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eBook

Identity Explainer

How to fuel unified customer
experiences with connected data

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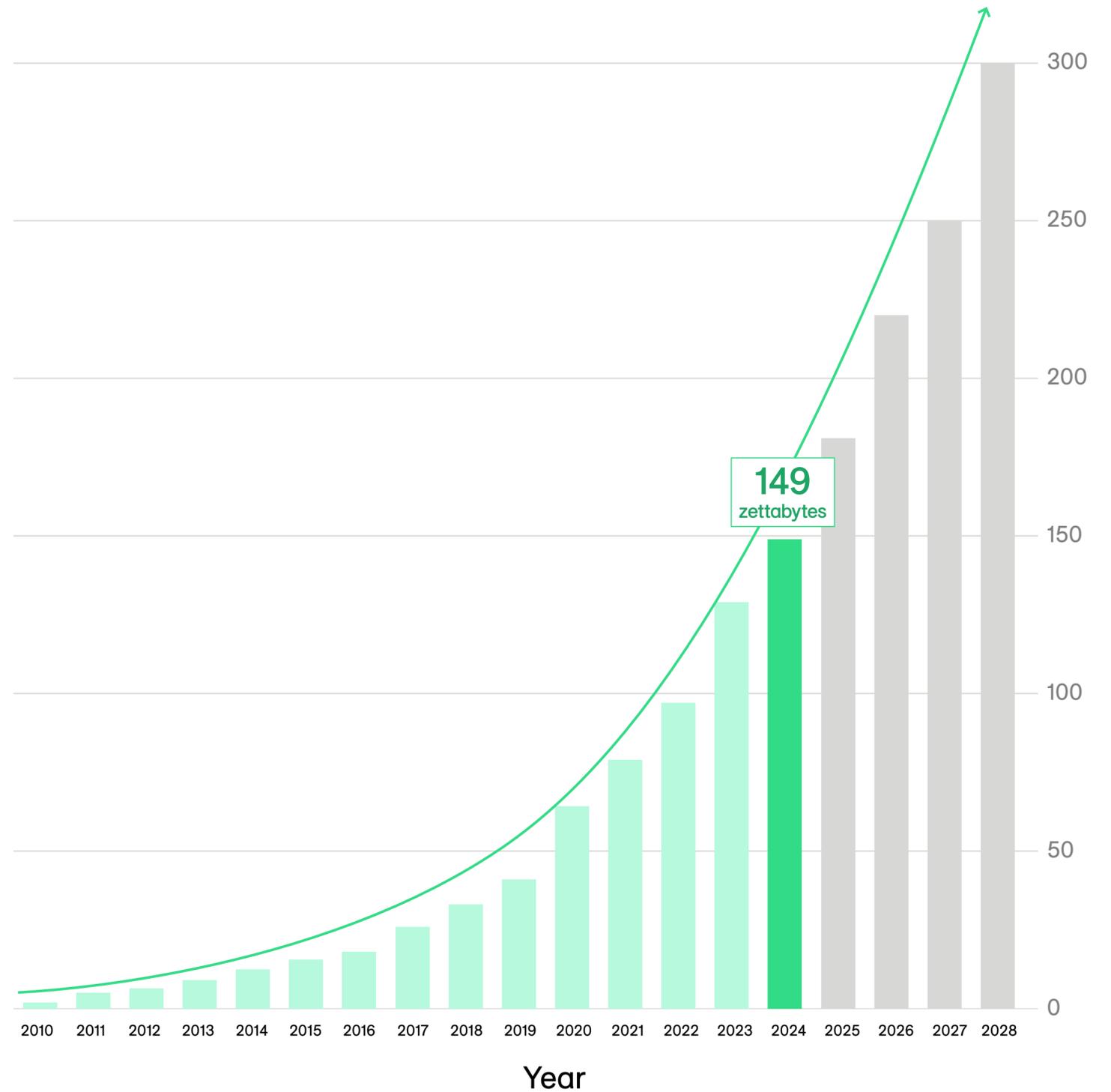
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Introduction

Marketers today are primed for success as customers create more data than ever before. Think about it: At a glance, you might know what your customers are buying, what content they're engaging with, and even how they feel about your brand. Your greatest advantage is a deep understanding of your customers – and there has never been more data about what customers love and need, where they spend time, and who they are. But how confident are you that all of this data connects back to the same person?

The amount of data created and shared around the world in 2024 skyrocketed to 149 zettabytes.¹ This was 31 times more global internet traffic than two years before. How much is 149 zettabytes of data? Enough to make up 30 trillion HD movies (which would take millions of years to watch) and enough data to cover almost 2 million football fields. By 2028, global data is expected to double – but without a strategy to connect this invaluable, ever-growing data across marketing channels, customer insights won't evolve.

Data created and shared around the world



Meanwhile, consumers are constantly evolving, leaving incomplete data and scattered touchpoints throughout their journey with your brand. On average, 2% of customer data changes each month, meaning about a quarter of your data could be out of date after a year.² This creates fragmentation that makes it harder to create an accurate 360-degree view, or “golden record,” for each customer – a single, accurate, secure profile that reflects their most current information.

Without this “golden record,” your customer experiences can feel disconnected and inconsistent. The average person generates 1.7 megabytes of data per second.³ This data includes a mix of personal identifiers like email addresses, phone numbers, and postal addresses, along with digital identifiers like device IDs, cookies, and social media profiles – and that’s just the data tied to the individual. Within your own organisation, those same touchpoints are often scattered across systems and teams, creating data silos, even more fragmentation, and inaccurate insights about customers and campaigns.

For example, a retailer might have a customer’s purchase history stored in one system, their loyalty program information in another, and customer service interactions in a third. In each of these systems, the customer may have used different contact information – an email here, a phone number there. Without a way to link all of this individual’s data across your business, you’re left with pieces of a complex customer puzzle. Connecting these fragmented data points isn’t easy, but it is possible – and critical to your marketing success.

This is where identity resolution can help.

In this eBook, you’ll learn enough about identity resolution to:

- Understand what identity resolution is and how it can enhance your marketing strategies
- Discover key identity resolution use cases and how to measure their marketing impact
- Build an identity strategy for your customer data with four steps to get started
- See how brands like LinkedIn, Eli Lilly, and Indeed are recreating customer experiences and redefining marketing success with identity resolution

Chapter 1: What is identity resolution?

Realising the immense value of your organisation's data, maybe you've already created a strategy to source [authenticated information](#) – data that's willingly shared on your site, app, or in emails – from your customers. This is critical during a time of signal loss when 70% of UK consumers turn off cookies and website tracking to protect their privacy.⁴ As a result, your [first-party data](#) is more essential than ever before – and connecting this data is key to creating deeper, more accurate customer insights.

Even when customers do share their personal information, this data is often inconsistent and riddled with gaps. For example, Ellen is a frequent click-list grocery shopper with a personal email, a work email address, and sometimes she uses her husband's email to get more first-time deals on the brands she loves. Without a single identifier to tie all this information back to Ellen and her household, the grocery retailer can't connect their first-party data about



U.S. Bank had invested considerable resources into building up our customer data, but more importantly, we needed to find a way to activate this data on every platform where our audiences were spending time. We needed a solution that integrated with all of the premier destinations that we needed.”

David Barnes, Product Owner, U.S. Bank



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Ellen with brand partners and publishers. They'll likely never know she prefers to buy her Great Dane's kibble from an online retailer because they offer free shipping, or that she shops for beauty products from a local pharmacy with frequent coupons.

Further, the grocery retailer may not even realise these insights exist within their own organisation because Ellen's data is siloed or inconsistent. This means their purchase history system may not connect with their loyalty program, which won't link to customer service interactions. Without a [unified enterprise identity](#), they'll continue to treat Ellen as multiple different people across their teams and marketing outreach, missing opportunities to provide her with relevant, personalised experiences.



Enterprise identity is the centre of a defensible retailer relationship with the consumer, and why a retail media network can be successful.”

Evan Hovorka, VP Product and Innovation,
Albertsons Media Collective



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How does identity resolution work?

A robust identity strategy helps your brand responsibly connect its first-party data across platforms and brand, tech, and data partners for effective collaboration. The right identifier builds a library of customer data that is consistent and accurate, leading to personalised customer interactions that build brand loyalty, drive conversions, and prevent signal loss.

Put simply, identity resolution is the process of linking data points back to a single entity, creating a unified view of the consumer. By connecting a consumer's digital interactions to their offline attributes, marketers can understand behaviours across devices, channels, and touchpoints. This holistic view enables smarter marketing decisions and the delivery of truly personalised experiences.

The accuracy of these connections depends on the quality of the data structure that connects various identifiers across platforms, devices, and touchpoints.

Business Professional

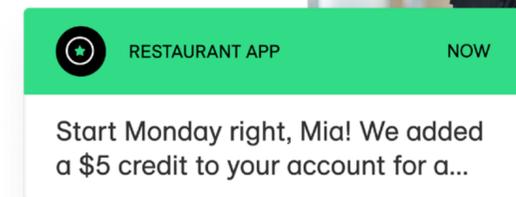
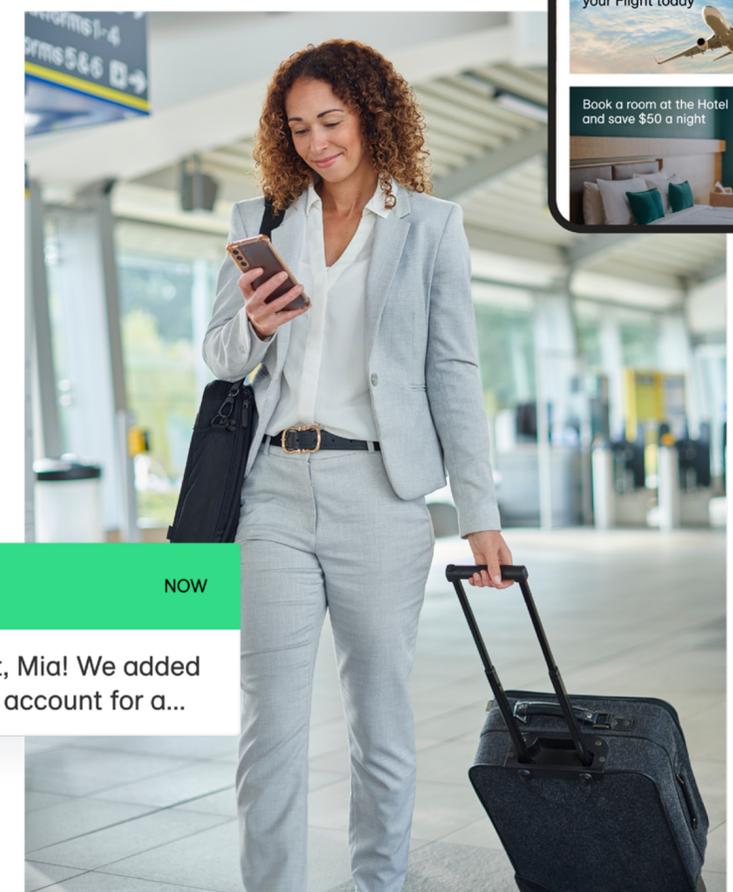
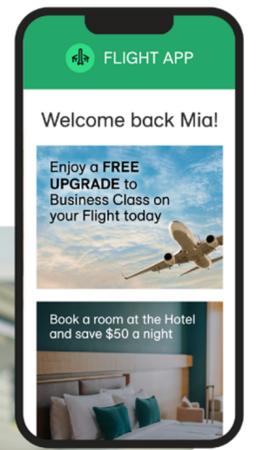
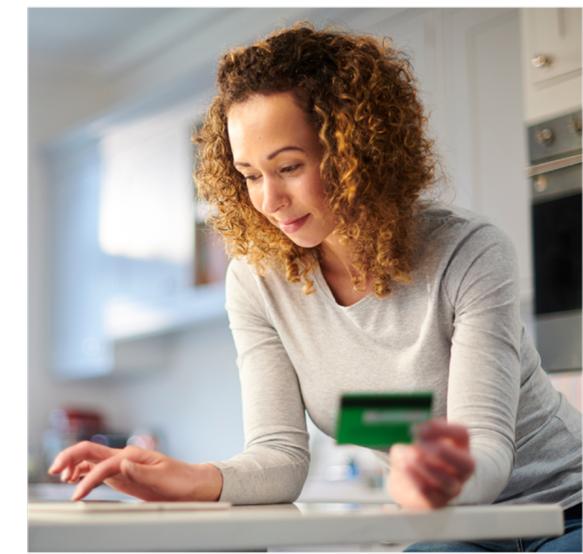
Loyalty Program Participation

Frequent Traveler

Podcast Listener

Loves New Tech

Stays at Luxury Hotels



Here are a few key elements that make identity resolution possible and successful



Online and mobile data

Online and mobile data is a type of first-party data that doesn't directly identify an individual without additional information but can be used to gain a sense of a person's online activities and preferences. For example, a Mobile Ad ID (MAID) is a unique identifier created by a mobile device's operating system and shared with apps downloaded to the device. A MAID can be used to "remember" an individual's behaviour and choices without their directly identifiable data. Identity resolution collects and connects these data sets, then matches them through a unique identifier.



Known data

Known, or offline data, another kind of first-party data, consists of PII, such as an individual's name, postal address, email address, and phone number. This data is compiled over time through continuous customer interactions and stored in an offline reference graph.



Resolution

The data resolution process uses advanced algorithms and matching logic to accurately link online, mobile, and offline data to create consistent, accurate audience identities. Resolution can happen at either the individual or household level, depending on the granularity of data you desire and your campaign goals. In both cases, resolving identities enables you to better personalise customer experiences across channels and interaction points.

How resolving customer identities leads to data matching

When all of these components work together, you get a deterministic match or probabilistic match of individuals and households.

Deterministic matching links different identifiers to known individuals' PII. For example, when someone starts a new job, deterministic matching can link their new work email with accounts and activities associated with their old one.

Probabilistic matching complements deterministic matching to create a fuller picture of a customer's online identity. For example, devices can be grouped by data points such as IP address, operating system, Wi-Fi network, and location. Probabilistic identity uses statistical modelling to group these devices and assign them varying identities.

By resolving identities across channels and devices, marketers can better understand how customers interact with your brand and continue to learn about their preferences. Identity resolution is one sophisticated way organisations can combat signal loss and continue tailoring campaigns to customers' behaviours, preferences, and interests [without using third-party cookies.](#)



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What to look for in an identity solution

Here are three essential questions to ask when searching for the right identity solution for your team:

1 Can the technology produce accurate, reliable match results?

An identity solution must have high precision to avoid duplicate or incorrect matches that lead to wasted marketing resources. But it's essential to consider what kind of precision you're looking for – whether it's focused on specific data sets, use cases, or shared match accuracy across partners.

2 Is the solution scalable?

The identity solution must be advanced enough to support incredibly large data sets and cross-channel integration for global campaigns.

3 Does the technology help protect customers' data?

The identity solution, while remaining accurate, must meet data requirements (e.g., GDPR, CCPA). This is critical for keeping track of customer rights requests (e.g., opt-outs) and protecting authenticated customer data.

Chapter 2: Why is identity resolution critical for marketers?

The energy around customer data can feel frenetic. Advertisers know the gold-like value of this data and how critical it is for [addressable marketing](#); but turning customer data into tangible, measurable success on every channel is still being explored. Identity resolution has emerged as the proven gold standard method for marketers connecting customer data.

Identity resolution is not only helping marketers overcome signal loss, but it's connecting customer data across new channels and ad types that don't rely on cookies at all. For instance, [CTV is exploding](#) and driving higher spending on video ads. More than [four in every five British pounds](#) spent on digital advertising in the UK are transacted programmatically, and that share is projected to keep increasing, with commerce media close behind. Retail media is experiencing rapid and sustained growth as it is expected to reach £8.6 billion in the UK by 2030.⁵ Publishers, platforms, and media networks are all turning to the secure power of identity to scale and measure addressable advertising across channels.



NBCUnified audiences is our first-party data set, scaled to over 3,000 audiences. We know who watches The Office, if they watch it on Peacock or if they watch on one of our apps. We know who are fashionistas, who are tech enthusiasts. We're able to anchor this data to an identity and create a holistic view of these households and individuals and how they interact with our brand."

Kaitie Coghlan, SVP, Data Product & Partnerships,
NBCUniversal



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Even LinkedIn, which connects 630 million professionals around the world, was searching for a better way to help [advertisers reach the right audiences](#) for networking, career growth, and new opportunities. Lauren Atieh, Partner Manager at LinkedIn Marketing Solutions, said there's nothing more important right now than being able to measure your campaigns accurately.

“If you have multiple campaigns live on different channels, you must be able to measure everywhere to really understand the value of your advertising and which platforms are driving impact to the bottom line for your business,” she said.

With LiveRamp's identity solution, [LinkedIn Advertising Solutions](#) gained the ability to combine the platform's rich first-party data with partners' data for clearer insights about the most valuable audiences.



We want advertisers to reach the right audience at the right time with the right message. While partnering with LiveRamp on audiences and measurement, being privacy-centric is top of mind for us always.”

Lauren Atieh, Partner Manager,
LinkedIn Marketing Solutions

Chapter 3: Key use cases and next steps

Key use cases for identity resolution

Here are two ways identity resolution can enhance your marketing strategy for better customer experiences and greater business impact:

1 Responsibly activate your first-party data across channels

[Data activation](#) is the most basic use case for generating new customer insights from first-party data. Once your team has compiled and unified siloed customer data from your organisation's data management systems, tools, and platforms (such as cloud data warehouses or a CRM system), you can use identity resolution to connect the new data sets to external data partners.

A durable identifier, such as LiveRamp's RampID, responsibly connects your unified customer profiles with third-party data from other sites and platforms, such as social media, [CTV](#), or offline data. The identifier

translates any combination of digital identifiers, including third-party cookies, from across channels into one clear picture for each customer profile and audience segment. This visibility and connectivity leads to better match rates on an individual and household level before and after campaigns, leading to the most accurate performance results and audience insights.

Even if you're low on first-party data or it's incredibly complex, [like Eli Lilly's was](#), identity resolution makes the first-party you do have go even further. **Responsible data activation, through the power of a trustworthy identifier, bridges gaps in customer intelligence for deeper audience insights – and stronger marketing results.**



How Eli Lilly Transformed Customer Experiences with First-Party Data

Eli Lilly and Company, founded 150 years ago, helps more than 51 million people globally by addressing some of the world's most critical health challenges. But the company had an ambitious goal: To expand from providing therapeutics at one point in the customer journey to serving customers along their full health journey.

Their team had rich first-party data, but the data was complex and lived in silos and across multiple clouds. They needed to unify this data to fully understand it, act on it, and build the most accurate, connected customer view possible. Plus, permissions and privacy were top concerns. Steve Rommeney, Associate Global VP of Engineering, Platforms, and Capabilities, posed the challenge, "Are we seeing customers the way they want to be seen? If the customer is standing in front of me today, we want to make sure we can pass that test."

Read how Eli Lilly partnered with LiveRamp to create a connected, 360-degree customer view without third-party cookies.



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2 Accurately measure campaign data across channels

With an identifier that responsibly unifies our internal customer data and external campaign data, you'll have the connectivity needed to unlock advanced measurement and analytics tools, such as [data clean rooms](#), for more meaningful business outcomes. In one [Forrester survey](#), less than half of US business leaders who want to deepen and unify measurement across media partners said they are able to today. About 20% of survey respondents said they are using responsible identifiers in advertising to enable cross-platform data sharing and targeting while protecting user security; but only 8% have been able to remove interoperability barriers between partners and their preferred platforms.

One way to solve interoperability challenges for [stronger measurement](#) between identifiers is with a secure clean room. A clean room is a neutral space where trustworthy [data collaboration](#) partnerships can exist without either party (or parties) having access to the other's customer data. A clean room embeds technologies, such as encryption and differential privacy, so data can be shared responsibly between teams with clear rules and permissions. As [LiveRamp's Matt Karasick](#), Chief Product Officer, explains, clean rooms allow you to advance data collaboration use

cases with partners in a trustworthy way. But enabling data collaboration within the clean room for deeper insights and advanced campaign measurement starts with identity resolution.

“You need a solid identity that is rooted in trust in order to make this data joinable. Clean rooms need to have that identity piece built in. Then the clean rooms can scale and people get access to better data than ever before,” Karasick said. “Companies who were never able to participate can collaborate because of the controls and safety that are in place. We're watching a whole new level of innovation occur right in front of our eyes, and it's exciting.”

With a clean room powered by identity resolution, marketers and data scientists can gain access to new insights to better plan, activate, and measure across the ecosystem – and optimise marketing for better business results.

How to build your identity strategy

As complex as unifying millions of data points may sound, the right identity partner can handle the heavy lifting. Here's a glimpse at the process of building a durable identity strategy:

- 1 Reconcile and connect your organisation's first-party data** by integrating online and offline data to establish complete profiles of each individual customer. Combining your first-party data eliminates fragmentation across departments and provides a clean and accurate data set that can be used for new customer insights, better measurement, and effective data collaboration.
- 2 Develop a first-party data framework** that spans every touchpoint in complex consumer journeys. A comprehensive framework solution, such as [enterprise identity](#), will not only help your team break down data silos, gain deeper customer insights, and maximise your technology investments, but it's primed for advanced data collaboration down the line.
- 3 Activate your data across channels with a durable identity partner** that can reach ideal audiences across browsers, mobile devices, and CTV in a trustworthy way. For example, LiveRamp's RampID powers a person-based approach to identity, helping marketers resolve any combination of data sources (known and/or online) to a household or an individual with unmatched accuracy and scale. By matching first-party audience data with high-quality publisher inventory, you can create and activate multiple customer segments to personalise, prospect, re-target, and scale to new audiences.
- 4 Measure and optimise new data insights** to gain a critical understanding of your audience and campaign performance. Once you've consolidated your customer data, chosen an identity solution, and connected your first-party data across marketing channels, you can unlock a unified view of your marketing data. With insights from your new data sets and partnerships, you'll be able to continuously [measure and optimise](#) your advertising strategies and investments based on audience and efficiency earnings.



Identity resolution in action

How Indeed connects more job seekers to their next best role

Indeed, the world's top job site, needed a better way to target job seekers offsite, measure campaigns, and personalise user experiences as the digital advertising ecosystem shifts away from third-party signals. Indeed's Reach Team sought [a scalable, durable identity solution](#) to replace third-party cookies and sustain advertising effectiveness – RampID was their solution of choice.

Indeed partnered with LiveRamp to implement RampID, the most durable identifier for connecting the ecosystem, into their AWS-based infrastructure. Using LiveRamp's AWS Embedded Identity Resolution, Indeed resolved its first-party data to RampID directly within its cloud environment, minimising data movement for responsible collaboration. This helped the team create seamless connections with advertising partners, such as Freewheel's Beeswax, for real-time bidding and precise campaign measurement.

↑ **54%**

growth in
re-targeting
audiences

↑ **20%**

increase in
response rate

The integration of RampID [transformed Indeed's advertising strategies](#). By consolidating their first-party data, Indeed expanded its addressable audience by 54%, reaching more job seekers while improving targeting precision. Campaigns powered by RampID also saw a 20% boost in engagement, leading to more qualified leads for employers and optimised job searches for candidates. With enhanced measurement capabilities, Indeed had access to new actionable insights for refining campaigns and maximising ROI.

Indeed's Paul Bloom, Senior Product Manager, Reach Team, said having one identifier to understand the job seekers' full journey was a game-changer for employers.



Indeed, in partnership with LiveRamp, has been able to actively close the gap on reaching all job seekers and improving measurement, even in the face of signal loss. Indeed has been able to provide confidence to its employers that reach and targeting solutions will not lose scale, deploying real-time solutions to maintain targeting capabilities on first-party data.”

[Paul Bloom, Senior Product Manager, Reach Team, Indeed](#)

Conclusion: Turning data challenges into opportunities

The landscape of digital advertising is changing, driven by growing consumer demand for stronger privacy regulations. As traditional signals like third-party cookies fade, the way brands access, use, and connect customer data must evolve. It's a pivotal moment – one that calls for innovative solutions.

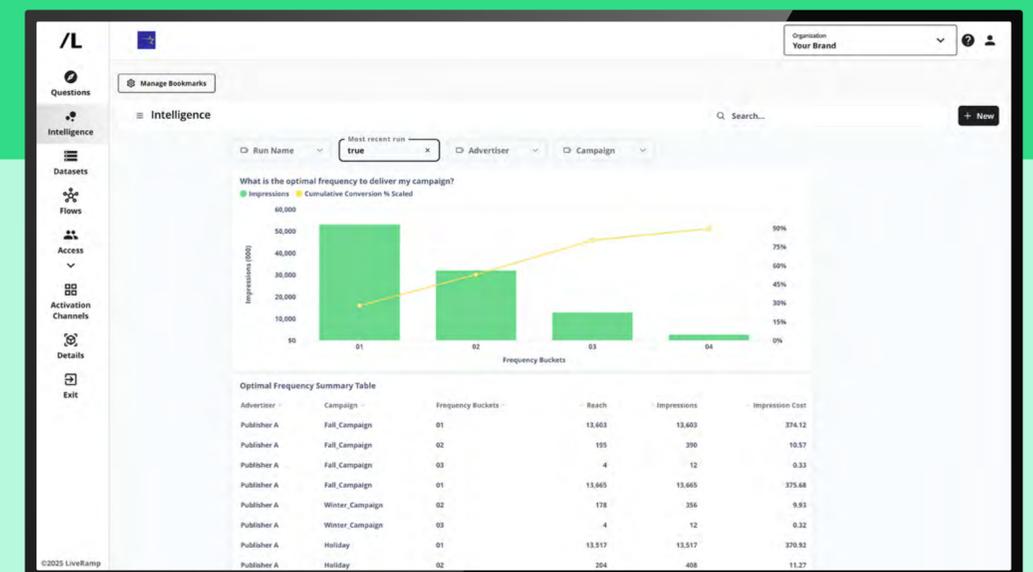
The good news is that LiveRamp has the connectivity solutions that marketers need. With over 20 years of leadership in identity resolution, LiveRamp helps brands unify fragmented data into complete customer profiles – accurately, at scale.

By incorporating identity solutions into your marketing and business strategies, you can create personalised campaigns at scale, optimise marketing spend, and deliver more consistent customer experiences. With the confidence that every interaction is backed by the most accurate, connected customer view across devices, channels, and platforms, you'll have the power to drive better business outcomes.

Because at the end of the day, it's not just about managing more data – It's about making your data more actionable.

If you're ready to turn complex data into clear opportunities, explore LiveRamp's [Live/Identity with our interactive demo](#).

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Endnotes

1 Taylor, Petroc. "[Data Growth Worldwide 2010-2028](#)." Statista, 21 Nov. 2024.

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5 Edwards-Scott, Ellie. "[Retail media's surging investment](#)." Retail Media Age, 17 July, 2025.

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