

WHY DATA PROTECTION MATTERS TO SMEs

GDPR is about protecting your customers' and employees fundamental right to privacy

Your customers and employees are your most important assets. The GDPR provides you a framework to protect them, and thus protect your reputation and your business. Compliance with the Law can give your business a competitive advantage.

GDPR is about transparency and accountability

Your customers and employees have a right to know what you are doing with their personal information. Engage with your customers and staff, keep it simple, and be accountable for your actions.

The GDPR definition of personal data includes images

If you use CCTV, or collect images of staff or customers for use on your website, then you need to ensure these images are collected fairly and lawfully. The same rules apply to collecting images as they do to your usual data collection methods, and you will need to include provision for this in your privacy policy as part of your transparency compliance.

Your customers and staff are becoming more aware of their data protection rights

Part of your obligations as a controller are to ensure your customers and staff know what their rights are under the Law. Be aware of them and have easy-to-follow procedures in place to deal with them.

SMEs may need to designate a Data Protection Officer

Certain organisations will need to examine the possibility of designating a dedicated DPO. This will apply in the main to where the nature of the processing requires the regular and systematic monitoring of a data subjects on a large scale.

Data Subject Access Requests are becoming more common

A good proportion of complaints received by the Office of the Information Commissioner relate to failures in respect of subject access requests. Having a standardised process for handling these requests will make it easier for controllers and will ensure timescales and requirements under the law are met.