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The consumer [ecommerce](#) industry has spent two decades building a huge, complicated set of tools and systems that track and analyze what people do on the internet. Different people have different opinions about this, and that has led to arguments over the last five years about whether this is a good practice or not. [Digital marketing](#) has been built on the backbone of digital [advertising](#) with the help of third-party data and rented relationships.

This process works so that a website viewer comes to your website, loads a pixel so advertising partners can track what they do on your website (most leave purchasing nothing) and then you re-target those audiences who purchased nothing to encourage people to come back on your site. This method used to work fine — until some of the big tech platforms and waves of regulations from around the world took unilateral decisions to change it.

As D2C brand owners, you might still be relying on third-party data without realizing the precarious situation it has put your brand. Now is the time to think of how to grow your D2C brand differently and build stronger relationships.

Do not be reliant on Facebook Ads only

Start testing other platforms to see what works. This diversifies your brand and you will not take a hit, especially in busy seasons like Q4. Test if ads for your brand need to be more organic as the recent changes might not target customers at the right time. Continue testing what works with the audience and scale that up. Amplify the organic content that seems to do well. The organic content can be questions answered, user-generated content or even a quote. If it does well with your audience, it might be a good idea to consider scaling it up.

Build the brand continuously

Facebook Ads drugged everyone into thinking paid media is easy with instant data and gratification. Brand owners took for granted the steps to build a brand people are excited to shop from, not just one that is convenient and shows up when you need it the most. With the changes coming, it makes sense to get personal with the customers to build the brand. This will help build a community around the brand that does much better than a brand with no story.

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Think about ads differently

Think of advertising differently. Think more on the lines of building a story for your brand instead of

just advertising what worked in 2020. This is a change I have noticed in the last few months and I expect it to only deepen over the months to come.

Focus on alternate channels

Focus on collecting email addresses and phone numbers instead of just targeting users through paid campaigns. This will go a long way in building the brand and ties in the previous point. Once you collect the details, keep the community around the brand informed of what's going on with the brand. This helps them relate more.

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Improve the website

Focus on improving your website speed and performance. This is even more important now than it was previously. A lot of brand owners take it for granted, but a customer does not enjoy the experience of a slow website. I make it a monthly exercise to speed up the website and see an instant improvement in conversion rates. Also, always do an A/B test on your website to see what works best with your audience.

Differentiate better

Differentiate your products more than ever before. With digital advertising evolving, your brands and its offering play an even more important role than they did previously. Think of how you can improve your offerings substantially from those offered by your closest competitor.

Data is not oil

Just because your pixel has data from the last couple of years, it doesn't mean you're sitting on gold unless you analyze that data to better understand your potential customers and their buying patterns. Not just that, collecting email IDs and phone numbers by itself will not help your brand grow. Analyze, segment and reach out to the customers regularly.

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Source: [How You Should Evolve Your D2C Brand as Digital Marketing Evolves](#)