

## **DMA Response to CMA Online platforms and digital advertising market study**

### **About the Data & Marketing Association (DMA)**

The DMA is Europe's largest trade body in the data and marketing industry, representing over 1,000 data-driven companies across the UK.

The DMA played a major role in the shaping of the GDPR data protection laws in the UK and EU and led the implementation in our industry as the trusted source for industry advice and guidance.

The DMA continues a leading role in discussions around data, tech and AI, ethics, marketing and beyond. Our Value of Data campaign—led in partnership with Edinburgh University's Design Informatics Department and the Bayes Centre—is leading the way in providing a place for discussions about the ethical use of data.

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### **Our Response**

The DMA welcomes much of the CMA's interim report into online advertising. The conclusions reached in the report regarding the need to increase privacy, transparency, trust and control are similar to those reached by a number of government departments, independent bodies, think tanks and trade bodies.

As the CMA report recognises, Facebook and Google and a small number of other businesses have a monopoly over customer data and, thus, an ability to create markets in which they have preferential conditions. While it is clear these organisations will continue to play mammoth roles in the online sphere, giving control primarily to the user will fundamentally change the relationship of online companies and their users and the subsequent way data is collected, used and stored.

The DMA believes that restoring consumer trust is vital for the success of the online advertising industry. Giving users more control over their data and being more transparent about how their data is used is the best way to do this. As such, companies and regulators should be looking for ways to facilitate the transfer of power over data from online advertising platforms to the user.

The CMA's interim report proposal to mandate 'fairness by design' is a bold and encouraging step to further accountability. In the industry, organisations realise that if they do not act transparently and fairly, they will lose customers. Effective regulation that requires businesses to adopt more fair and transparent practices will be commercially helpful as well as the right

thing to do for consumers. In the same way that 'privacy by design' component of GDPR has helped businesses to incorporate accountability and transparency, 'fairness by design' should also help further these aims as well as give greater control to consumers.

The DMA looks forward to engaging further with the CMA in its work in online platform and digital advertising markets. There is a fine balance to be achieved: it is vital that the issues of market inequalities are redressed but equally important that the UK continues to position itself as one of the world's best places to run an online advertising business.

Please do not hesitate to get in contact if the DMA can contribute further to the CMA's work.

Kind regards,

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