



**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **DMA ANNOUNCES RANGE OF MEASURES TO IMPROVE INFORMATION SECURITY IN DM INDUSTRY**

The Direct Marketing Association (DMA) is launching a range of measures to help its supplier and client members improve information security when handling consumer data.

They include the introduction of best practice guidelines, the launch of a new private information security standard 'DataSeal' in conjunction with BSI Management Systems and, where applicable, the encouragement of DMA members to become certified to the ISO: 27001 standard.

These measures are being introduced following the controversy caused by several well publicised cases surrounding the loss of personal data by government departments and businesses. This resulted in a DMA review which examined in detail the advice provided to members regarding the storage or transfer of customer and prospect data.

The DMA concluded that its members would benefit from industry wide initiatives in several areas:

- A review of the wide range of generic data protection and data security documentation available concluded that members did not have easy access to DM industry specific guidelines. As a consequence a DMA *Best Practice in Information Security* guide has been produced that summarises the key elements of how members can raise standards above the minimum of legislative requirements.
- The DMA also identified the potential benefits of encouraging members to satisfy external information security standards and has received advice and guidance from BSI on how this can be achieved.

The DMA standard DataSeal has been developed in conjunction with BSI and enables members to become certified once they have implemented a specified range of information security measures and have passed an independent audit undertaken by BSI. Subsequent certification will be required on an annual basis.

The standard will enable the users of direct marketing services to identify those DMA members which meet prescribed information security standards. At the same time it would enable supplier members to demonstrate the importance they attach to the safe and secure storage, usage and transfer of client and prospect data.

DataSeal is expected to be formally launched by the DMA in April 2009.

- In addition, the DMA is in negotiation with BSI to help DMA members progress to ISO: 27001 certification where the scope of their trading activities demands a broader or higher level of information security requiring constant development and improvement.

Commenting on the suite of measures, Mike Lordan, DMA's Director of Consumer Services, Compliance & Accreditation, said:

"Taken together, these new measures demonstrate the importance to our industry of high standards in information security as an essential foundation for maintaining and enhancing consumers' trust and confidence. In particular, the DataSeal standard will help members identify and enforce the practical measures and processes required to achieve a constant state of vigilance.

"The standard is accessible, achievable and affordable and is likely to become a minimum requirement in assuring data owners that appropriate data security measures are in place."

"Information is critical to the operation of a company, and its survival," says Julian Thrussell, Product Marketing Manager for BSI Management Systems UK. "Lapses in security have a serious impact on the credibility and brand of an organisation. Although recovery may be prompt - memories last longer. Information and its protection is taken for granted and many organisations leave themselves open to its abuse, however the DMA recognises the importance for its members of assessing risks and putting in place suitable controls to limit any potential breaches."

The DMA 'Best Practice in Information Security' can be downloaded from:

[http://www.dma.org.uk/attachments/resources/4897\\_S4.pdf](http://www.dma.org.uk/attachments/resources/4897_S4.pdf)

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### **Editor's Notes**

The DMA is the country's largest trade association serving the marketing communications sector. Formed in 1992, the organisation represents more than 900 corporate members, spanning advertisers, agencies and suppliers. The DMA is focused on protecting the direct marketing industry by lobbying against overly restrictive legislation, developing standards of best practice and promoting responsible marketing. Through its 'Preference Services', the DMA also enhances consumer trust and confidence in direct marketing by providing consumer protection from unsolicited telephone, mail and fax marketing.

According to the Direct Marketing Association's 2008 *Economic Impact Analysis* report, UK organisations spent £50.5 billion on direct marketing during 2007. Sales attributed to direct marketing

activity totalled £133.4 billion - £76.4 billion from consumer sales and £57 billion resulting from business-to-business sales. The industry directly and indirectly employs 1,009,000 people, accounting for 3.4 per cent of employment in the UK.

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