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By Mark Hamstra, Contributor to CO— by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Companies are rethinking their approach to digital [advertising](#) amid changes in privacy policies on major digital platforms like Facebook and Google, and as online [marketing](#) becomes more ubiquitous, according to [retail](#) presenters at a [CommerceNext](#) event attended by CO—.

Online retailers are conducting more testing of creative approaches and of different platforms, adjusting their advertising strategies in real time and focusing on bolstering their customer databases as new privacy restrictions take effect.

[Facebook](#), [Google](#) and other platforms have upgraded their privacy features to give users more control over how their data is used, which can in turn provide challenges for marketers.

Suruchi Shukla, vice president of marketing and [omnichannel](#) growth at [Tailored Brands](#), the parent of [Men's Wearhouse](#) and [Jos. A. Bank](#), said the company is taking an in-depth look at how it's using its data, and how its customer targeting strategies should be built, as digital platforms have applied more restrictive privacy policies.

“As Facebook and Google and others start to change their algorithms, the customer journeys shift, and our ability to adapt to a shifting customer journey is what I am focused on,” said Shukla.

Tailored Brands is working closely with its digital agencies, but also directly with Google, Facebook and [Pinterest](#), to try to stay ahead of ongoing privacy policy changes that will impact the company's data-driven marketing strategies.

“It's a combination of being a little nimbler and more adaptable on our end and understanding what data we are collecting and how we apply it, and then having a direct relationship with some of the people [at the major online platforms] who have a direct impact on what we are trying to do,” Shukla said.

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## **Tailored Brands: Testing ‘out of the box’ marketing that breaks through the digital clutter — and reaps results**

Meanwhile Tailored Brands has been actively testing creative approaches to stand out as consumers have been increasingly inundated with digital advertising, she said.

“We are looking at generating creative that is pushing us to think out of the box, something that sticks with consumers a little bit more, something that carries the brand personality, along with it being this

‘never done before’ type of creative,” said Shukla.

In order to quickly gauge the effectiveness of its digital ads, the company has been working with [digital marketing](#) agency [New Engen](#) to put in place a rigorous testing framework. It is testing a range of ad formats, such as video versus stills, audio versus no audio, and product-oriented messaging versus lifestyle messaging, among others.

Shukla said that by testing what digital ads work and which ones don’t, Tailored Brands has been able to quickly take non-performing creative out of circulation.

## **CarParts.com: Analyzing the customer path to purchase to see what clicks become sales**

Houman Akhavan, chief marketing officer at [CarParts.com](#), said the explosion of digital advertising is also impacting its marketing strategies. The company has been leveraging data-driven attribution (DDA), a function driven by machine learning, that helps the company analyze its customers’ path to purchase.

DDA essentially assigns a weight to each click a customer makes before they actually buy a product online, so that CarParts.com can better gauge what media and messages are driving customers to make a purchase.

“A lot of the attribution models we have seen in the past have been ‘one size fits all,’” said Akhavan. “What we do know is that every customer journey is different, and the path to purchase is complex. Consumers are getting inundated with so many different ads, and there are so many different clicks taking place.”

**Related:** [How a New Wave of DTC Startups Are Tapping Big Retail to Scale Growth](#)

## **Joybird: Engaging consumers during their online shopping journey to ask, ‘Why aren’t you checking out?’**

Eric Tsai, vice president of marketing and business development at online furniture store [Joybird](#), said the company has long been a rigorous collector of its customers’ data and has shared its data analysis with Facebook to help it tailor the brand’s marketing on the platform.

It also leverages data points from throughout the customer journey to help it improve customer service. For example, Joybird initiates contact with customers who dwell too long in the online shopping cart without checking out to see if they are having any issues that could be resolved to help complete the sale.

“It’s important to ask people when they are in the cart, ‘Why aren’t you checking out? What is the

problem here?” said Tsai.

Then, other customers could be asked if they encountered similar challenges in completing their purchases.

Similarly, Joybird has also leveraged insights from online chat sessions to help understand its customers better, and often uses pop-up questions to gather feedback from shoppers, such as asking if certain content was useful.

Joybird, long viewed as an innovative [e-commerce](#) retailer, also continues to seek to break through the online clutter with new creative strategies and tools to coax customers along their path to purchase. Among its most recent digital marketing efforts is the launch of “[Inspired by Pinterest Trends](#),” which allows customers to create 3D images of rooms filled with furniture.

“We like to engage with our customers on the creative,” said Tsai. “You can click on the Pinterest ads and design your room right there.”

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Source: **How Brands Like Joybird and Men’s Wearhouse Are Rewriting the Marketing Playbook**