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The Benefits of

Cross-Device
Marketing

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The complexity of today's digital advertising ecosystem can sometimes make the industry seem as if it is forgetting its core raison d'être. Fundamentally, ad tech exists to ensure that advertisers can show relevant ads to potential customers, using the unique environment of the internet to forge powerful and personalized connections between brands and people.

With more and more people using multiple devices to browse the internet, finding a single user behind the numerous mobile phones, laptops, connected TVs, and tablets is vitally important, and it is the responsibility of advertising technology companies to ensure this happens.

In this white paper, we'll be taking a look at the important benefits from a branding, performance, and financial perspective that result from being able to identify the same user across a myriad of devices.
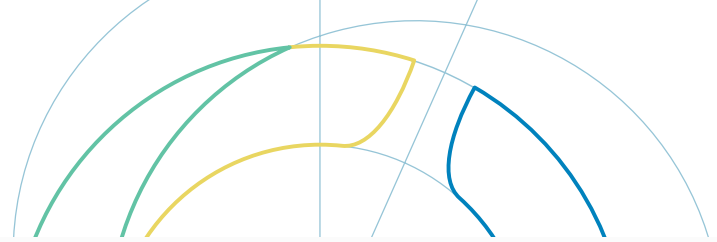
What is Cross-Device Marketing?

In the early days of digital advertising, brands relied on reaching potential online customers primarily through personal computers. Today, as we know, things are very different. Users are connected to the internet through a variety of devices; from laptops and mobile phones, to tablets and smart TVs. By 2025, as we enter the age of the Internet of Things (IoT), the number of networked devices per person is expected to climb to 9.27 (according to Cisco VNI 2018). Which means digital advertisers will be sending their message to users through more and more devices in the coming years. And this increase in channels will mean an increase in noise, and a further dilution in brands' access to prospects.

Finding the same user across multiple devices has several benefits. Advertisers save money by avoiding displaying the same ad to the same user multiple times; users won't get tired of seeing the same ads (known as 'ad fatigue') and advertisers will have the ability to build sequential storytelling narratives that tell a cohesive story across different devices.
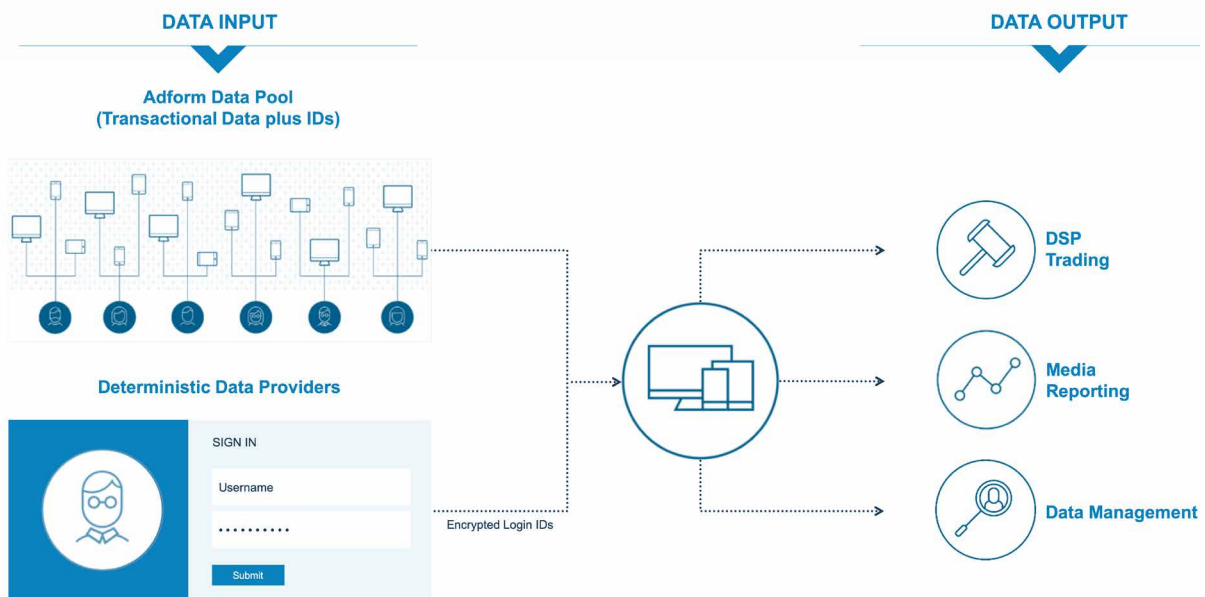
Historically, one of the main issues with cross-device has been the ability to technically match identifiers across different devices. For instance, if you were to visit a website from your desktop, advertisers would identify you from information contained in your browser cookie. But, if an advertiser wanted to later retarget you with an ad while you were browsing the internet on your mobile phone, then advertisers could only identify you from your phone's device ID. Finding a way to bridge the gap between mobile and desktop tracking information, along with tracking information for every modern device, is the central goal of cross-device marketing.

ID Graphs help advertisers reach this goal by storing and arranging data in a way that focuses on the person behind the device. An ID Graph connects a single user ID to information from multiple devices. It identifies this single user by sifting through a combination of 'deterministic' data and 'probabilistic' data.

Deterministic Data: Deterministic data is verifiable information about a particular user that can be detected across devices. An obvious example would be 'login data,' so when a user logs into a website from both their mobile and their desktop device, tracking technology can determine who that user is, on both devices, with a great degree of accuracy. One disadvantage of this form of data is that while it is highly accurate, it is harder to scale and can be subject to privacy restrictions.

Probabilistic Data: Probabilistic data is acquired by machine learning algorithms that sift through multiple data points and sort that data into clusters. By identifying patterns in behavior, the algorithm can assign particular users with a cross-device ID.

Not all graphs are created equally. Typically, more reliable and effective ID Graphs will use a combination of deterministic and probabilistic data to identify users. The graph will use deterministic data as a foundation from which to analyze and search for a wider range of data sets.

DATA INPUT

Adform Data Pool
(Transactional Data plus IDs)

Deterministic Data Providers

SIGN IN

Username

....

Submit

Encrypted Login IDs

DATA OUTPUT

DSP Trading

Media Reporting

Data Management

In the following white paper, we'll examine the benefits of an ID Graph, including the different ways cross-device marketing can create efficiencies and maximize performance.
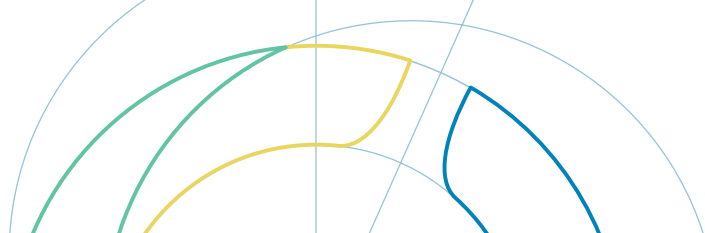
The Benefits

The ability to accurately target users with ads across multiple devices leads to a range of benefits, helping advertisers enhance their prospecting, branding, retargeting and performance activities.

Attribution and Reporting

Digital advertising has enabled brands to measure the success and impact of their campaigns using a range of metrics. With a cross-device ID Graph, advertisers can gain a holistic view of the impact of their campaigns. And, by measuring a customer's journey across a series of devices, advertisers gain a deeper insight on a user's total interaction with their ads.

Cross-device allows advertisers to create campaigns that accurately reflect how a user spends time online throughout the day. A typical user may read the news on their mobile app or browser during their morning commute. Maybe they also listen to streaming music while at work or shop from their work laptop later in the day. In the evening, they may watch a film on their connected TV, before having a final browse of current affairs on their tablet before bed. An advertiser using cross-device can target this user at every touch point throughout their day; and, importantly, be able to build up, over time, a picture of that user's interests along with a picture of when, where, and how they engage with advertising.

Armed with information on how users behave across different devices, advertisers can find out which devices performed the best throughout the phases of the customer's journey from inspiration to research to purchase. This provides advertisers with true account of which ad placements they can 'attribute' a conversion to.

The ability to receive accurate data on user activity also greatly aides the performance of buying algorithms. Programmatic advertising often harnesses machine learning algorithms, such as Adform's Odin, that study historical data and bid higher on impressions that are more likely to result in a click or conversion. With the help of an ID graph, buying algorithms have a broader and more accurate range of data to learn from, resulting in campaigns that are highly optimized for performance.

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Storytelling

Another reason why cross-device marketing is so beneficial to advertising is that it aids creativity. With today's technology, advertisers can show users a sequence of ads over a period of time that tell a story. With cross-device, that storytelling ability is enhanced as advertisers are able to track the same user across different devices and ensure users see the correct sequence of ads that make up the 'story.'

Let's say you are a travel company that wants to sell holiday packages. To target customers, you think of a sequence of ads that guide a potential customer on a journey to the holiday package that best represents their interests, and follow up afterwards to instill customer loyalty and repeat purchases.

Ad 1: In the first ad, you could showcase flight times to luxury destinations.

Ad 2: If a prospective customer clicks on a particular destination in the first ad – for instance, Ecuador, you can then retarget the user with a second ad that displays specific holiday resorts or the weather.

Ad 3: Your third ad could then focus on local nature spots, cultural landmarks, or cuisine.

Ad 4: If the customer doesn't convert, you can try again with a similar destination. And, if a user does convert, you can continue the relationship by asking them to rate their trip afterwards.

Ad 5: Having fostered a relationship with the user, you could then follow up with a similar holiday suggestion.

This sequence of ads, and the many just like it, rely on being able to identify the same user whatever device they may be using. Imagine purchasing a holiday on your desktop to Mexico and then being targeted on your mobile phone by the same company with a trip to Brazil for the same period. It's annoying for the user, and a waste of money for the advertiser. Research from the IAB has indicated that **3 out of 4 consumers prefer ads that are fewer in number but more appropriately personalized.** Cross-device enables tailored and efficient ad experiences that can be interesting, relevant, and non-intrusive.

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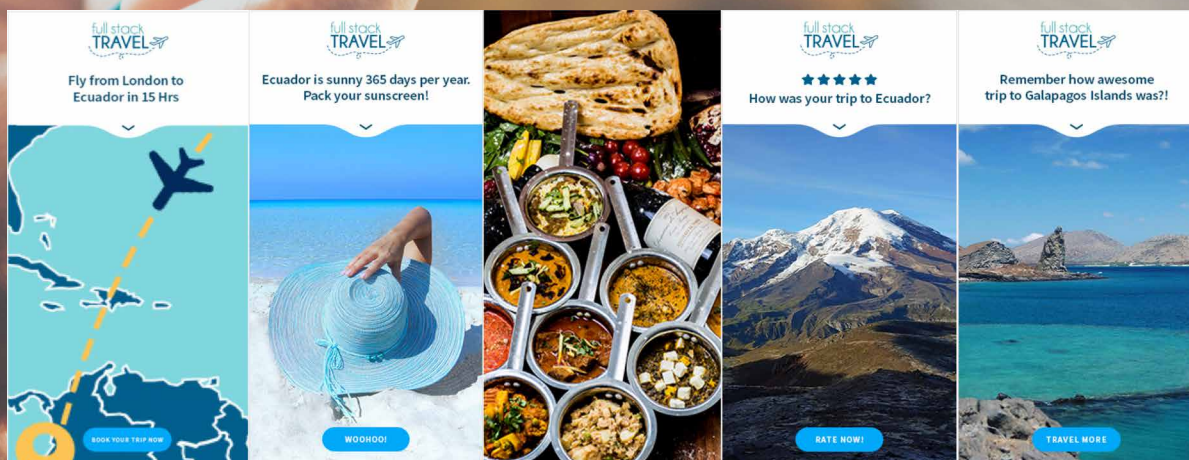
Fighting Ad Fatigue

Ad fatigue was once described by The Drum, an industry trade press, as **'The Silent Killer of Ad Performance.'** Over time, as users become over exposed to the same ads, they begin to develop a negative feeling towards that brand; knowing when to stop is an important and valuable lesson that brands need to learn in order to preserve their reputations.

The same phenomenon applies to when you start dating someone and they send you twenty unanswered texts in a minute, eventually, they start to come across as a bit desperate and needy. Similarly, while brands need to work to persuade potential customers to click their ads and eventually buy their products, they also need to also ensure they are exposing their message to users the appropriate amount of times before they too come across as desperate and pushy.

Through the simple identification of a user across different devices, advertisers can apply effective frequency caps to their campaign and ensure that they aren't wasting money on repeat impressions. And, once that user is identified, they no longer have to worry about bombarding them with the same messaging over and over again.

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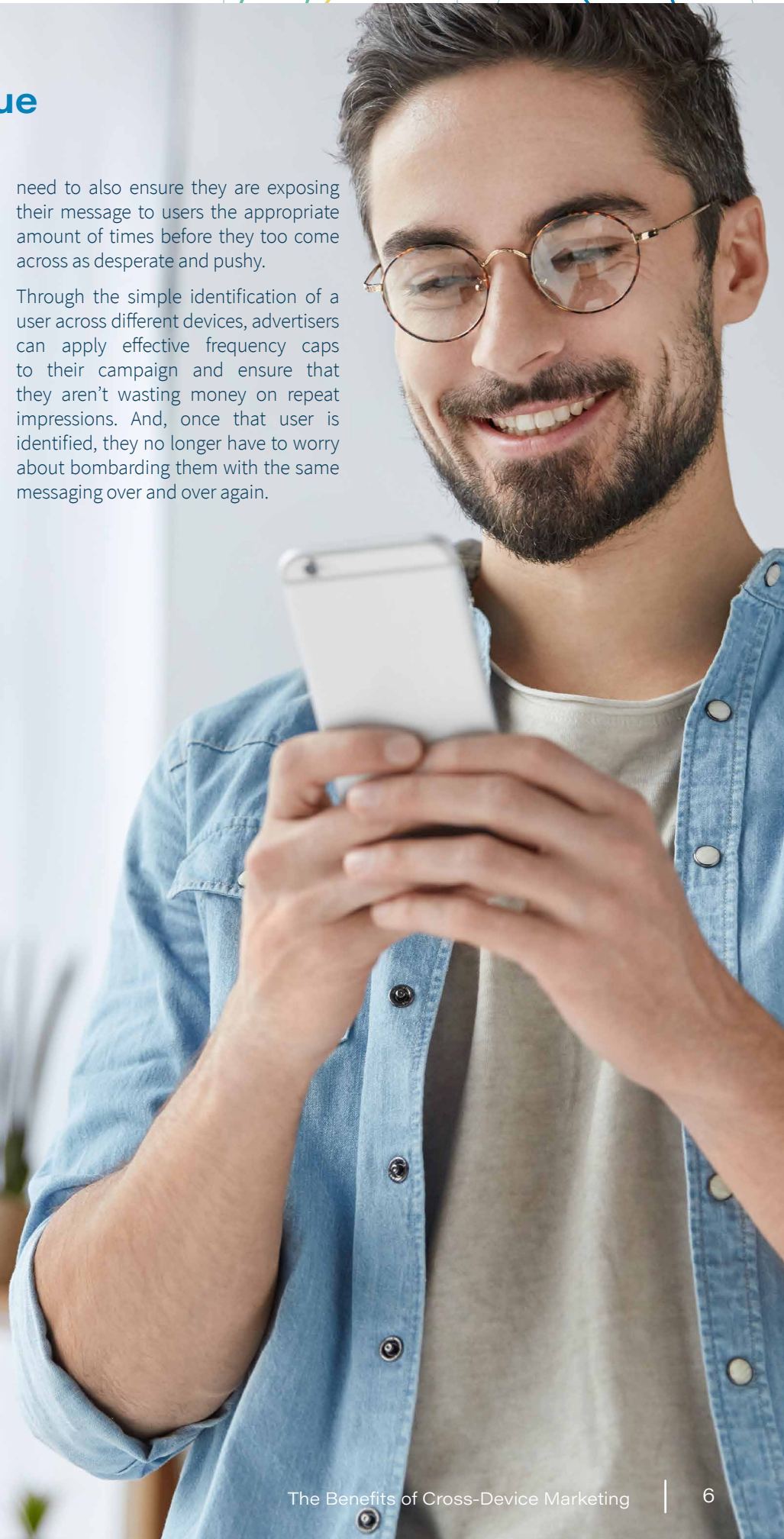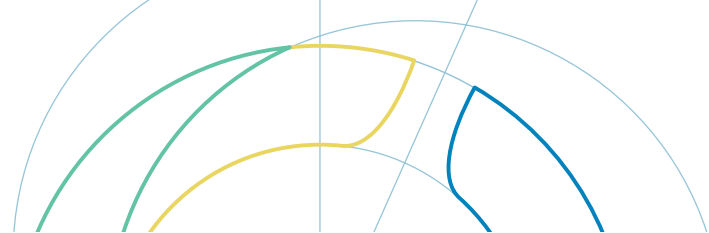
Cost Efficiencies

The ability to cap the frequency with which a user sees an ad not only helps reduce ad fatigue but also helps advertisers save money on repeated impressions. Repeat Impressions no longer become an unavoidable occurrence, but a strategic decision which places the advertiser in control.

The cost-efficiencies enabled by cross-device can be demonstrated with a simple calculation:

Firstly, let's imagine a situation where you **don't** have cross-device in place. You decide to run a campaign that targets **10 million users.** You want to target each user three times so you set a **frequency cap of '3,'** leading to a target of **30 million** impressions in total. The effective cost per thousand impressions (eCPM) is **€2**, which means in total you have spent **€60,000** on your campaign.
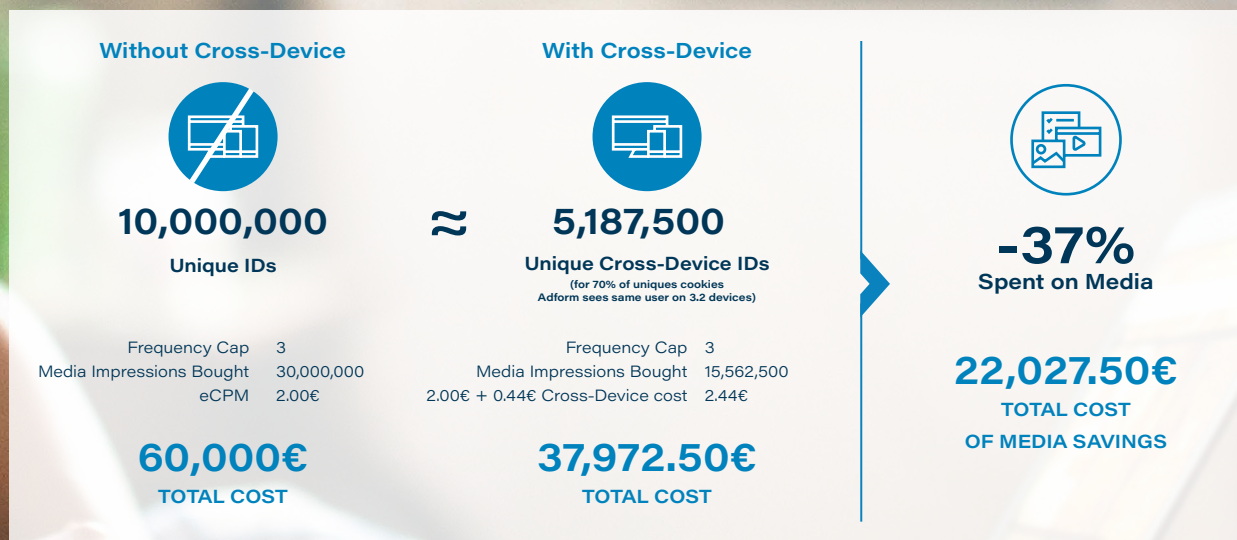
However, without cross-device, we cannot be sure that those 10 million users are all unique as we have no way of matching the same person across different devices. So now, let's see what happens when we activate cross-device at a cost of **€0.44 CPM** .
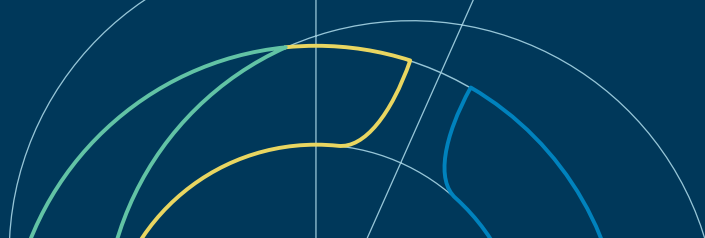
Adform's ID graph detects that roughly **70%** of users can be identified on **3.2** devices. So, if we take the 10 million users in the campaign, we know that 7 million of those IDs are not unique and can be divided by **3.2** to make **2,187,500**. Let's add the 30% of users that can't be identified across devices and now we have a new list of total IDs that stands at **5,187,500.**

Once we apply the same frequency cap of **'3'** we know that our campaign is looking to reach **15,562,500** impressions.

Finally, let's set our eCPM at **€2** and add the cross-device fee of **€0.44** and we a looking at a total cost of **€37,972.50** spent on the campaign.

In this example, cross-device can result in massive **37%** savings of **€22,027.50**, with the additional cross-device fee being more than offset by significant savings on ad spend.

Without Cross-Device		With Cross-Device
10,000,000	≈	**5,187,500**
Unique IDs		Unique Cross-Device IDs
		(for 70% of uniques cookies Adform sees same user on 3.2 devices)

Frequency Cap	3		Frequency Cap	3
Media Impressions Bought	30,000,000		Media Impressions Bought	15,562,500
eCPM	2.00€		2.00€ + 0.44€ Cross-Device cost	2.44€

60,000€	**37,972.50€**	**-37%**
TOTAL COST	TOTAL COST	Spent on Media

22,027.50€
TOTAL COST
OF MEDIA SAVINGS

FORWARD. TOGETHER.

With the proliferation of connected devices and the millions of data signals across the internet, it is important that advertisers never lose sight of the fact that they must continue speaking to people and not devices in their messaging. It is vital for technology companies to provide solutions that help find the music in the noise, and help advertisers create personalized, direct, and impactful ads to the same user across every device.

If you're an Adform client but not yet using Cross-Device, please reach out to your account manager or Adform central client services **(programmatic@adform.com)** and we'll help you get started immediately.

Already a Cross-Device user but want to switch to Adform Cross-Device? Simply change your cross-device provider using the drop-down in the platform and notify your account representative for added support.

Not a current Adform client and ready to learn more? **Tell us** a bit about yourself and we'll be in touch shortly.

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Adform provides an integrated Software as a Service platform for the buying, managing and serving of digital advertising. The company's software consists of a Data Management Platform, a Demand Side Platform and an Ad Serving Platform with advanced analytics, reporting and creative tools that drive high impact digital advertising campaigns globally. Founded in Denmark in 2002, Adform services a client portfolio that includes the world's leading agencies, advertisers, consultancies, and publishers.

To learn more visit us at **www.adform.com**