

# What 2016 will mean for digital advertising

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## The year we say goodbye to bad ads?

**As the year draws to a close, one of the hottest topics of conversation in the industry is the sharp ascent of ad blockers.**

Consumers are choosing to assert greater control over their online experiences, with use of ad blocking software up 41% year-on-year according to PageFair. All this talk of ‘adblockocalypse’ (as some are calling it) has the potential to lead to a pessimistic start to 2016 – especially for the majority of publishers that are reliant upon ad revenue to survive – but thankfully this has instead sparked a much needed reevaluation of **digital advertising** and a renewed focus on how to provide a more positive user experience within **advertising**.

2016 is the year we’ll see publishers and advertisers fighting back to regain control over ad blocking as they focus on winning over consumers with better offerings to meet the high expectations of today’s audiences.

## Publishers take action against ad blockers

Publishers will take decisive action against ad blockers by adapting and enhancing their ad propositions and taking steps to educate users about the importance of the ad-funded model. Recent IAB research shows that if presented with a straight choice between either paying for content, or viewing **advertising**, a comfortable majority of consumers say they’d prefer to continue seeing ads online. By focusing on improving user experience, and delivering ads that are truly engaging, advertisers and publishers will halt the uptake of ad blocking technology and can begin to repair relationships with their consumers. These actions are likely to result in fewer, more creative ads per page and over the longer term, will lead to an increase in average CPM rates.

## Data will be used in a smarter way

The popularity of ad blockers highlights a shift in mindset from consumers who have become increasingly conscious of the significant data trail they create every time they go online, and this is reflected in their attitudes towards privacy. Advertisers’ use of consumer data will become

more subtle next year, with a focus on what should be done with customer information, rather than simply what they are capable of doing. Ads will strike a better balance between personalisation and privacy, and while relevance will remain vital to effective **marketing**, consumers will appreciate a less intrusive approach.

### **Programmatic ad formats continue to grow**

Next year, we can expect to see greater interest in new programmatic ad formats that provide value and have a greater impact for advertisers. Companies will be working towards an overall improvement in formats available to trade programmatically and premium publishers in particular will be looking to capitalise on this.

**David Ogilvy** used to say that you should never write an ad that you wouldn't want your own family to read. There's a useful lesson here for today's **digital** world: publishers and advertisers must now focus on providing the sort of ad experience they'd be happy to 'subject' their own friends and family members to.

It is by taking steps to improve UX within **advertising** and to ensure **advertising** is neither intrusive nor disruptive, that companies will be able to keep their audiences on side and encourage continued success throughout 2016.

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