

# MediaWallah Clean Room Buyer's Guide and Workbook

**FIND THE CLEAN ROOM SOLUTION  
YOUR ORGANIZATION NEEDS**

# Introduction

## THE CLEAN ROOM ERA IS HEADING INTO FULL SWING, AND IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY.

As first-party data becomes the new “marketing currency,” brands and publishers rely on clean rooms to ensure transactions are fully secure – and highly effective. Indeed, per one [Gartner forecast](#) 80% of marketers with media budgets of \$1 billion or more will be using clean rooms by 2023, and up to 500 deployments were active or in process by 2020.

But while marketing and revenue leaders know they need to adopt clean rooms, finding the right clean room can be easier said than done. The clean room market is diverse and rapidly evolving, and the stakes for hitting the ground running are high.

The good news is that you don't need to select the best clean room from all the available options. You need to find the right clean room *for your organization*. That's where this workbook comes in. By the end of the content and exercises that follow, you and your teams should have a far clearer picture of your company's unique security and data management needs, a clearer sense of the stakeholders you'll need to bring into your journey with you, and an initial list of clean room providers that are likely to meet your demands.

This is important work that we think will set you in good stead for the data deprecation to come. But before diving in, it's important to know what a data clean room is – and why it's becoming crucial to the marketing tech stack in the new data landscape.

If you're already well-versed in clean rooms and data, skip forward to Page 4.

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# Clean Rooms 101

## DEFINED: WHAT'S A CLEAN ROOM?

As Forrester defines: a data clean room is “a secure platform where brands can access advertising data and use it for targeting, measurement, and analysis. The advertising performance data provided in a clean room is aggregated and has controls to ensure privacy.”

Rather than passing sensitive data back and forth directly, organizations share their data securely with a clean room—which then reports back high-level findings about the data to both sides.

For instance, say you'd like to target a user who has opted in to your CRM with the email janedoe@mail.com, and you want to know if you'll likely find her on a major publisher site. You can't simply “ask” (via automated channels) if janedoe@mail.com is in the publisher's registered user lists. Even with standard encryption (or hashing) in place, a customer's email address is too sensitive to pass along directly.

Instead, you and the publisher can both share your email lists with the clean room platform,

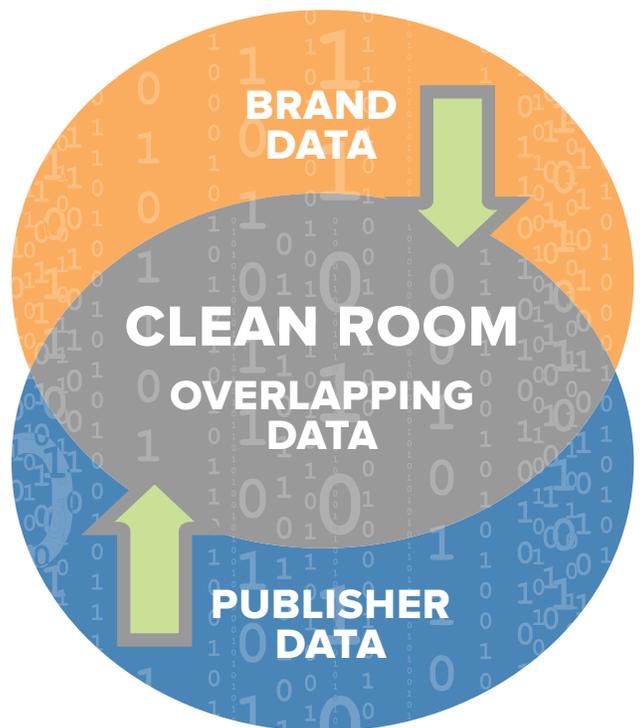
which will compare the lists and report back on percentage overlap between them. If there is, say, a 95% overlap between your list and the publisher's, the chances of reaching the customer tied to janedoe@mail.com is high. You and your publisher partner can go through a similar process for analytics after the fact, comparing your target customer data with the publisher's information about registered visitor behavior.

## THE SHIFT: WHY FIRST PARTY DATA BUILDS A CLEAN ROOM WORLD

In programmatic advertising, brands and publishers have had well-established channels to compare their own audiences with that of their partners via third-party identifiers like third-party cookies and mobile ad IDs (MAIDs). Because these identifiers are both anonymous and already available publicly, they let advertisers and publishers exchange audience information without exposing sensitive data.

But now, third-party IDs are being phased out due to new legal along with self-imposed regulations. As a new currency, brands and publishers now turn to highly curated, often personally identifiable first-party identifiers including customer emails, IP addresses, and proprietary CRM lists. This entrusted data can be highly sensitive for customers, brands, and publishers alike—making it impossible for partners to simply compare audience lists directly. Clean rooms provide the safe intermediary both sides need.

**As first party data takes center stage, clean rooms will only become more crucial in the marketing data stack.**



# The Three Key Clean Room Features That Matter Most

With so many strong offerings on the market at a wide range of price points, what feature set should you seek in your room provider? One place to start is by looking to clean rooms' core purpose: Enabling secure, effective data matching with partners across the ecosystem. In our market research we found that sophisticated brands returned again and again to these three themes – and as a result focused on finding clean room partners that delivered on security, effective data matching, and interoperability.

To be sure, other factors from analytics to UI should be crucial in your ultimate decision. But we recommend these three factors as the three core starting points from which to begin your “long list.” Below you’ll find an overview of how to match each three factor with your business needs.

## 1 SECURITY: On Premise vs. Off-Premise Data Access

From a security standpoint, the level of protection you need will depend on a combination of your company’s security culture and the data sets you’re looking to match. Factors to consider include data regulations in your industry and region; how broadly or narrowly your users have permissioned your data usage; and whether your data is more operational (like a dataset of users who have opted in to marketing emails) or are core assets (like lists of likely high-value intenders for a core product).

With your data security profile ready, you can ask what level of protection you’ll need from your clean room platform. When it comes to data security, protection hinges largely on one question: How does the clean room access your data? In some clean rooms, parties securely pass data off-premise and into the platform’s data warehouse for analysis. In others, the platform analyzes your data from within your own secure on-premise environment – and uses a complex system of digital “keys” and ciphers across multiple nodes to align the information between partners.

The safeguards that “off-premise” clean rooms put in place are more than secure enough for many brands and use cases. However, the most security-sensitive brands will only work with clean room platforms that can ensure on-premise analysis: They’ve laid out extensive security infrastructure to keep their sensitive data secure, and do not want to run any risks of passing their data beyond their walls.

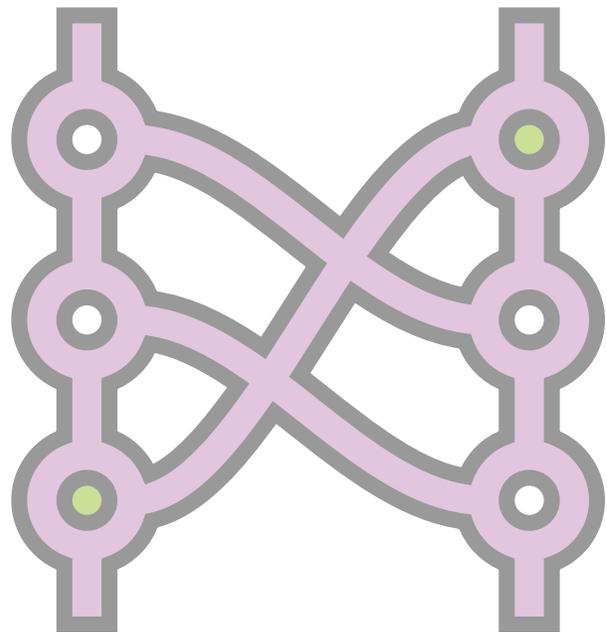


## 2 INTEROPERABILITY: Managed Service vs. Self-Service

While some of your partners might work with the same clean room providers as you do, many others across the ecosystem likely will not. As a result, you'll inevitably work with as many as dozens of clean rooms or more at a time in the coming years. Corraling insights and activation across these "hermetically sealed" data environments will become a core challenge—and clean room interoperability will become critical.

While it's partially a technical issue, clean room interoperability largely comes down to workflow and management that comes with issues like porting data across platforms and the legal liabilities of multiple partners. Some clean room providers – which we dub Managed Service solutions – take that interoperability work "off your plate." Others, which we call Self-Service, give you the technology but leave the interoperability up to you. Depending on your organization, each option has its pros and cons:

- **Managed service** handles all of the interoperability issues – from migrating data to handling legal aspects and liability – on behalf of the client. At the same time, managed service companies are often a black box, obfuscating granular data a company might need to make more precise targeting decisions. For instance, they might convey that 95% of the data shared with a partner audience is aligned – which is helpful for making media buying decisions; but it won't say which specific hashed emails fell outside of that window.
- **Self-service** provides access to the clean room technology platform only. Self-service offers zero help on collaborating with partners across the ecosystem—for any partner that has a different platform, it will require migration work to be done in-house or by a third party. Self-service providers also do not take liability for data mishaps like bad uses of the data, leakage, or other problems; plus clients need to have the resources to manage the workflow. Without a managed service business to "protect," self-service providers are often free to be more open about the data. For this reason, self-service platforms typically give clients far more granular data about their audience and how it aligns with data sharing partners.



Self-service works best for organizations with enough resources to handle data partnerships at scale—such as ad agencies, large brands and publishers with their in-house data and media teams, and tech middle-men with a wide range of built-in partners.

Managed service is often best for organizations without the in-house resources to handle multiple clean rooms on their own, that are willing to forgo some of the insights and control they would get if they managed the process themselves.

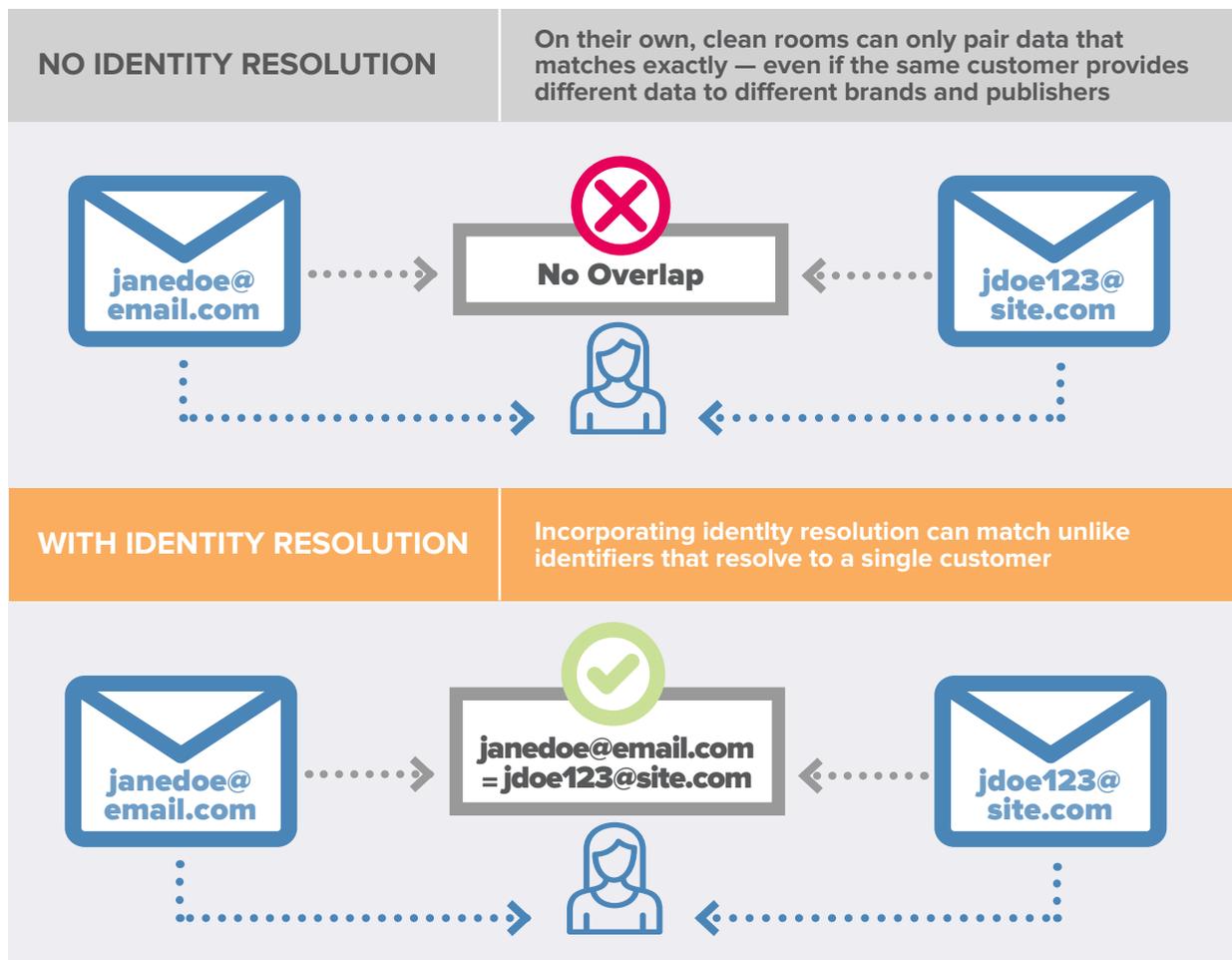
# 3 MATCHING: Externally Integrated vs. Built-In Identity

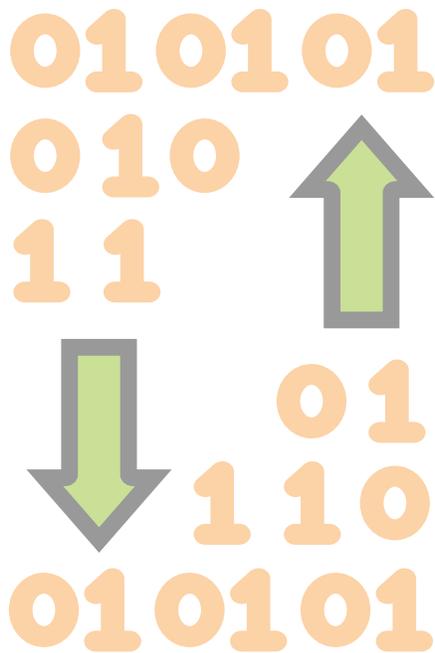
Clean rooms' core function is to match your and your partners' data sets – but a data set alone may overlook many individual users.

Continuing the example of janedoe@email.com from above:

- 1 Let's say a customer has opted in to your email list with the address janedoe@email.com, but has registered at your partner's site with her other address, jdoe123@site.com.
- 2 She's opted in to receive messaging from both your organizations—but simply matching email lists won't tell you that.
- 3 Multiplied across lists with millions of customers, these “unmatchable” identifiers translate to missed opportunity at scale.

To make sure you're matching customers – not just data – you'll need identity resolution. Identity resolution ties the full universe of customer identifiers to your and your partners' customer data sets – telling you both, for instance, that janedoe@email.com and jdoe123@site.com both represent the same individual.





Many clean room providers bring identity resolution into the mix, but in different ways. Some offer integrations with external clean room providers. Others have identity resolution built directly in to their solutions.

As with security and interoperability, the solution you need depends largely on your use case. If you're using clean rooms to closely match one data set with another – for marketing activation or analytics, for example – then built-in identity makes the most sense. External integration means another point solution to handle, plus the inevitable loss of data fidelity and insight as the data transfers from clean room to identity partner to brand and back. Built-in analytics creates a single data “pipe” that solves these problems.

But at the same time, there are some clean room use cases where built-in identity may not be nearly as important. For instance, if you're comparing brand and publisher audiences to answer “focus-group” type questions like what kinds of content likes or the music they prefer, match rates matter much less. For directional questions like these, having identity in the mix is much less critical.

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# Self-Assessment

## GET YOUR CLEAN ROOM PROFILE

Answer the questions below to score how much support you require from each of the core clean room functions: security, interoperability, and data matching. You'll likely need the input of other key stakeholders – such as the CIO, CPO, or legal team – to get the full answer to many of these questions. We've left a space beside each question for you to note whose help you'll need if any.

After you've scored yourself, turn to the buyers' guide for market insight into the right clean room provider for your business and use case.

QUESTION	ANSWER	ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS TO ASK
<b>How regulated is data in your industry?</b> Regulated industries include Finance and Pharma. 0 = minimal regulation, 3 = highly regulated		
<b>On a scale of 1 - 5, how concerned are your customers about privacy/data security?</b> 5 is the most concerned.		
<b>On a scale of 1 - 5, how much do you intend to use user data protection as a key strategic position?</b> 5 is the most vigilant.		
<b>Assess your company's security's culture. On a scale of 1 to 5, to what degree does your company seek to avoid / is your company concerned about each of the negative outcomes below?</b> 1 is lowest priority, 5 is highest.		
Exposed user PII		
Data leakage to competitors		
"Creepy" targeting after data is leaked on supply chain		
Other Concerns (Rank each in its own row)		
1.		
2.		
<b>What uses are my 1PD permitted for?</b> Broad / All Uses: 0 points   Up to 5 Uses: 1 Point   Under 5 Uses: 2 Points		
<b>On a scale of 1 - 5, how proprietary is the data you're transacting on?</b> 5 is the most proprietary. Minimally proprietary includes general operational/media data; highly proprietary includes LTV information for a core product.		
<b>TOTAL</b>		
<b>Scoring:</b> 0 - 11 Points. Minimal security sensitivity 12 - 22 Points. Mid Level security sensitivity 22 - Above. High security sensitivity		

## INTEROPERABILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT

QUESTION	ANSWER	ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS TO ASK
How many countries do you operate in?		
How many walled gardens do you work with?		
How many major open web publishers (eg Disney, NBCU, Paramount) do you work with?		
Tech stack: How many of the technologies you work with currently are powered by first-party cookies?		
Do you have a strategy in place for pseudonymously recognizing unauthenticated users on your website? Yes = 1, No = 0		
As third-party cookies leave the ecosystem, how many alternative identifiers do you plan to use in digital marketing as a replacement? Under Five = 0 Points, Five or More = 1 Point		
<b>TOTAL</b>		
<b>Scoring:</b> 0 - 13 Points. Minimal security sensitivity 14 - 24 Points. Mid Level security sensitivity 25 - Above. High security sensitivity		

## DATA MATCHING SELF-ASSESSMENT

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY DATA ALIGNMENT NEEDS / USE CASES? Check all that apply.	
	Activation
	Analytics
	Audience Insights

# Buyers' Guide

Given your brand's needs, which clean room partner is the best fit for your organization? The chart below can help you decide. We've populated this chart based on our extensive market research we put into building our own solutions

	SECURE DATA SHARING: ON-PREMISE, OFF- PREMISE,OR BOTH?	SELF SERVICE OR MANAGED SERVICE?	NATIVE OR EXTERNALLY INTEGRATED IDENTITY RESOLUTION?
	Off Premise	Self-Service	Integrated
	Off Premise	Self-Service	Integrated
	Off Premise	Managed Service	Native
	Both On and Off-Premise	Both	Native

Want to discuss your results or your clean room needs in more detail? We'd love to hear from you.

**Make an appointment for a meeting  
with our team today.**

# About MediaWallah

MediaWallah provides innovative identity-by-design solutions for the world's largest brands, publishers, platforms and agencies. Mediawallah helps companies create complex 360 degree views of customers and prospects to continue to market to them across channels, IDs, data types, partners, and their own business silos—all with the most advanced security protections, and regardless of changes to the market landscape.

Companies trust MediaWallah to provide agile privacy-first data capabilities to ensure that their identity data is kept safe while also delivering maximum value even as market dynamics evolve over time.

LEARN MORE AT  
[MEDIAWALLAH.COM](https://www.mediawallah.com)