IAB SA and IAB Tech Lab's virtual open forum on ad experiences and measurement

By Juanita Pienaar   25 Aug 2020

The IAB SA and IAB Tech Lab recently held a virtual open forum on ad experiences and measurement, which included interactive discussions with international speakers, panel thought leadership with South African executives and deep dives into the technical details of the marketing industry to facilitate conversations between industry experts, attendees and IAB Tech Lab product experts on some of the most pressing issues in our industry.

Alexandra Salomon, IAB Tech Lab head of Global Business Development gave an overview of what IAB Tech Lab does and said that its mission is to engage the member community globally to develop foundational technology and standards that enable growth and trust in the digital media ecosystem.

They develop foundational technologies that are member-driven and member-contributed, working with companies and associations from across the digital advertising ecosystem, locally (in the States) and globally.

She explained that they are structured with four key themes:

1. Identity, data and privacy
2. Brand safety and ad fraud
3. Ad experiences and measurement
4. Programmatic effectiveness

So, all their projects, standards and guidelines all fit within these key standards:

Tech Lab Standards & Services – Solving Real Problems

① IDENTITY, DATA, & PRIVACY	② BRAND SAFETY & AD FRAUD	③ AD EXPERIENCES & MEASUREMENT	④ PROGRAMMATIC EFFECTIVENESS
Project Rearc (rearchitecting post-cookie/ID)	**ads.txt / app-ads.txt** (anti-fraud specs)	**VAST** (video ad delivery spec)	**OpenRTB** (programmatic real-time protocol)
DigiTrust ID service	ads.txt Aggregator (transparency insights)	SIMID (video ad interactivity spec)	OpenDirect (programmatic guaranteed spec)
Data Label ("nutrition label" for data)	**sellers.json** (anti-fraud, transparency spec)	MRAID (mobile in-app rich media ads API)	CATS (ad request spec for direct buys)
Audience Taxonomy (data segment categories)	**SupplyChain object** (transparency spec)	New Ad Portfolio (ad weight, size, experience specs)	Ad Management API (creative approval API)
Transparency & Consent Framework (IAB Europe)	ads.cert (security, anti-fraud spec)	SafeFrames (secure ad "container")	CTV/OTT Guidance (IFA, User Agent, app store ID)
CCPA & Other Privacy Frameworks	**Content Taxonomy** (contextual categories/channels)	**Open Measurement** (unified SDK for viewability & more)	Spiders & Bots (traffic detection & filtering list)
	Ad Product Taxonomy (product categories)	Podcast Measurement Technical Guidelines	Blockchain education

iab. TECH LAB   **Bold** = Recommended adoption priorities   s

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She also clarified that IAB Tech Lab works hand-in-hand with all the IABs around the world, bringing technical standards and supporting the product development to the global market. They work with the IAB SA on events like this one but also with companies in South Africa to help bring a voice and an experience from a different perspective into the development of these standards and guidelines.

Angelina Eng, VP of Measurement and Attribution at IAB Tech Lab presented on the subject of ad experience and

measurement.

She explained that she works between IAB and IAB Tech Lab because (on the IAB side) she helps to work with the members of the IAB from a business perspective to help bring some of those needs and requirements over to the Tech Lab and help translate those business perspectives into technical standards and vice versa. Part of her role is to help educate and inform how that applies to businesses both economically, financially and organisationally and from a pricing standpoint.

She said that in the last three years a lot of the browsers have been making some changes to their operating systems or to the browser itself:

Angelina Eng, VP of Measurement and Attribution at IAB Tech Lab.
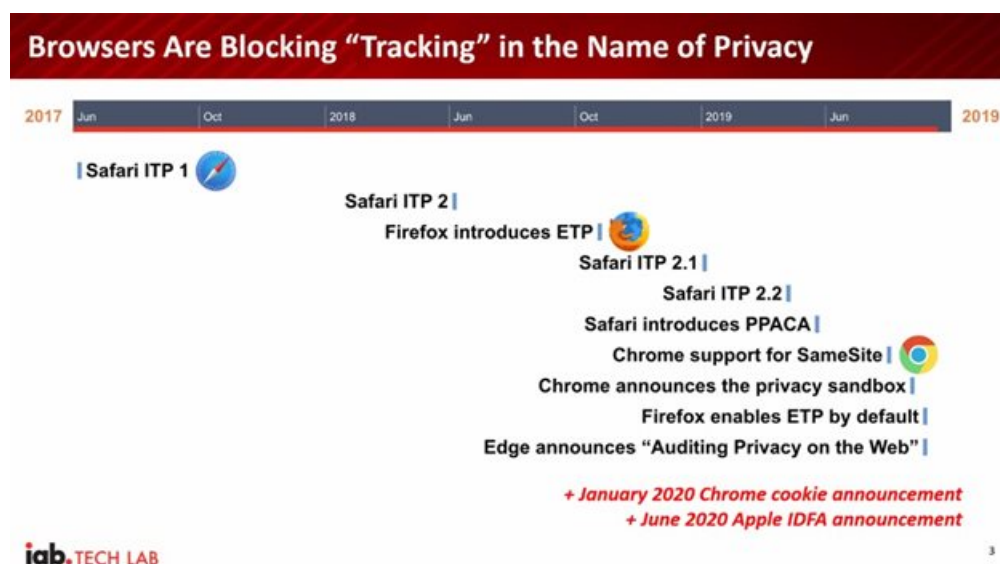
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In the last few months, there have been some significant announcements in changes. Chrome announced that they will be phasing out all third-party cookies on the browser by 2022 and Apple announced that they're removing the IDFA this spring.

Eng said that a lot of these impact measurements, not just the ability to target people, but that we use cookies for a variety of reasons.

She said these four browsers are all focused on reducing cross-site tracking, fingerprinting and audience stitching at scale and that they're doing it on their own.

But why are they doing this? She explained that there are users that don't want any tracking. They are explicitly adding ad-blockers and trying to ensure that they're not going on platforms where they'd be risking their privacy and their data. Then you have others who don't care and who want everything personalised and who are ok with that. However, there is a significant chunk of people in the middle who want personalised experiences but who also want to protect their privacy.

Eng said that currently, they use cookies and identifiers for:

- Permissions and privacy
- Targetting capabilities
- Control creative
- Campaign management
- Monitor performance
- Attribute outcomes
- Robust insights

She said that without these identifiers, we need to rearchitect our industry. Here, she introduced a global IAB and Tech Lab initiative called, Project Rearc:

IAB & Tech Lab Initiative: Project Rearc

An Industry Collaboration to Rearchitect Digital Marketing

Tech Lab proposes to develop rigorous **technical standards and guidelines** that inform how companies collect and use such an identifier so that:

1. **Consumers are in control** of the use of the ID and any related data. Any privacy preferences attached to the identifier are strictly followed.
2. **The identifier is sufficiently encrypted** so that it cannot be reverse-engineered to identify the person.
3. Brands and publishers have **auditable, technical assurances** that third-party vendors cannot track consumers on this basis without explicit consent.
4. Third-party vendors are able to **execute on behalf of trusted first parties**, without compromising any of the above objectives.

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She said they have two working groups; the Accountability working group and the Addressability working group. The Accountability working group is focused on developing mechanisms for privacy control and ensuring that it can be adapted globally and across multiple browsers. The Addressability group, on the other hand, is looking at providing solutions from a technical standpoint on targeting, audience measurement, etc.

She also spoke about the Partnership for Responsible Addressable Media. It brings together many influential organisations, globally and most notably some top-tier leaders that are underrepresented in Project Rearc.

According to the World Federation of Advertisers, this initiative intends to advance and protect critical functionalities like customisation and analytics for digital media and advertising, while safeguarding privacy and improving the consumer experience. The governing group of the Partnership will include the most influential organisations in advertising:

Trade bodies: 4A's, Association of National Advertisers/ANA, Interactive Advertising Bureau, IAB Tech Lab, Network Advertising Initiative, World Federation of Advertisers
Advertisers: Ford, General Motors, IBM, Procter & Gamble, Unilever
Agencies: UM (an IPG Mediabrands company), Publicis Media
Publishers: NBCUniversal
Ad Tech/Martech: Adobe, LiveRamp, MediaMath, The Trade Desk

Eng said that there are four working groups which these industry stakeholders are working on.

- Technical standards that are lead by the Tech Lab
- Business practices

- Privacy, policy and legal considerations
- Communication and education

But now what? How is measurement going to be impacted?

1. It's central to powering the digital advertising ecosystem.
2. It generates metrics that are currency, when standardised and of the appropriate quality, for the buying and selling of advertising.
3. It's the basis for knowing whether a target goal was achieved and how ads performed.
4. It can inform and help improve user experiences > results in more relevant ads.

But she said our industry is really fragmented:
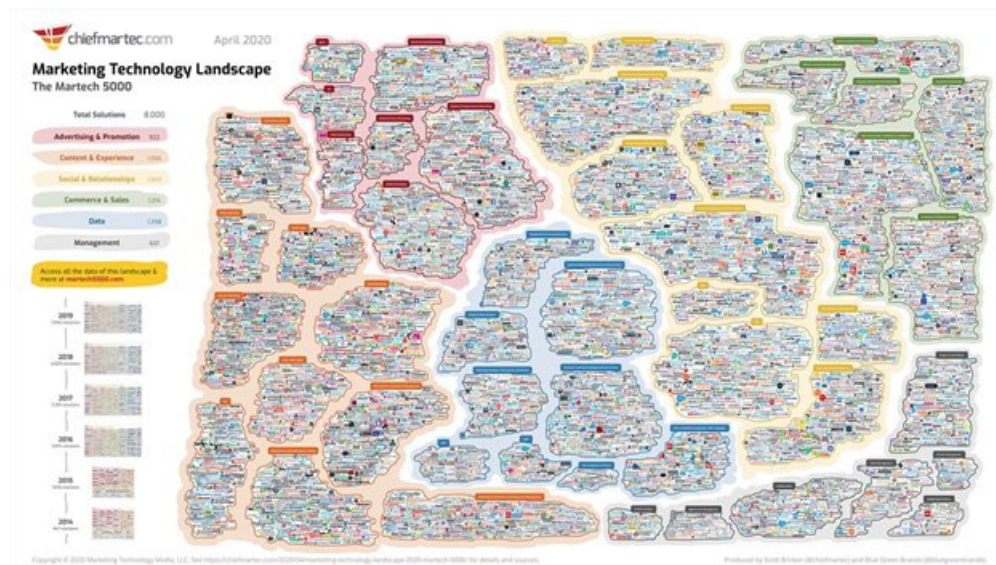
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Get a better view of the map here. You can also read more here.

She explained that the map depicts a very wide overview of martech and adtech ecosystems. There are pools of different types of elements and companies within there. She said we need technology standards to establish better measurement and that we have all these different channels, from display, social, native, including video and TV, audio, gaming, search, OOH - all these different channels are being tracked. But unfortunately, a lot of the information and the data points that are within them are not consistent across the board.
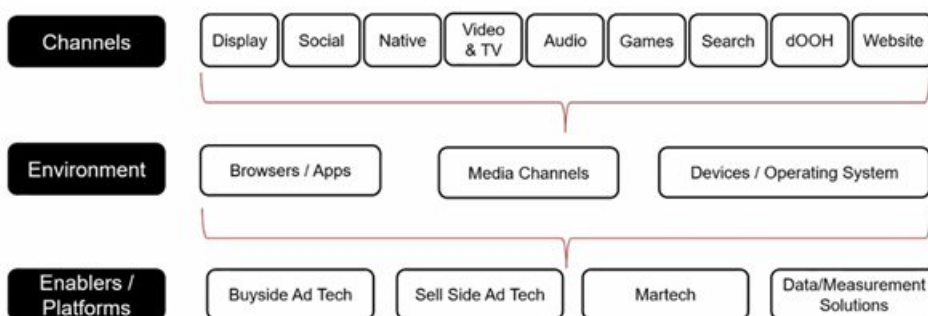
She ended off her presentation by saying that now more than ever we need:

1. Adoption of new/updated standards (refer to the first image above).
2. Industry participation, collaboration and advocacy on tech standards. If you're not familiar with them Eng suggests you read up on it and familiarise yourself. Ensure that you ask your publishers or vendors to upgrade to those platforms so that it provides the entire ecosystem with good data and with great user experience.
3. To share experiences, tips and solutions with others.

View the full webinar, including Eng's panel discussion with Audrey Naidoo, head of digital marketing at Absa; Vincent Maher, head of group enablement at Multichoice and Andrew Smit, head of data solutions at Incubeta, below:

Also, take a look at our coverage of IAB Tech Lab's Amit Shetty's presentation on tech standards that enable improvements in ad experiences and measurement, below:

Tech standards that enable improvements in measurement and experience
Juanita Pienaar 27 Aug 2020

For more on the IAB Tech Lab and what it is they do, you can visit its website and to find out more about IAB SA events and how to join, click here.

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.
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