

A Radio Interview on Data Security and the Data Protection Act

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Abstract

This audio resource is intended to provide a broad overview of data security matters and associated legislation in the form of the Data Protection Act. The resource is presented in the context of a radio interview between a student and an expert in the field of data security.

Introduction

Data protection is a serious issue and has become increasingly important as banks, retailers and corporate systems migrate their resources towards the internet. These data-thirsty businesses rely on the seamless transfer of information between themselves and their clients, and under the thumb of UK data security legislation, the secure transmission and storage of this information becomes a legal requirement. The resource aims to discuss these requirements in greater depth, looking at both the responsibilities of the data holder and the rights of the subject, as well as examining why these measures are so important to individuals and society as a whole.

Background

The original Data Protection Act was passed in 1984, its purpose being to protect the privacy of individuals in respect to data stored and used under their name. This was superseded by the 1998 act, which expanded upon the original regulations in light of developments in networking as mentioned above.

In 2010 the laws set out by this act become ever more relevant as the web moves towards user-generated content where depositing large amounts of personal data on social networks is seen as the norm by many people.

Method

Data protection was chosen because it is an important subject that affects everybody who holds personal information, or has information held about them. In the podcast a legislation expert is interviewed by a student wanting to find out how the DPA affects them, with the roles played by several group members. It was felt that an interview would serve as an effective method of presenting information, as it is not demanding of the user and the audio format allows it to be downloaded to an mp3 player.

Discussion

The interview begins with the student querying what issues need to be addressed if personal data is required for a university project. The expert therefore introduces the subject of data security, examines possible threats and identifies the methods used to secure data, such as antivirus software and encryption, as well as physical measures such as security personnel and secure storage.

The expert goes on to present the legal requirement for data security measures under the 1998 Data Protection Act. The eight main principles of the act are introduced and briefly explained, together with the rights of the data subject. Sources from which to gain further information are also latterly identified.

The interview is a useful resource as it addresses many of the main considerations regarding data security and, most importantly, provides a comprehensive overview of the rules and reasoning behind the DPA. It is hoped that the listener will associate themselves with the student interviewer and share in gaining more understanding of their rights and responsibilities in respect to the act.

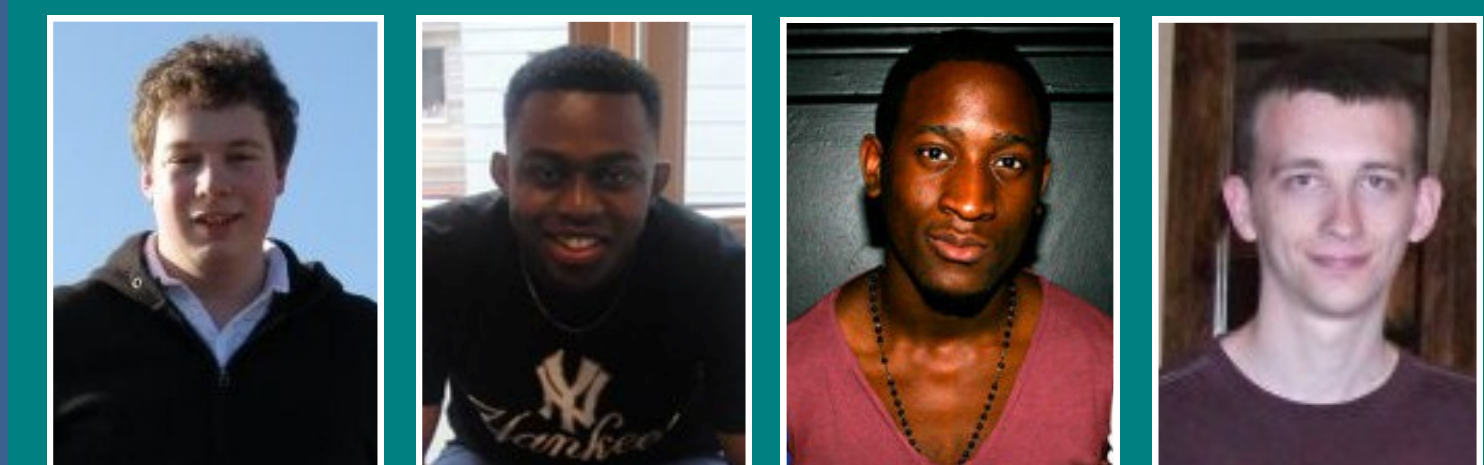
Conclusion

One of the key realisations reached as a result of producing this resource is the importance of data protection to almost every one of us. In the UK, people become data subjects as soon as they are born, as their details are usually recorded on a birth certificate. We should therefore share a common interest that data is held securely, and distributed and processed for valid, subject-authorised reasons. The Data Protection Act continues to be the backbone in upholding data subject rights in the UK.

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Group 6 Profile



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