

TAKE 5:

**WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
FIRST- AND THIRD-PARTY
COOKIES?**

Digital Marketing and Cookie Types



This piece is designed to give you an introduction to the world of tracking cookies, and the differences between first- and third-party cookies.

Cookies have been around almost as long as the web. A cookie is a small text file that is placed on your computer by a website to store and transmit information. Some examples of companies that place cookies on your computer include the websites you visit and advertising companies that display ads to you.

We generally talk about two kinds of cookies in digital marketing, first-party and third-party.

First-Party Cookies



First-party cookies are placed on your computer by a site when you visit its pages. The purpose of the first-party cookie is to help the site recognize a visitor. First-party cookies can help sites automatically log in a person, associate her behavior with previous actions, customize content and experiences to previously expressed interests, and more.

Generally, consumers don't try to block first-party cookies because they add value to the experience, and because the individual actually chose to visit the site in the first place. First-party cookies can serve great benefits to the consumer, like recognizing them when they revisit a site so they don't have to log in again. In addition, a consumer that sets their browser to reject first-party cookies will find it very difficult to surf the web because many sites require them in order to gain access to content.

Third-Party Cookies

Third-party cookies are placed on your computer by companies other than the site you visit. Most sites display content from a variety of sources when you request a web page. For example, an ad network might place a cookie on all browsers that are exposed to an advertiser's banner ads. Or if a site includes "like" buttons or embedded videos, these can also deliver third-party cookies.

Third-party cookies help advertisers track what consumers do after they view or interact with content. This kind of measurement is important because most people exposed to an ad don't click to visit an advertiser immediately but may subsequently visit. Advertisers want to be able to understand these "long-term" advertising effects.

Media companies also use cookie data to develop customer profiles that infer interests and purchase intent from the types of things people do online. For example, an ad network could aggregate all of the people who interacted with baby care ads to create an audience of people who are (probably) parents.

Third-party cookies collect and pass anonymous information only. A person's name, address, or data that might identify them as an individual is not passed. Nevertheless, some consumers take steps to avoid even anonymous tracking. Some have started deleting their third-party cookies. They do this using purpose-built tools or manually changing settings in their web browser. Others have chosen to use web browsers like Safari that block third-party cookies by default. Other major browsers allow consumers to opt-in to cookie blocking in settings.

While a growing number of people have third-party cookies blocked, relatively few try and block first-party cookies. This is because blocking third-party cookies has few or no experiential effects while blocking first-party cookies prevents users from experiencing most sites.

Third-Party Cookies and Mobile

Third-party cookies are the workhorses of PC web measurement, while in mobile their use is problematic. Cookies have very limited capabilities with regard to data gathering in apps.

ABOUT TAKE 5

The Take 5 series is designed to help senior marketers learn more about data-driven customer marketing by creating short educational pieces that can be read and absorbed in less than five minutes. The main content of each Take 5 is 600 words or less to stay focused and brief. The Take 5 series will also be available as a collection – a primer on data driven customer marketing.

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ABOUT APSALAR

Apsalar, the leader in mobile data management, helps direct marketing brands get better marketing effectiveness by providing a mobile data management platform that delivers a true understanding of customer behavior in apps and across other marketing channels.

Apsalar
MOBILE DMP

- APSALAR ATTRIBUTION**
Collect and measure in-app consumer behavior and marketing performance. Measure every in-app action relevant to your business
- APSALAR AUDIENCES**
Unite your first party data from all sources, enrich it with third party data, and build high performance marketing audiences
- APSALAR DATASYNC**
Easily and safely share customer audiences and data with your digital marketing platforms, including analytics, marketing automation, media companies and legacy DMPs

The Apsalar Mobile DMP enables brands to measure marketing effectiveness, enhance, manage, enrich and segment profiles to build audiences, and easily and safely connect to other marketing partners so brands can confidently share their data and audiences.