

**ID Resolution**

**Time to (Seriously) Think About Household**

**Roundtable Summary**

Identity is at the core of every aspect of today’s Martech world: audience, insights, media activation, measurement, attribution, and more. We often hear the use of common identifiers such as MAID (mobile ad ID) or email account that lead to “person-level” identity as if that were the answer for everything. In the meantime, household remains the default unit for traditional media and offline measurement, yet households in the identity world are always the bridesmaid, never the bride. Household resolution serves as a reasonable solution in many use cases, but each identity provider uses its own definition and methodology, muddying the waters.

Objectives

This roundtable aims to discuss the merits and the trade-offs of applying household as the default identity unit for planning, activation, and measurement, as well as the challenges and possibly arriving at an agreeable definition moving forward.

Discussion Points

- What level of identifiers do brands currently use for insights, audience creation, activation and measurement?
- If different levels of identifiers are applied, how do they get reconciled?
- If household is part of the equation, what is the definition of household? Who owns those data? Is there a proper consent in place?
- What would be the merits and challenges if applying household as the default identifier?

**Discussion Background: Person vs. Device vs. Household**

While cross-platform measurement and ROI/ROAS is on every agenda for discussion, the status quo is to apply different identifiers for different use cases. Yet the connection between different identifiers may not be as clear and consistent as most people think. In the identity resolution field, many are focusing on either device or account/individual, mostly because of the availability of common identifiers such as MAID or email. We have seen different identity providers lean on different identifiers and end up with various levels of IDs even on the same campaign, e.g., device-level identifier for digital activation and household level identifier for offline measurement. When different identity providers apply different rules to connect PII to cookies to MAID to email, and different rules for “household”, the same audience that was originally created for the campaign will 1. look very different after delivery; 2. lose the consumer journey in the process; and 3. fail to properly track conversion as the connection is broken. The mismatch is costly from both overspending and missed opportunities.

Furthermore, as the concerns and regulations for privacy increase, so does the loss of common identifiers. There have been numerous proposals on aggregated groups, from zip codes to cohorts, all based on some shared behavioral traits. The concept of household seems to be too conventional to be taken seriously– yet in real life, consumers / audience are human who likely cohabitate– the basic concept of “household”.

While household is an established concept, defined by the Census in the US, the same definition does not always apply in Martech’s identity practice. What defines a “household”? Is it shared physical address, shared surname, or shared IP address? Who owns the data and who can provide consent? How can we ensure the use of household privacy-compliance while providing brands with consistent identifiers for insights, planning, audience creation, activation and measurement?

**Roundtable Chairs**



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Sable has over 30 years of experience in advertising/ adtech/ martech, and has spent the last decade focusing on data, identity resolution and measurement. An established analytic and insights leader, she is known for asking tough questions, digging deep in data and methodology, and translating complex concepts to relatable and compelling stories.