Global Privacy Control in WebKit: what the new API means for marketing and analytics

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Short answer: Global Privacy Control (GPC) is a browser signal that lets people express a preference to opt out of data sharing and cross-context targeted advertising, and on 18 November 2026 WebKit announced an API that lets apps on iOS, iPadOS, visionOS and macOS 27 turn it on. When enabled for a navigation, pages receive the Sec-GPC: 1 request header and navigator.globalPrivacyControl. It matters because your tags, servers and consent tools may start seeing the signal from in-app browsing.

TL;DR The short version

- Global Privacy Control is a browser signal for opting out of data sharing and cross-context targeted advertising.
- On 18 November 2026 WebKit announced an API letting apps on iOS, iPadOS, visionOS and macOS 27 turn it on, sending Sec-GPC: 1 and setting navigator.globalPrivacyControl.
- Check that your tags, servers and consent tools detect and honour the signal, including traffic from in-app browsing.

Read online, listen to it, or change the text size: https://blogs.iictp.org/global-privacy-control-webkit-api-marketers-guide

What is Global Privacy Control?

GPC is an emerging web standard. WebKit quotes the specification as of 10 November 2026: it is designed to let users express a preference to opt out of sharing and cross-context targeted advertising. WebKit also quotes the California Attorney General's page on the California Consumer Privacy Act, which lists a right to opt out of sale or sharing of personal information, including through GPC.

How the WebKit API works

- Developers using WKWebView set globalPrivacyControlEnabled on the preferences object returned from the navigation policy delegate.
- SwiftUI's WebPage exposes the same through isGlobalPrivacyControlEnabled.
- The setting applies to the whole document tree produced by that navigation.
- The header and the JavaScript property are then active for the main frame, its subframes and their subresources.
- The app chooses whether and how to offer the user setting.

What is new compared with before

Apps built on WebKit now have a first-party way to add their own GPC setting for the web content they display. For marketers, the signal can therefore arrive from inside apps with embedded browsers, and third-party subframes and resources receive it too, not only your own page.

What the source reports

- The API is available as of iOS, iPadOS, visionOS and macOS 27.
- The announcement gives no adoption figures and does not say how many apps will switch it on.
- It does not say that Safari or any particular app enables the signal by default.

Limitations and open questions

- A signal is not compliance. What you must do on receiving it depends on the laws that apply to you and your visitors.
- The announcement covers the API, not enforcement or how advertising vendors respond.
- Older operating system versions and non-WebKit browsers are outside this announcement.
- This is general information, not legal advice. Sources were read on 26 November 2026. Products, rules and standards change, so check the linked originals before you rely on any detail.

How to get your stack ready

1. Log the Sec-GPC request header and measure how often it appears, by platform.
2. Read navigator.globalPrivacyControl before tags that share data for advertising run.
3. Map the signal in your consent platform to a documented opt-out state, and agree the mapping with privacy counsel.
4. Apply the same decision server side, including conversion APIs and audience uploads.
5. Test an in-app browser build with the setting on and confirm which requests still fire.

What it means for digital marketers and analytics teams

- Expect smaller remarketing and sharing-based audiences wherever the signal is honoured.
- Separate measurement that your rules allow from sharing for cross-context advertising, so one switch does not break reporting.
- Document how each vendor treats the signal.
- Report opt-out share next to match rate so campaign changes are explained.

Frequently asked questions

- **What is Global Privacy Control?** A browser signal expressing a preference to opt out of sharing and cross-context targeted advertising.
- **How do I detect it?** Check the Sec-GPC: 1 header on requests or navigator.globalPrivacyControl in the browser.

- **Is it legally binding?** It depends on jurisdiction. California's Attorney General page cited by WebKit refers to opt-out including via GPC; ask counsel about your markets.
- **Which Apple versions support the new API?** WebKit names iOS, iPadOS, visionOS and macOS 27.

Related reading

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- Third-party JavaScript supply chain risk
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Sources and further reading

1. John Wilander, WebKit. Global Privacy Control (GPC) WebKit API. 18 November 2026. webkit.org/blog/18646/global-privacy-control-gpc-webkit-api

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