

THE BUNKER

Part of the CYBERFORT group



GDPR: THE UNDERCOVER ENABLER

**HOW GDPR COMPLIANCE CAN HELP
BUSINESSES UNLOCK EFFICIENCIES
AND BOOST THEIR BOTTOM LINE**

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INTRODUCTION

DATA PROTECTION HAS NEVER BEEN HIGHER ON THE AGENDA FOR COMPANIES ACROSS ALL SECTORS – BIG AND SMALL.

Yes, it has always been important for businesses to get it right, but the impending enforcement of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has undoubtedly shone a spotlight on the way that personal data is collected, stored and processed, and by whom. But this doesn't necessarily mean that compliance has to be the arduous tick box exercise that's carried out primarily to avoid reputational damage and hefty fines. Contrary to what you may have read in the media, GDPR can act as an enabler for businesses to work smarter. Just going through the process of becoming GDPR compliant can be massively beneficial, and should be treated as an opportunity, rather than a chore.

Security is at our core. It's what we do. We too have had to conduct audits and assess our processes to ensure that we are fully compliant with these new guidelines. Having been through this process, it quickly became clear that GDPR can actually facilitate the way we work in a number of different ways.

The purpose of this paper is to share our knowledge with others and offer insight into how GDPR can be used to benefit businesses in the long-term, from an organisation that knows first-hand.

EXEC SUMMARY



UNDERSTAND

Gaining full visibility and control of your data

STREAMLINE

Consolidating data and reassessing processes to improve efficiency

EVALUATE

Auditing the supply chain to give confidence that third-party providers are fully compliant

SECURE

Overlaying security to mitigate risks

UNDERSTAND

THERE ARE SO MANY OPTIONS WHEN IT COMES TO DATA SHARING.

The widespread use of email, USB sticks, online transfer tools and printing has resulted in data sprawling. It may sound odd, but this decentralised approach to data storage and processing means that many businesses don't have clear visibility of the type of data they hold and where exactly it is.

One of the aims of GDPR is to protect personal information and ensure a coherent approach to the free movement of data. This is a great opportunity for businesses to use the process of becoming GDPR-ready as an excuse to get their data in order and remove anything that isn't needed.

To achieve compliance, organisations must address the issue of visibility. The first step in doing this is to carry out a data mapping exercise. This establishes the different types of sensitive information that an organisation is responsible for – from employee and customer data, to third-party information and everything in between – and exactly where this data is held and who is processing it.

Responsibility for this will likely fall on the shoulders of the designated GDPR expert or Data Protection Officer within an organisation. But it's important to note that although they know what is required to comply with the new regulations, they won't necessarily have the skills and know-how to conduct a comprehensive data mapping procedure.

Instead, it's always worth appointing a specialist consultant to assist with the data mapping process. They can also provide a roadmap of what needs to be done in future in order to remain compliant. Legal advice and assistance from a compliance specialist will also ensure a structured and logical approach.

Another requirement of GDPR is that all data you hold must be appropriate with regards to what you plan to use it for. For example, a fintech company wouldn't be able to hold the gender of their customers in order to offer them a loan or process payments.

Once you have visibility of all of the data you hold, you can begin the process of data cleansing – removing all of the data that you don't really need, or deleting duplicates of the same data sets or unnecessary back-ups. Be brutal. Most businesses unknowingly hold rafts of data, and often sensitive personal information, that they don't actually need in order to function. Therefore, GDPR brings with it an opportunity to become less data-heavy.

Reducing the amount of data you hold has massive benefits in terms of data storage, meaning that compliance with GDPR can also lead to generous cost savings.

It makes perfect business sense to know exactly what information you have and how it is being used. Becoming GDPR-ready means that this will have to happen, and that can only be a good thing.

GDPR CAN ALSO LEAD TO GENEROUS COST SAVINGS



STREAMLINE

THERE IS ALWAYS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT WHEN IT COMES TO BUSINESS PROCESSES.

Even in the most process-driven businesses there is opportunity to improve efficiencies, and the run up to GDPR is the perfect time to reassess how things are done.

Data mapping and cleansing will paint a clear picture of where important and sensitive information sits within a business. This offers the opportunity to question business processes in a way that may not have been done before. Many organisations can fall into the trap of following processes simply because that's the way things have always been done, as opposed to because it is the most efficient way of working.

For many, it won't be uncommon for multiple employees to be working from separate versions of the same documents. Sending spreadsheets to other staff members on email or saving new versions on desktops makes it near-enough impossible to keep track of the latest data included across these documents.

Questioning why practices such as this are necessary is the first step towards achieving a streamlined process. If multiple employees need to work from the same spreadsheet, then making a change to the way documents are shared within an organisation can create enormous efficiencies.

For example, storing documents in a centralised encrypted location means there will only be one correct version in existence at any time. Sharing the location of the secure folder via email

instruction rather than adding an attachment also reduces the likelihood of expanding the reach of this data unnecessarily. By doing this, organisations can ensure there is just one source of truth and, ultimately, strengthen their data protection by bolstering the three key principles of security; confidentiality, integrity and availability.

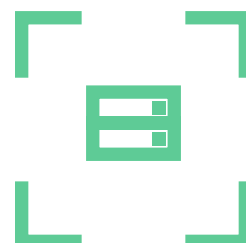
Pinpointing where inefficiencies lie and making improvements

means less time is spent establishing what and where the accurate data is, and more time on carrying out the productive activities that add value to a business.

This will become even more important as GDPR sees customers gain the right to be forgotten, meaning all their data must be deleted from a company's system within 30 days of request. Knowing exactly where this data is, and having confidence that there is only one version of it, will make deleting records a much smoother and hassle-free process when it occurs.

By looking at GDPR from the perspective of amending processes, rather than simply adhering to data protection regulations, organisations can open their eyes to the opportunity for increased efficiencies.

BY LOOKING AT GDPR FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AMENDING PROCESSES, RATHER THAN SIMPLY ADHERING TO DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS, ORGANISATIONS CAN OPEN THEIR EYES TO THE OPPORTUNITY FOR INCREASED EFFICIENCIES



EVALUATE

WHEN GDPR COMES INTO FORCE, BUSINESSES CANNOT ONLY BE INWARD-LOOKING AT THEIR OWN PROCESSES, BUT THEY MUST ALSO ASSESS WHAT IS HAPPENING EXTERNALLY.

You are equally as responsible for data shared down the supply chain as you are for data stored within your own systems.

A thorough audit of the supply chain – including everything from an outsourced payroll company to a recruitment agency and even the window cleaners – can clarify where data ends up and if it is being used in a compliant manner. Whilst this may be a large task, it is not something to look upon with dread or fear, as here lies the opportunity to build a fully compliant solution for your customers.

Carrying out an audit on current and previous suppliers will uncover any insecurities within the businesses you're dealing with. Moving forwards, contracts must detail the specific processes in place for the reporting of any data breaches – past, present or suspected.

Being able to spot regular minor data breaches, or having transparency over any larger breaches, will put you in a better position to evaluate the security of a supplier, therefore informing your decision on whether to move on to another.

When working with any supplier, as stated in Article 28 of GDPR, organisations must also lay out a clear set of rules within a contract to establish;

- Which data is appropriate for them to handle
- How often it can be used
- What purpose it can be used for
- How long it can be kept for

The final point is of particular importance, as it clarifies the length of time that data can be kept for following the termination of a contract.

Businesses already do everything they can to differentiate themselves, so there is no reason not to extend this to GDPR compliance. By making these contractual agreements and having a clear view of the supply chain, organisations can publicise with confidence that their service is part of a fully compliant network. In doing so, they can eliminate a surging risk factor for prospective customers.



SECURE

CREATING A CENTRALISED LOCATION FOR BUSINESS DATA, AND REASSESSING PROCESSES TO ADDRESS WHICH MEMBERS OF STAFF NEED ACCESS TO SPECIFIC DATA SETS, MEANS THAT SECURITY SHOULD THEN BE A SIMPLE STEP.

It is much easier to secure one or a few large data sets than it is to safeguard fragmented data which is saved in multiple locations and on a range of devices. Therefore, by ensuring compliance in terms of data processing and supply chain management, businesses have an opportunity to better protect their personal data.

Once the data mapping, cleansing and process analysis has been carried out, it should be clear where the information sits. This should then be encrypted and stored in a safe environment, with both robust physical and cyber security measures in place. Since it will also be clear who needs access to which types of sensitive information, access privileges can also be applied as an additional layer of protection.

ACHIEVING GDPR COMPLIANCE BY ADOPTING THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF SECURITY ALSO HAS THE ADDITIONAL BENEFIT OF CREATING A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

For many businesses, securing sensitive data to the standards outlined in GDPR might be the most daunting task, especially considering the recent hysteria surrounding the severity of potential fines. In many cases it may be easier to outsource the storage of sensitive data to a GDPR compliant provider.

If this is the path you wish to go down, it's important that you, as the Data Controller – the company responsible for how data is processed – conducts the right due diligence to ensure compliance before choosing a storage provider. A good, compliant provider should offer peace of mind that data is properly safeguarded and should have the certificates and accreditations to prove it.

Again, addressing the security elements that

GDPR brings with it should mean that, in most cases, businesses will have the confidence that their sensitive information is protected, and can therefore focus on growing the business. Achieving GDPR compliance by adopting the highest levels of security also has the additional benefit of creating a competitive advantage. This is especially true for the likes of fintech companies and those working in professional services, since they are often highly regulated and deal with lots of sensitive data.






CONCLUSION

GDPR WILL NOT ONLY DEMAND THAT ANYONE PROCESSING EU DATA IMPROVES THEIR SECURITY POSTURE, BUT IT ALSO OFFERS BUSINESSES A CHANCE TO BECOME MORE EFFICIENT, PRODUCTIVE AND CUSTOMER-FOCUSED.

HAVING CLEAR VISIBILITY OF YOUR ENTIRE DATA ENVIRONMENT, BRINGING EVERYTHING TOGETHER AND LOCKING IT DOWN IN A SECURE LOCATION CREATES A FOUNDATION FOR EFFICIENT BUSINESS. WHETHER IT WAS THE INTENTION OR NOT, GDPR BRINGS WITH IT HUGE OPPORTUNITIES TO EMBRACE BETTER WORKING PRACTICES.

FORWARD-THINKING ORGANISATIONS, THAT RECOGNISE THE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF GDPR, WILL USE THE PROCESS OF ACHIEVING COMPLIANCE AND REDUCING RISK AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO OVERHAUL HOW THE BUSINESS WORKS FOR THE BETTER. THESE IMPROVED EFFICIENCIES ARE LIKELY TO POSITIVELY IMPACT A COMPANY'S BOTTOM LINE. WHAT BETTER TIME TO BEGIN THE JOURNEY, THAN NOW?



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**AT THE BUNKER, WE'VE GOT GDPR NAILED.
WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH THE PROCESS
AND WANT TO HELP OTHER BUSINESSES
ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE AND UNLOCK
EFFICIENCIES IN THE SAME WAY WE HAVE.**

VISIT **[THEBUNKER.NET](https://thebunker.net)** OR CALL OUR TEAM
ON **01304 814800** TO FIND OUT HOW WE
CAN HELP YOU BENEFIT FROM GDPR.