



ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

It's Here

By the time you read this GDPR and Guernsey's new Data Protection Law will be in force. Although I write this a few days before the 25th May, my prediction is that the sky has not fallen in, the World is still trading and no one has been fined €20M or 4% of their turnover. This is good and hopefully I am correct.

My second prediction is that many of us now have a better understanding of what we need to do to protect data, keep it secure and understand why we should be doing that, also a good thing.

Lots of people I have talked to think GDPR and the local legislation that has been driven around the Globe is an arduous task with little benefit. Whilst I agree some of the more detailed aspects of GDPR may have limited benefit, the focus on individuals and how companies hold, maintain and process personal information about us has to be a good thing.

There are some real benefits behind GDPR. I can have more confidence that:

- Companies only hold information about me that they need to hold.
- I can contact a company and ask to be told the information they have about me.
- If there is a data breach it will be reported.
- If a company deliberately ignores the regulation they will be brought to account.
- Compliance with the law will become part of standard operating procedures.

Not every organisation has all of the required systems in place now, but the culture of managing data properly is spreading.

Implementation

The Data Protection Commissioner in Guernsey has made it very clear that there will be a period of grace for companies to comply with the new laws. With roughly two years from announcement to implementation to prepare, a firm cut-off date would have been very difficult to achieve. The attitude appears firmly to be assisting companies to improve their processes rather than punish them if they don't.

That said, the fear, uncertainty and doubt that has been spread by some over the past six months has recently reached a crescendo. A pragmatic and planned approach to creating a compliant environment is the best way forward, identifying which areas of the business need to be improved and who, if anyone, needs to be employed to assist with this.



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As an IT supplier, we have received some requests to outsource all of the GDPR work or for confirmation that systems hosted by us are GDPR compliant. This is not really a practicable solution as GDPR compliance can't be achieved with IT alone. We can help by creating IT environments that assist with compliance, but the organisation has to have the correct policies and procedures in place. We also have standards we work with (e.g. IASME Gold) that have specific GDPR components.

Are you here yet?

Some organisations will be fully prepared for GDPR and will confidently face any scrutiny from the Commissioner. Others will be well on their way to the same goal, while some will still be taking their first steps. If you are in the latter category, don't panic! You can still act to take the necessary steps to meet the law.

About the Author

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