multiple data activation techniques and monetization strategies to sustain and grow your revenue.

Here are the four ways we recommend using data now to add value for your audiences and advertisers:

- ✓ **Use first-party data to deliver helpful ads**
- ✓ **Use analytics to inform and optimize your advertising strategies**
- ✓ **Use contextual data to connect advertisers with interested audiences**
- ✓ **Use data to inform your non-advertising monetization strategies**

> We're committed to innovation and we expect to introduce new product solutions in the months ahead to help advance your business in these areas.

Use first-party data to deliver helpful ads

First-party data is valuable because it can help you understand your audiences, and the types of ads and experiences they'd find meaningful. By exploring different ways to use first-party data in a privacy-centric way you can deliver more helpful ads for your users, improve performance for your advertisers, and boost revenue for your business.

To activate first-party data in your directly-sold campaigns, you should start by creating a unique, pseudonymous identifier for each of your users in your existing databases. You can assign identifiers to your users in audience platforms like Data Management Platforms (DMP) or Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software.

Once you've put information security features in place and created identifiers, you can build audience lists or segments based on first-party data like demographics, content preferences, and activity history while ensuring users' data remains secure. Your segments can then be ingested or transferred into your ad management platform for packaging, marketing, and activation.

First-party data segments allow you to deliver personalized ad campaigns and frequency cap across different devices in a privacy-forward way without the use of third-party cookies.

How it works with Google

Use Google Ad Manager

Google Ad Manager partners with existing first-party datasets can use Publisher Provided Identifiers (PPIDs) to create encrypted user IDs, build audiences, and deliver ads to first-party audience segments. The identifier must be hashed, anonymous, and must not contain any personal information, third-party identifiers or device IDs.

Currently, Ad Manager's PPID capabilities only support direct reservation deals, but we are exploring expanding these capabilities to programmatic transaction types for buyer decisioning in the future.

To ingest your PPID audience segments into your Ad Manager account, use batch upload which is a part of the platform's Audience Solutions feature.

Once your audiences have been added to Ad Manager, you can also create new segments natively within the platform. Ad Manager Audience Solutions allows publishers to create custom audience segments based on data from your ads, websites, and apps. These lists can then be applied in line items and used to add value to your offerings for advertisers and buyers.

Here's how you can build first-party audience segments natively in the Ad Manager platform:

- ✅ Create first-party audience segments of users with PPIDs that have seen certain ad units, ad placements, or been exposed to ads with key-values.

- ✅ Build first-party audience segments of users with PPIDs that have visited certain pages by adding a 1x1 transparent Audience pixel tag to your site or mobile app.

Condé Nast doubles down on first-party data

Condé Nast has spent over 100 years building real relationships with their customers, allowing the company to become deeply integrated into the lives of over one billion consumers worldwide, including 1 in 2 American households. That trust provides Condé Nast with over one trillion first-party data points each month, which are fed into the company's Spire data platform.

Through the Spire platform, Condé Nast is able to create personalized ad experiences for consumers across all of their touchpoints. To power the delivery of personalized ads across their owned digital channels, Condé Nast uses Google Ad Manager's Audience Solutions features.

According to third-party research conducted over the past three years by Millward Brown and Dynata, marketers who deploy campaigns using Spire data have experienced a 15 point lift in brand awareness and 13 point lift in purchase intent on average versus campaigns that are not using Spire data.

"First-party data has allowed us to improve customer experiences across our properties by increasing advertising personalization, providing content recommendations, and respecting consumer opt-outs. The virtuous cycle of personalization has in turn led to higher engagement and additional data assets, while giving our customers what they want, and building trust."

Karthic Bala, Chief Data Officer, Condé Nast
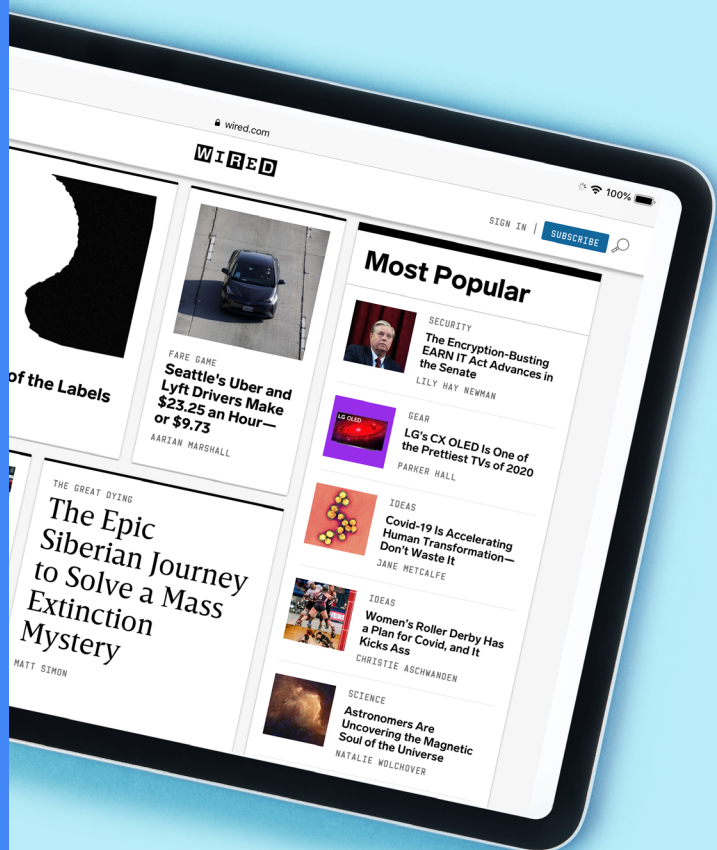
Use analytics to inform and optimize your advertising strategies

Understanding how users engage with your content and behave across your sites and apps can lead to meaningful insights that make your ad inventory more valuable, your ad campaigns more effective, and improve your subscriber conversion rates.

We recommend using analytics software across your properties to learn more about your users' journeys, content consumption trends, and how user behavior impacts advertising and other revenue strategies.

Insights like these will help you create new audience segments like in-market and affinity categories in your ad management platform, adding value and performance for your advertiser clients. They will also help you develop a better understanding of which users are most likely to subscribe to your services, and how best to promote your services and offerings to them.

How it works with Google

Use Google Analytics 360
Google Analytics 360 gives you the tools you need to better understand how your users are engaging with your content across your sites and apps. You can then use those insights to take action, such as improving your website performance, optimizing your editorial or content strategies, or informing your advertising strategies and audience segments based on users' behaviors. Additionally, Analytics 360 can easily integrate with other Google solutions like Ad Manager and Cloud.

Use Google Surveys
Publishers who use Google Surveys can design custom surveys to get fast, reliable insights. Looking for self-reported feedback on which ad formats users prefer, or who is most likely to subscribe to your services or what they might be inclined to pay for them? Use Surveys to get instant feedback in easy-to-digest graphs and charts that help you make sense of your data.

Case study | **Kgmedia**
trusted connected

Kompas Gramedia increases CPMs 25% with Google Analytics 360

KG Media, Indonesia's largest publishing conglomerate, needed a better understanding of their readers to deliver better results for advertisers. To accomplish this, they used Google Analytics 360 to learn more about their travel audience, specifically those people who were researching travel, but hadn't yet bought airline tickets.

Using these insights, KG Media then created an audience list to reach these users and ran a Programmatic Guaranteed campaign in Google Ad Manager with an airline advertiser. This approach helped Kompas, one of the KG Media properties, **increase CPMs by 25 percent** and helped the advertiser **lower cost per flight search by 80 percent**.

"By linking Google Analytics 360 and Google Ad Manager, we were able to develop advanced audience-segmentation strategies for our advertisers. Building these new data-centric capabilities helped us greatly increase our CPMs."

Moch Rifki, Vice GM Marketing Digital & Print, KG Media
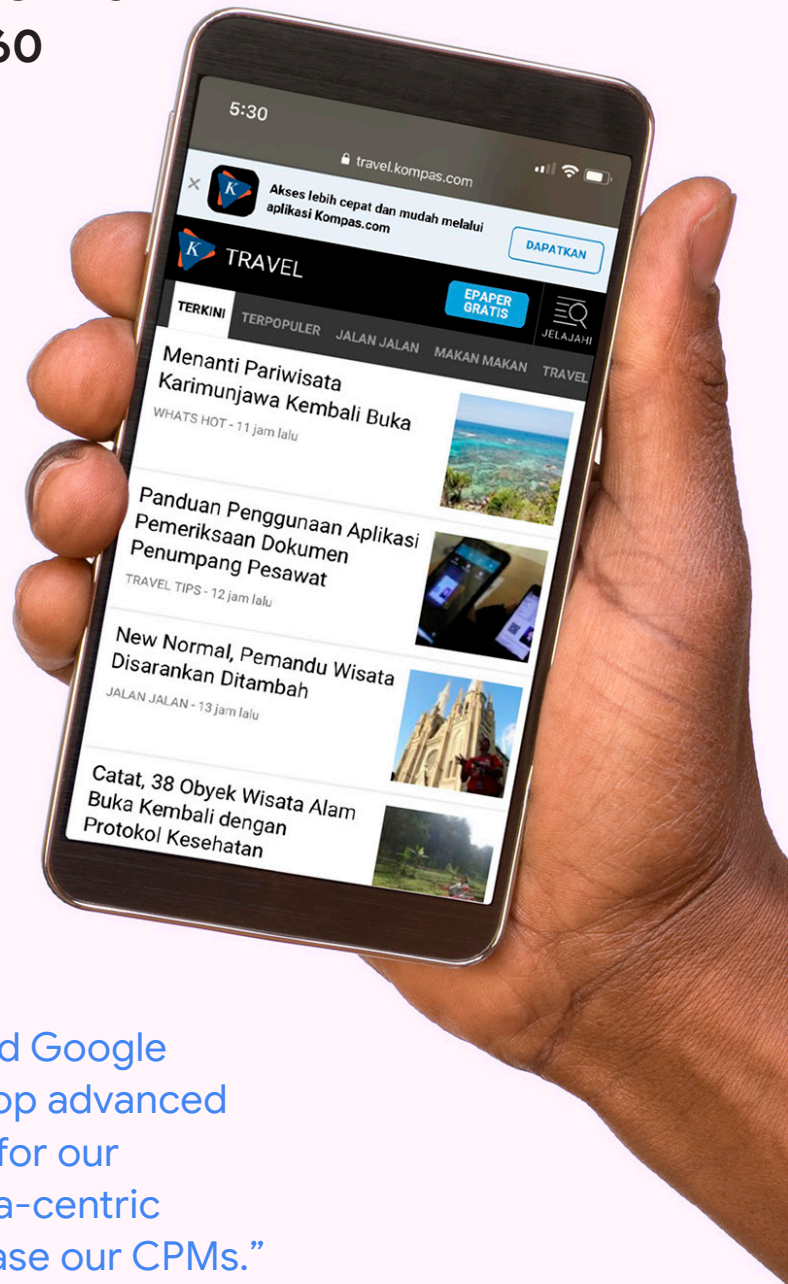
Use contextual data to connect advertisers with interested audiences

Contextual data is one of the oldest and most accessible ways for publishers to create compelling privacy-centric audience lists for advertisers. In practice it's very simple. For example, when you categorize articles or videos as content about "personal fitness," it's safe to assume that advertisers looking to reach fitness enthusiasts would be interested in placing ads on that content.

While on the surface this seems straightforward, sophisticated publishers invest a lot of time adding additional granularity to their contextual signals, which in turn adds value and creates more opportunities for their inventory. To use the example above, if you create additional sub-categories for "personal fitness" content like "yoga," "cycling," or "running," advertisers can further personalize their messaging and you can charge a higher CPM for the more specific audience.

🔧 How it works with Google

Use Google Ad Manager
Using the Ad Manager platform, publishers can create, market, and reach audiences based on contextual signals using key-values. Key-values help you better understand your users, market your inventory more effectively, and earn more for your traffic.

Forecast on key-values:
Once you've added key-values to the ad tags on your website, and enough time has passed to gather data, you'll be able to see how large your contextual audiences are, which will allow you to package and market your audiences more effectively.

Sell on key-values:
Once your audiences have been packaged, you can sell your inventory using direct and indirect transaction types. If you have a large and valuable segment, we recommend using direct deals like Programmatic Guaranteed to extract additional value.

Report on key-values:
You can report on key-values using the key-values dimension, select the keys you want to include in reports, transform your most important keys into custom dimensions, and see when reporting settings for keys were changed.

Use data to improve your non-advertising monetization strategies

Understanding and implementing your first-party audience data can open many new advertising opportunities. But it can also create or improve alternative revenue models as well.

Today, leading publishers are creating better relationships with their users by offering service options that best suit their preferences or create additional value. In some cases this may mean offering users lighter or ad-free experiences via subscriptions, access to exclusive content, or simply creating new vehicles to deliver useful information about the content they love.

Whichever services you decide to offer your costumers, using your first-party data can help you improve performance and drive revenue.

How it works with Google

There are a combination of ways you can use Google solutions to power and inform your non-advertising monetization strategies. Here are a few recommendations to get started.

Use Subscribe with Google
Subscribe with Google offers your users a streamlined payment process and delivers no-friction access to your content across multiple Google touchpoints like Search and News when subscribers are logged into their Google accounts.

Use Google Data Studio
Google Data Studio helps publishers easily import and visualize their data from spreadsheets, Google Analytics, Google Ad Manager, BigQuery, and many other dashboards or databases. See up-to-date reports for multiple projects and data sources in one easy interface. Data Studio is integrated with over 150 cloud, SQL, e-commerce, and digital advertising platforms.

While Data Studio can be used to inform your advertising strategies, it also works well for publishers looking to learn more about their users and optimize revenue strategies across disparate areas of their business.

Use News Consumer Insights
The News Consumer Insights report uses the funnel concept to visualize different reader segments in Google Analytics 360 to better understand how they engage with your site. The end goal is to provide insights that help you move users from the "Casual Readers" segment down the funnel to becoming "Loyal Readers", or even "Subscribers".

Case study | 集英社 | SHUEISHA Inc.

Shueisha uses Google Data Studio to turn insights into action

Shueisha is a major Japanese publishing company known for comics, magazines, and books. Alongside its print businesses, Shueisha has embraced the digital revolution. It now develops apps, including Shonen Jump+, which has been downloaded more than 15 million times and boasts over 4 million monthly active users.

To measure the success of Shonen Jump+, Shueisha uses Google Data Studio to visualize its performance through customized dashboards. After each episode is released, the dashboards show key metrics such as views, likes, and active user rate.

One of Shueisha's main goals is to increase the number of active users, and Data Studio gave the company the ability to see whether offering free titles contributed to more sessions and active users.

Shueisha also sought to increase revenue by improving the lifetime value of its customers. Based on these insights, the company was able to make better product decisions in both the app and their other publications.

"As a publisher, efficiency in data and analytics is a huge factor in the success of our production process. Data Studio enables us to get real-time insights about our audience and make fast, informed creative decisions."

Shuhei Hosono, Editor-in-chief, Shonen Jump+
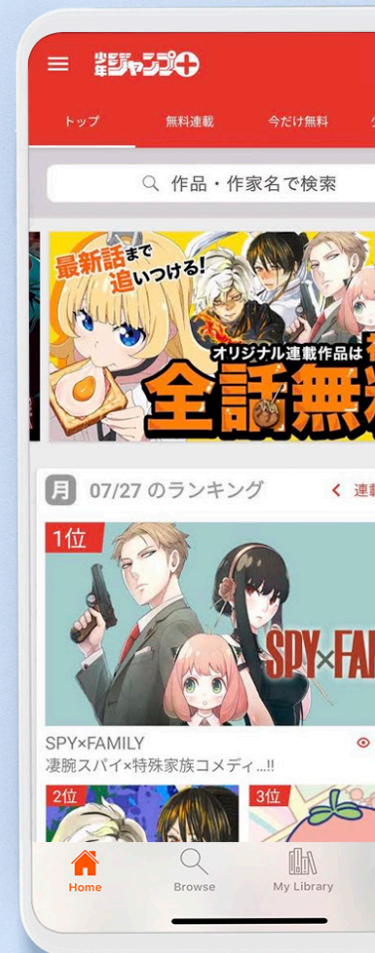
Business Insider uses News Consumer Insights to drive revenue

With the launch of their free, premium subscription offering, BI Prime, Business Insider used Google's News Consumer Insights solution to better understand what readers want and expect when they subscribe and how to reduce friction in the sign up process. Here's what they did:

- The BI Prime team used Google Surveys to ask users questions related to subscription such as expected benefits and propensity to subscribe.

- Business Insider tested and optimized different subscription prompts based on News Consumer Insights best practices.

- The BI Prime team opted for a free-trial approach by offering "Guest Passes," a free subscription trial, via a newsletter sign-up.

- Business Insider used Ad Manager to serve BI Prime promotional ads to potential subscriber segments to boost awareness and conversion.

Following implementation, Business Insider grew their consumer subscription revenue by 150% in one quarter and increased their share of long-term subscribers by 40% in two months.

"Using the News Consumer Insights framework, Google has taken publishers' data conversation to a whole new level. The insights we've received helped us better visualize our user funnel, the profile of our potential subscribers and the type of content they are interested in."

Claudius Senst, Head of Consumer Subscriptions

BUSINESS INSIDER PRIME

Business Insider Prime: Become an insider.

We take you inside the companies and the topics that matter to you.

STUDENT

Best Offer

Monthly Membership

$1

THEN $12.95/MONTH

START MY TRIAL

Cancel anytime

Annual Membership

$99

SAVE $56.40

SUBSCRIBE

Cancel anytime

Two Y

Looking for enterprise access?

03

Manage data and discover insights in a privacy-centric way

At this point in the playbook you've invested in direct relationships, developed a strategy for managing your first-party data, and are using flexible tools to activate your data across your advertising and alternative revenue strategies. The next step is to consider using cloud technology and machine learning to best organize your data and extract powerful business insights.

In this chapter, we'll reveal how cloud technology can help you to:

✅ **Join your data in one secure environment to produce powerful new insights**

✅ **Create better experiences for your users at scale with machine learning**

Join your data in one secure environment to produce powerful new insights

First-party data can be scattered across advertising platforms, website interactions, in-store transactions, and systems like a DMP or CRM tool. Publishers can gain a better understanding of their users when they bring all this information together and analyze it for insights.

Cloud technology has inherent privacy, operational, and security advantages when it comes to storing and organizing large data sets, such as encrypting all data by default and setting parameters for who has access. You can also gain access to the computing power needed to analyze significantly more information at one time.

How it works with Google

Use Google BigQuery
Traditional data warehouses aren't designed to handle today's explosive data growth, run advanced analytics, or scale quickly and cost-effectively.

As a modern and serverless data warehouse solution, **BigQuery** addresses your current analytics demands while scaling as your data needs grow. Google Cloud's **migration offer**, **easy-to-use tools**, and **global partner support** can jump-start your modernization and help you manage the end-to-end process.

BigQuery Data Transfer Service
The BigQuery Data Transfer Service automates data movement into BigQuery on a scheduled, managed basis. The BigQuery Data Transfer Service facilitates transfers from many data sources, including other data warehouses.

For publishers who are just starting to explore using cloud technology, BigQuery's Data Transfer Service makes it easy to get started. Ad Manager partners who want to simply back up their advertising data in the cloud can **connect** and begin storing their data in a matter of hours.

Case study | **EL PAÍS**

The PRISA Group is breaking news and driving engagement with better analytics

While the Spanish newspaper industry is declining, its biggest selling national newspaper, EL PAÍS, owned by PRISA Group, has successfully transitioned from print to become the leading Spanish language news site worldwide, according to Comscore data.

To manage this transition, the company turned to Google Cloud for its machine-learning solutions and it's simple integration with the company's existing content management system. PRISA Group can now engage customers more deeply than before and better understand what they care about; freeing journalists and developers to work on generating better stories and content

EL PAÍS now ingests, processes, and analyzes data with Google Cloud's BigQuery and the result is powerful insights. The solution has helped cut project development time from four to six weeks to three to five days, and delivers reports 27% faster through the Google Data Studio integration, empowering key decision-makers to act quickly.

"We generated operational, editorial, and analytics dashboards accessible to all employees with Google Cloud. That democratized our data and made us much more efficient. Now that we are all speaking the same language, the decision-making process is more fluid."

Angélica Domínguez, Customer Strategy Manager, PRISA Noticias

Create better experiences for your users at scale with machine learning

When packaging your audiences, you always consider how to reach users with the right message. By bringing together performance data from different sources, campaigns, and platforms and analyzing it for patterns, you can discover insights that allow you to improve the ads, experiences, and offers you deliver to your users.

For example, you can instruct a machine learning model to look for and recognize patterns among the ads that people tend to respond to. You may discover that people are more willing to complete video ad breaks of certain lengths or click on display ads in certain locations in your app. Then you can optimize your monetization strategy to consider and adopt those attributes across your broader pool of inventory or your subscription strategies.

How it works with Google

Publishers with data scientists or data analysts on staff can use Google Cloud to power and improve the performance of every aspect of their business. Nearly all of the solutions featured in this playbook have simple integrations with Cloud, allowing you to capture and analyze your data in near real-time.

Looking to use machine learning to optimize your ad strategies?
By combining your first-party data from Google platforms like Ad Manager with data from your external DMPs, CRMs, and other databases in BigQuery, you can use machine learning and predictive analytics to learn new things about your users and optimize your campaigns to maximize performance and CPMs.

Case study | *Zulily*

Zulily increases revenue and enhances customer experiences with real-time analytics

Every day, Zulily launches 9,000 new product styles—more than 1.5 times the volume most big-box stores stock in their warehouses. For Zulily, it's like launching a new business every day, for each member, 365 days a year.

Optimizing revenue and inventory on such a massive scale requires real-time intelligence, and that means analyzing constantly growing streams of clickstream data. To do this, Zulily decided to move its data pipeline and big data analytics to

Google Cloud. It uses Google Cloud Dataproc and BigQuery to support real-time decision-making for customers and over 500 "merchants"—employees who interact directly with product suppliers—to market their offerings and manage inventory.

With the freedom to scale easily and cost effectively, Zulily increased daily data collection from 50 million events to 5 billion over two years, giving it richer data to increase sales conversions and improve marketing effectiveness.

"With Google Cloud, we can utilize real-time clickstream data and feed it back to our website and mobile app to inform how we guide and enhance the customer experience—even with 9,000 new products and millions of customers looking at our site. Those real-time insights give us the ability to drive a high level of lift."

Bindu Thota, Director of Product Management, Zulily
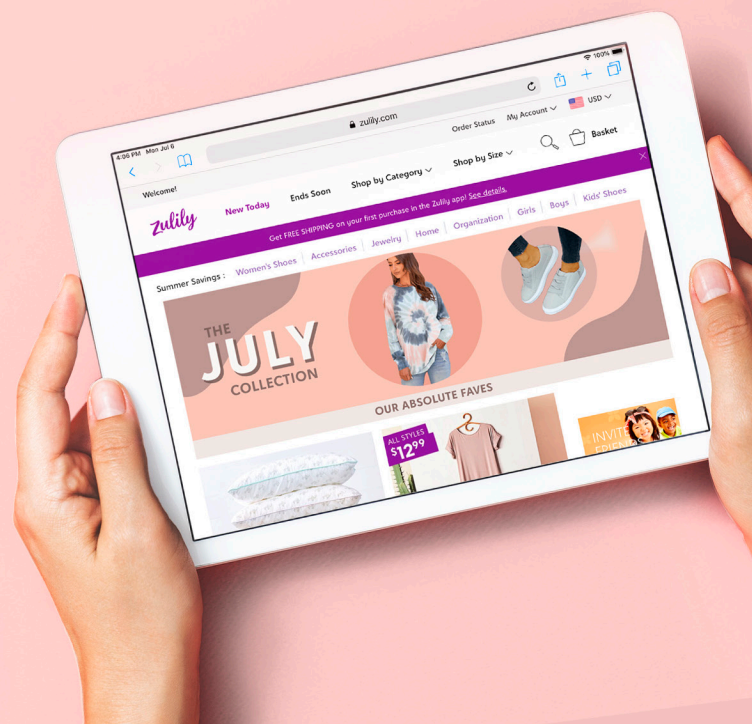
Preparing for the future

Industry changes due to user privacy concerns have given publishers reasons to rethink their current advertising practices. And while it's not entirely clear to what extent current practices will need to evolve, either because of future regulation or additional actions taken by technology platforms, there are ways your organization can stay ahead of changing norms.

Create a center of excellence

Many organizations, including Google's own digital media team, have formed a special group whose sole focus is to advise on existing privacy requirements and help prepare their organization for more changes ahead. These teams are typically made up of experts from different functions, ranging from legal to data science to marketing. Partners and vendors that help to manage or activate customer data are also invited to participate. It's this team's job to stay on top of all the changes, consider the impact from a variety of potential scenarios, and come up with a plan for how to respond to each.

Participate in industry discussions around changes to web standards

There's a lot of dialogue happening across the industry right now centered on exploring new technologies and setting appropriate standards to enhance user privacy, while supporting businesses that use the web. It's important that you participate in these discussions, so that the needs specific to your business can be considered. Engage via your industry trade associations or respected communities like the W3C, to ensure your voice is being heard.

Growing concerns around user privacy have impacted every corner of the digital advertising industry. And the changes that have come in response to these concerns will continue to have an impact. But as we've seen from the examples in this playbook, respecting user privacy doesn't have to come at the cost of lost revenue. Quite the opposite, in fact: the tools and platforms available to publishers today have already created impactful new opportunities to nurture relationships with customers, while using data responsibly.