# Google pauses plan to phase out third-party cookies but advances privacy features



Google has announced it will halt its plan to phase out third-party cookies in its Chrome browser, confirming on Tuesday that it will not introduce a standalone prompt for third-party cookies, instead maintaining its current system which allows users to control third-party cookie settings via Chrome’s Privacy and Security Settings.

Anthony Chavez, vice president of Google’s Privacy Sandbox initiative, explained in a recent blog post that during extensive discussions with various stakeholders—including publishers, developers, regulators, and the advertising industry—there remained divergent viewpoints on changes that would affect third-party cookie availability. “Taking all of these factors into consideration, we’ve made the decision to maintain our current approach to offering users third-party cookie choice in Chrome, and will not be rolling out a new standalone prompt for third-party cookies. Users can continue to choose the best option for themselves in Chrome’s Privacy and Security Settings,” Chavez stated.

Despite this shift, Google plans to continue enhancing privacy protections within Chrome's Incognito mode, which currently blocks third-party cookies by default. Among forthcoming features is IP Protection, scheduled for release in the third quarter of 2025. Chavez highlighted ongoing investments aimed at making Chrome “the world’s most trusted browser,” incorporating safety measures such as safe browsing, safety checks, built-in password protections, and AI-powered security tools.

This announcement follows Google's July update, where it proposed a new experience in Chrome designed to provide users with informed choices affecting their web browsing. The decision to pause the phasing out of third-party cookies comes amid increasing legal scrutiny faced by Google, including a recent ruling by US District Judge Leonie Brinkema in Alexandria, Virginia, who concluded that the company engaged in anticompetitive behaviours to maintain monopoly power in the online advertising technology market.

Industry analysts and marketing professionals have largely seen the announcement as unsurprising. Stephanie Liu, senior analyst at Forrester, told Marketing Interactive that 57% of B2C marketers surveyed in Forrester’s Marketing Survey 2025 did not expect Google to fully deprecate third-party cookies. Liu noted, however, that third-party signals continue to decline across the open web as other browsers have eliminated third-party cookies for years and consumers increasingly rely on ad blockers.

Chris Ngan, general manager for Hong Kong and Taiwan at The Trade Desk, characterised third-party cookies as “outdated,” citing their desktop-centric origins and incompatibility with fast-growth channels like connected TV and mobile applications. He also stressed rising privacy concerns and consumer demand for greater transparency and control.

Nelson Tsai, solutions development director at GroupM Nexus Media Solutions, stated that Google’s decision offers short-term continuity for advertisers but does not alter the long-term trajectory towards a privacy-forward advertising landscape increasingly driven by artificial intelligence rather than user IDs. “Smart marketers will take this moment not as a reason to revert to old habits, but as an opportunity to refine their data strategy: balancing effective targeting with sustainable data practices,” Tsai said.

Other industry voices echoed the importance of adapting to privacy-centric models. Niall Hogan, general manager for JAPAC at GumGum, pointed to rising expectations across the region for transparency and respect in data usage. Citing data from Japan, where over a third of consumers hold negative views on cookie-based advertising, he noted that Google’s move may reflect a reluctance to relinquish advertising models that face increasing scrutiny.

Gary Cheung, general manager of NP Digital Hong Kong, contextualised Google’s decision within the company's extensive scale and reliance on advertising revenue, emphasising the challenge of balancing advertiser demands with privacy considerations. He noted that advertisers must now adjust marketing strategies to incorporate third-party data alongside enhanced first-party data tactics, with greater emphasis on sustainable channels such as content, SEO, and contextual advertising.

The shift also bears implications for consumer trust and brand reputation. Chris Ngan underscored that outdated tracking methods risk being seen as intrusive, while Hogan warned that brands relying on surveillance-based advertising "risk falling behind—not just in performance, but in consumer trust." Twilio’s 2023 report on data control indicated that a significant majority (92%) of marketers in the Asia-Pacific region believe that ending third-party cookies could ultimately strengthen advertising trust.

Nelson Tsai advised brands to focus on delivering transparency, choice, and meaningful value exchange to earn long-term loyalty. He said, “Building trust needs to go beyond the technology in play. And the real opportunity lies in building deeper relationships with consumers through AI-powered personalisation that respects their privacy and delivers relevant experiences based on context and intent.”

Agencies and marketers face an evolving landscape. Tsai noted that while the urgency for cookie-less transformation may slow, the strategic imperative remains unchanged. This reprieve allows agencies additional time to develop and implement privacy-compliant data architectures that do not depend on third-party identifiers. He commented, “Those who built capabilities around interoperability rather than any single ID signal will find themselves better positioned.”

Gary Cheung reflected that agencies accustomed to advising clients on cookieless environments will need to adapt services to integrate first-party data and existing cookie-based methods, positioning themselves as vital partners in an environment characterised by mixed advertising approaches.

From a marketing perspective, Cheung highlighted critical factors such as creativity, empathy, and audience understanding to foster trust and engagement, framing privacy-first strategies as essential for sustained success rather than merely reactive to regulatory shifts.

Forrester senior analyst Nikhil Lai remarked that agencies focusing on first-party data remain well positioned, noting that other browsers like Firefox, Safari, and Brave had already discontinued third-party cookies. He encouraged brands to deepen zero-party data collection, strengthen second-party data relationships, explore open web opportunities with robust identity resolution methods, and experiment with contextual targeting.

Chris Ngan expressed that the importance of first-party data is increasing steadily, underlying its value in reflecting real user behaviour and offering full data control. He forecast a continued role for agencies skilled in data integration, insight generation, and cross-platform identity resolution to assist clients amid ongoing industry changes.

This announcement by Google comes at a critical juncture in digital advertising, reflecting the complex balance between user privacy, advertiser needs, and technological innovation in a rapidly evolving digital ecosystem.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://digiday.com/media/google-chrome-will-now-continue-to-use-third-party-cookies/> - Confirms Google's decision not to roll out a standalone prompt for third-party cookies, maintaining existing user controls via Privacy and Security Settings.
2. <https://www.scworld.com/news/3rd-party-cookies-here-to-stay-after-google-changes-privacy-plan> - Details Google's July 2024 announcement to abandon third-party cookie deprecation plans, proposing user choice experiences instead.
3. <https://developers.google.com/privacy-sandbox/blog/cookie-countdown-2023oct> - Documents Chrome's phased testing of third-party cookie restrictions in 2024, preceding the eventual policy reversal.
4. <https://www.cookiebot.com/en/google-third-party-cookies/> - Explains Google's original 2024 third-party cookie phaseout timeline and the Privacy Sandbox's role in ad tracking alternatives.
5. <https://www.cookieyes.com/blog/third-party-cookies-going-away/> - Provides context about Google's initial 2020 announcement and delayed timeline for eliminating third-party cookies.
6. <https://digiday.com/media/google-chrome-will-now-continue-to-use-third-party-cookies/> - Reiterates Anthony Chavez's blog post about maintaining third-party cookie options while continuing Privacy Sandbox development.
7. <https://www.marketing-interactive.com/with-cookies-still-on-the-menu-can-marketers-afford-to-wait-on-privacy-reform> - Please view link - unable to able to access data