

UNITED STATES



Ad-verse reactions:

How Americans feel about personalized advertising in 2025

/Research Reality



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Foreword



“In an era where digital technology seamlessly integrates into our daily lives, personalized advertising has become a central component of modern marketing strategies.

However, as personalization grows more sophisticated, so do concerns about privacy, data usage, and the boundaries between helpful recommendations and intrusive targeting.

In this report, we explore how Americans perceive personalized advertising, the types of tracking consumers find the most invasive, and how targeted ads influence product discovery.

By exploring these perspectives, we aim to provide a clearer understanding of the evolving relationship between consumers and advertisers in 2025.”

Ryan Gmerek

Vice President, YouGov America

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Report takeaways



Tailored ads, divided opinions

Most Americans (56%) are uncomfortable with companies using online behavior to personalize advertising – a stat that increases to **62%** among Gen X and Baby Boomers.

Similarly, more than 1 in 2 Americans say personalized ads creep them out (**54%**).



Too close for comfort?

Ads based on browsing history and social media behavior are the top two ad types that Americans find the most invasive.

“Options to opt out” (52%) and “Minimal data collection” (35%) are the top ways to make people more comfortable with receiving personalized ads.



The power of personalization

1 in 4 Americans agree that personalized advertising is helpful for discovering new products that they may want to buy.

However, Americans are less likely to find personalized advertising helpful compared to all other surveyed regions across the world.



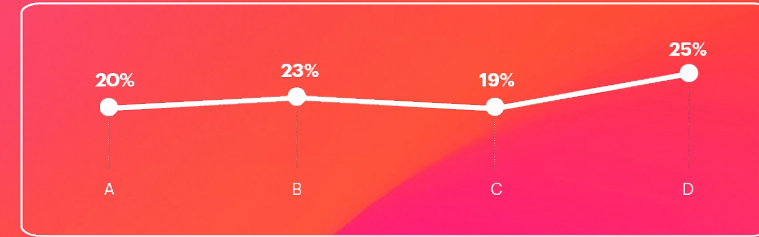
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Data results



37%
(vs. Nat Rep)



Attitudes to personalized advertising

Personalization versus privacy: How consumers feel about personalized advertising in 2025.



Attitudes to personalized advertising:

1 in 2 Americans say personalized ads creep them out (54%)

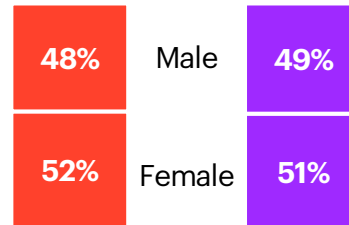
Those who agree are slightly more likely to be female, married, and have no children under 18 in comparison to gen pop.

■ Creeped out by personalized ads
■ Gen pop

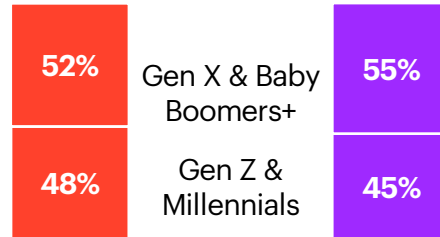
54%

of Americans agree:
 "Personalized advertisements creep me out."

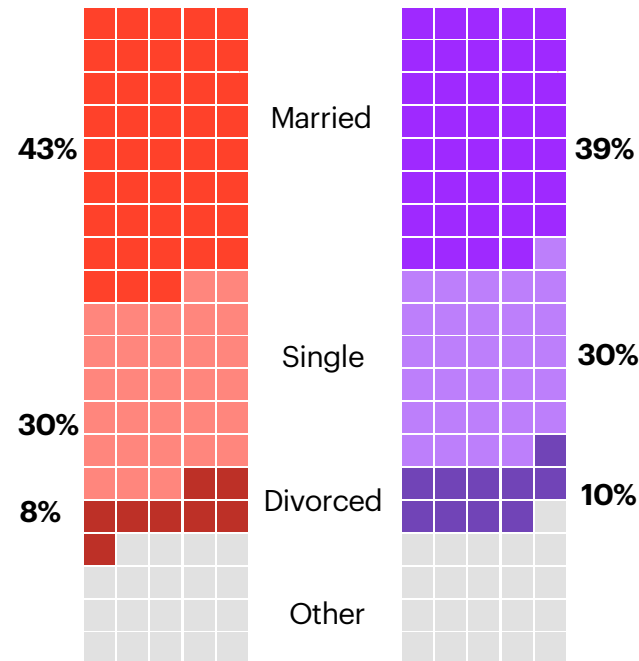
Gender



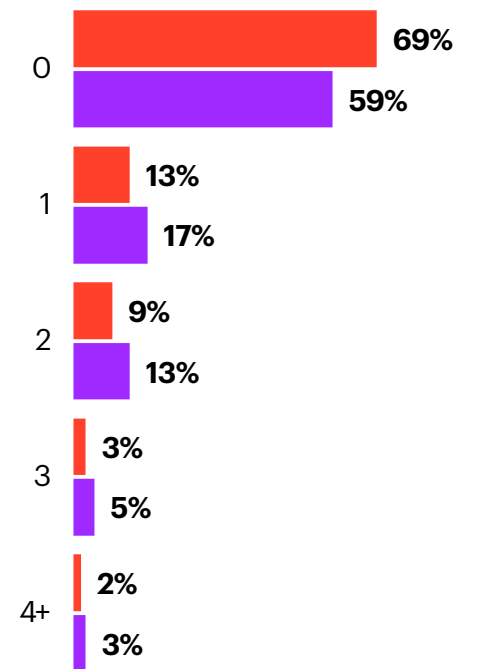
Generation breakdown



Marital status



Number of children under 18



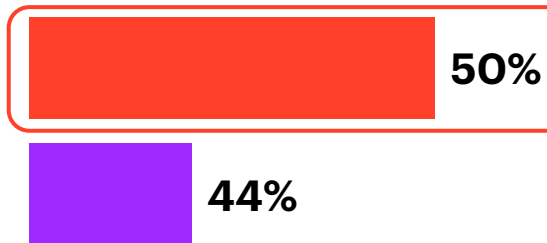
More than 2 in 5 Americans have an ad blocker on their web browser or cell phone

Among the 50% Americans who are creeped out by personalized ads and use ad blockers, 44% have one running all the time.

Yes, I have an ad blocker on web browser or cell phone:

■ Creeped out by personalized ads

■ Gen pop



44%

"I have my ad blocker running all the time, no matter what the website is"*



Americans who are creeped out by personalized advertising are less likely to use TikTok and Snapchat

Those who agree “personalized advertisements creep me out” are almost twice as likely to not belong to any platforms surveyed about.

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Social media and platform usage based on comfort with personalized advertising:

Platform	% creeped out by personalized ads who use	% of gen pop who use	Difference
TikTok	26%	36%	+10
Snapchat	16%	26%	+10
WhatsApp	27%	36%	+9
Instagram	46%	55%	+9
X	30%	37%	+7
YouTube	65%	71%	+6
LinkedIn	20%	24%	+4
Facebook	68%	72%	+4
Pinterest	22%	25%	+3
Discord	13%	16%	+3
None of these	7%	4%	-3

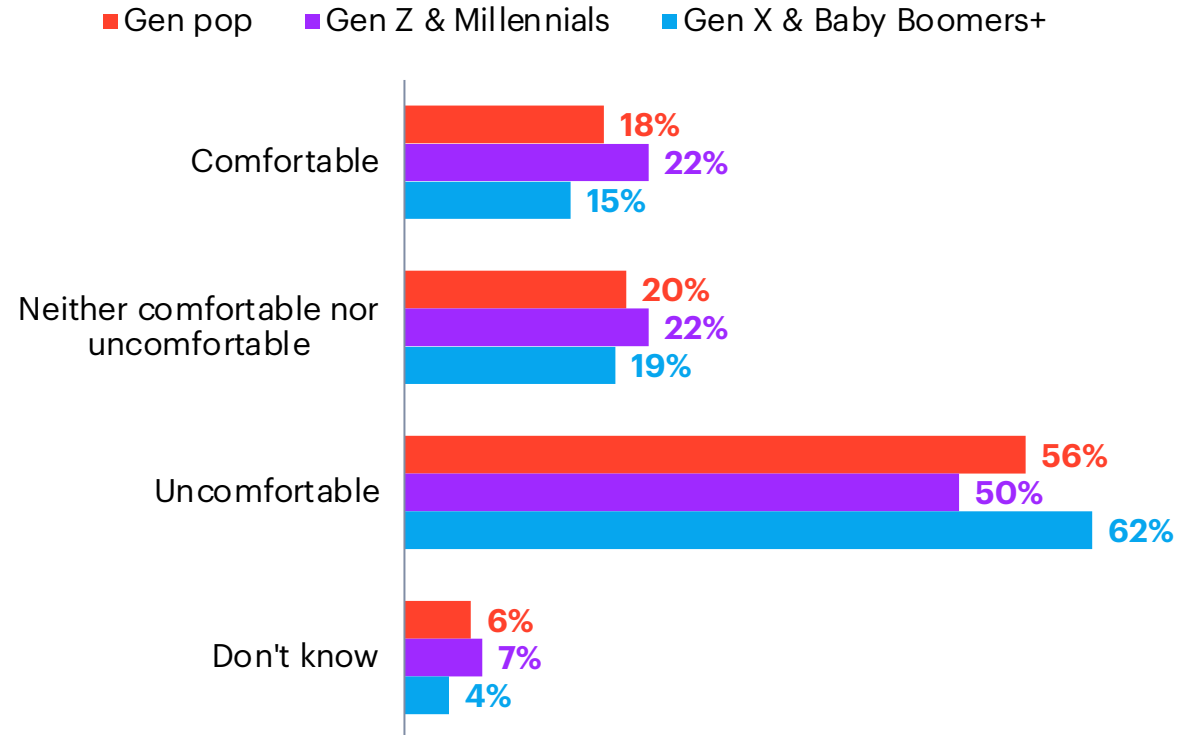
YouGov Profiles, January 26, 2025. Creeped out by personalized ads: Agree with the statement, “Personalized advertisements creep me out” n> 19,400

More than half of Americans are uncomfortable with companies using online behavior to personalize advertising (56%).

Gen Z and Millennials are more likely to be comfortable with personalized advertising (22%) than **Gen X and Baby Boomers+** (15%).

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How comfortable are you with companies using your online behaviour to personalize the ads you see?



Global view:
Americans are more likely to be uncomfortable with personalized advertising compared to most surveyed markets

People in the US and Great Britain are most likely to be uncomfortable with personalized advertising (56%).

How comfortable are you with companies using your online behavior to personalize the ads you see?

I am “uncomfortable”	
US	56%▲
All	41%
Australia	41%
Canada	45%▲
Denmark	42%
France	51%▲
Germany	47%▲
Great Britain	56%▲
Hong Kong	18%▼
India	21%▼
Indonesia	23%▼
Italy	42%
Mexico	30%▼
Poland	43%
Singapore	35%▼
Spain	48%▲
Sweden	50%▲
UAE	21%▼

YouGov Surveys, December 16, 2024 – January 2, 2025. n> 500
All represents unweighted average of 17 surveyed markets
▲/▼: Indicates statistically significant differences compared to All

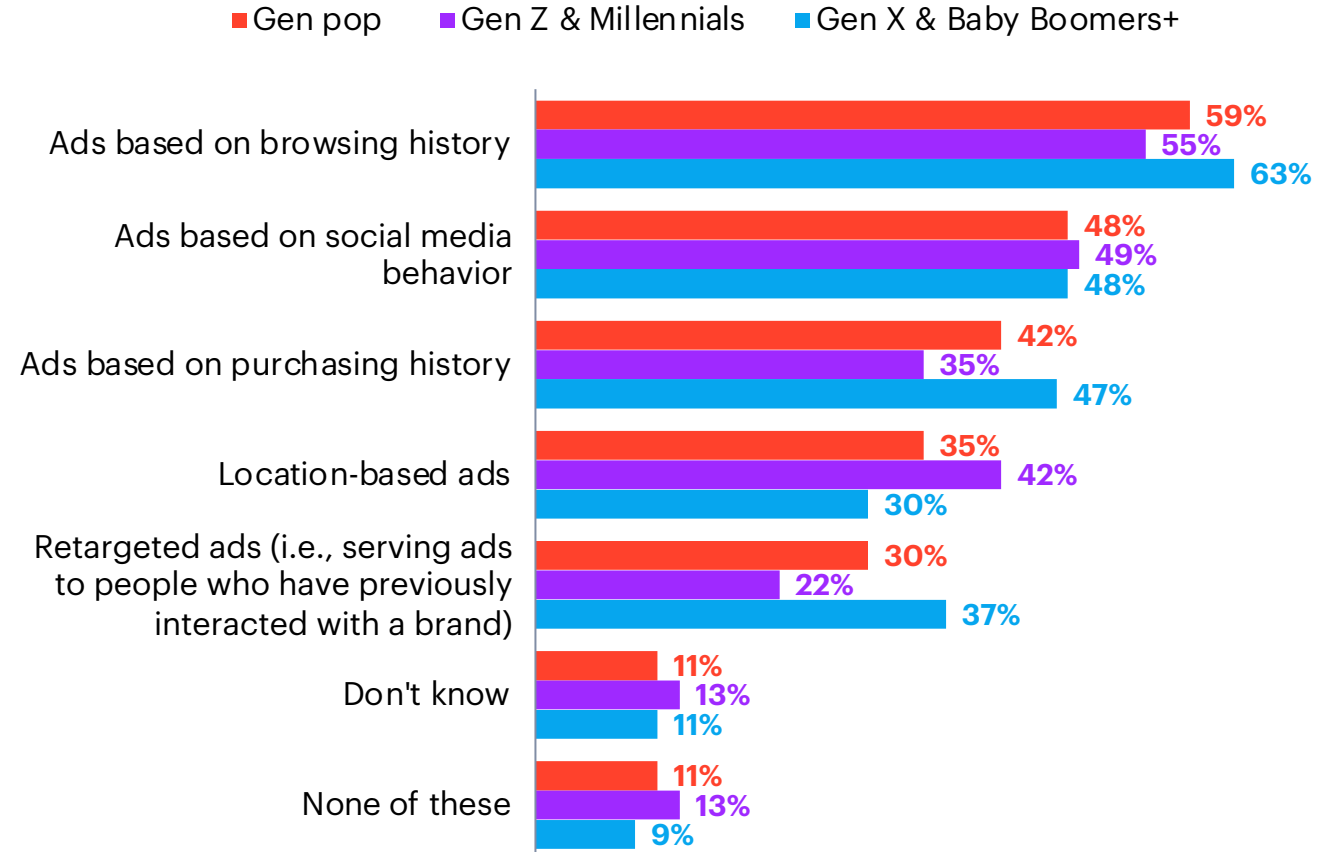


Ads based on browsing history and social media behavior are deemed the most invasive

Gen X and Baby Boomers+ are more likely to find ads based on browsing history invasive (63%) compared to their younger counterparts (55%)

Get in touch

What types of personalized advertising do you find most invasive?

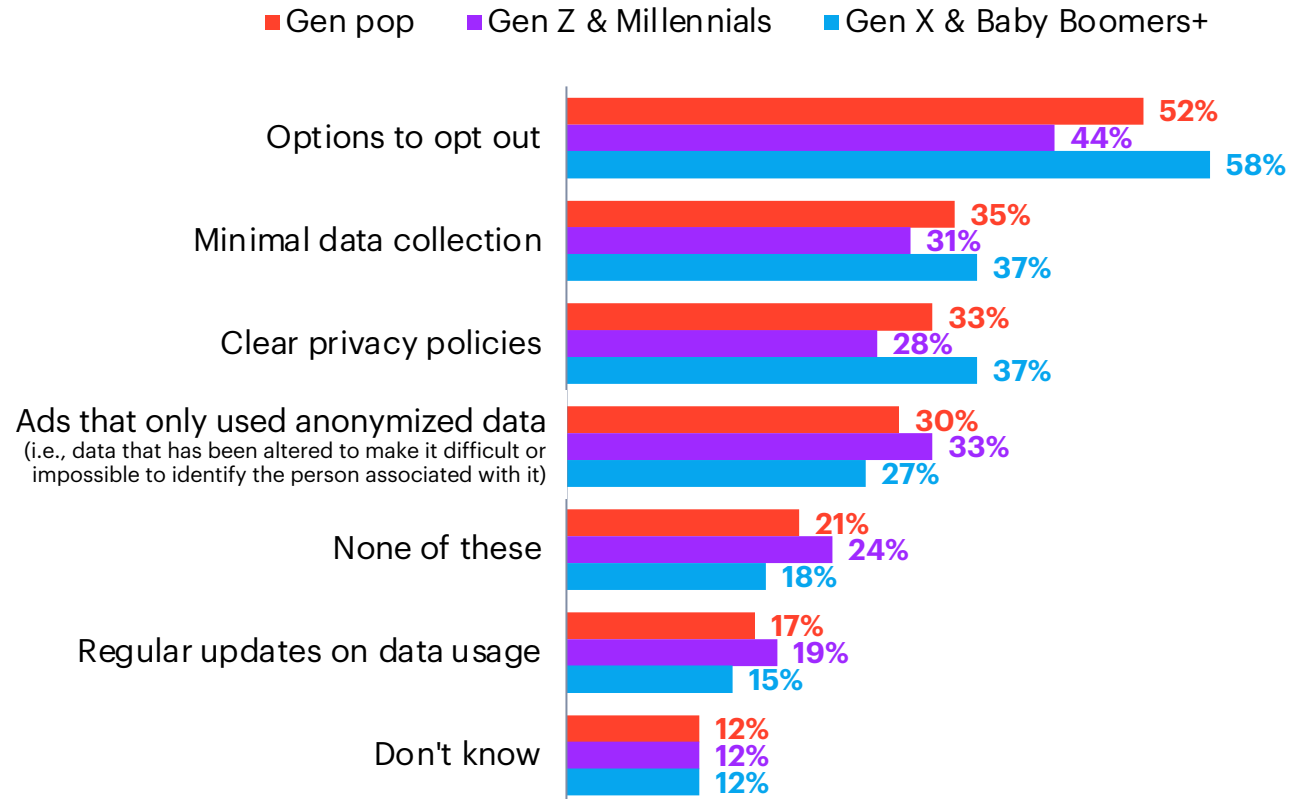


1 in 2 Americans say that “options to opt out” would make them more comfortable with receiving personalized ads

Gen Z and Millennials are more likely to say that ads that only use anonymized data make them feel more comfortable (33%) compared to **Gen X and Baby Boomers+** (27%).

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Which, if any, of the following would make you more comfortable with receiving personalized ads? Please select all that apply.



Personalization and e-commerce

Do Americans find personalized advertising helpful for discovering new products?

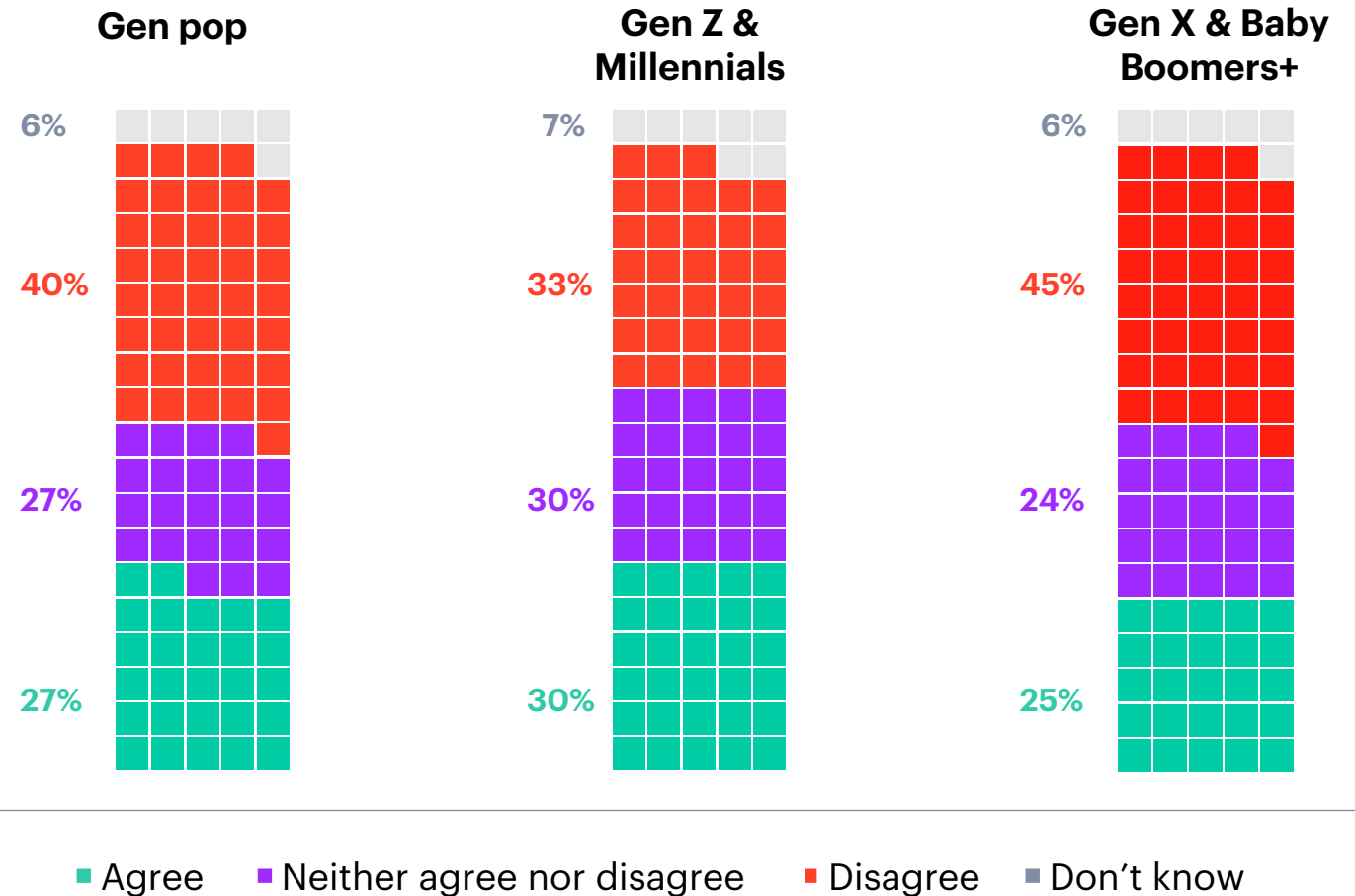


1 in 4 Americans agree that personalized advertising is helpful for discovering new products that they may want to buy (27%)

This increases to 30% among Gen Z & Millennials.

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To what extent do you agree with the statement: "Personalized advertising is helpful for discovering new products that I may want to buy"?



Global view:
Americans are less likely to find personalized advertising helpful compared to other surveyed regions

The US has one of the lowest percentages of respondents who agreed “personalized advertising is helpful for discovering new products that I may want to buy” out of 17 markets surveyed.

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To what extent do you agree with the statement: ‘Personalized advertising is helpful for discovering new products that I may want to buy.’

“Agree” personalized ads are helpful	
US	27% ▼
All	39%
Australia	47% ▲
Canada	34% ▼
Denmark	22% ▼
France	28% ▼
Germany	28% ▼
Great Britain	28% ▼
Hong Kong	56% ▲
India	67% ▲
Indonesia	66% ▲
Italy	36% ▼
Mexico	55% ▲
Poland	34% ▼
Singapore	44% ▲
Spain	36% ▼
Sweden	24% ▼
UAE	61% ▲

YouGov Surveys, December 16, 2024 – January 2, 2025.
All represents unweighted average of 17 surveyed markets
▲/▼: Indicates statistically significant differences compared to All



Methodology

The insights in this report have been sourced via YouGov Surveys and YouGov Profiles.

The insights in this report were sourced via YouGov Surveys – providing rapid answers from the right audience.

The multi-region survey was conducted from December 16, 2024 to January 2, 2025 with 1,503 respondents in United States.

Additional insights are available for 16 other markets: Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, and the UAE.

Throughout the report, various consumer segments are referenced:

- **Creeped out by personalized ads:**
Defined by those who answered “definitely agree” or “tend to agree” to the statement “Personalized advertisements creep me out.”
- **Creeped out by personalized ads and users of ad blockers:**
Defined by those who answered “definitely agree” or “tend to agree” to the statement “Personalized advertisements creep me out” and use at least one ad blocker service on mobile or web browser or both.

The sample population is segmented by generations throughout the report:

- Gen Z & Millennials (representing those born in 1981 and after)
- Gen X & Baby Boomers+ (representing those born in 1980 or before)

Only individuals aged 18+ are included in the survey.

Thank you

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