

Data Protection Ireland

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Headlines

- Safe Harbor ‘under Review’, p.17
- Privacy regulators enforce data protection law against Google Inc., p.18
- Pizza firm prosecuted for sending spam emails, p.20

Contents

<i>Expert comment</i>	2
<i>PIAs and privacy by design — using them to your advantage</i>	4
<i>Social media — challenges in the control of information</i>	7
<i>Risk, Accountability, and Binding Corporate Codes: a ‘smarter’ approach to data protection</i>	12
<i>News & Views</i>	17

DPC signs privacy agreement with FTC

The Data Protection Commissioner and US Federal Trade Commission have signed a memorandum of understanding to “promote increased understanding and communication” between both agencies.

According to Billy Hawkes, the development will mean “valuable assistance” to his Office “both as a basis for the sharing of experiences and knowledge of issues encountered by both agencies in their interactions with consumers and businesses, and also in relation to cross-border enforcement cooperation

where necessary.”

The MOU was signed in late June 2013. It is not known how subsequent revelations by Edward Snowden regarding US spying on EU institutions will affect implementation of the agreement.

Meanwhile, Ireland is said to be seeking to position itself as the EU’s premier data protection hub for US multinationals, while rejecting claims from some European partners that it operates a ‘light touch’ regulatory regime.

Taking a contrary position

to many of the key European privacy regulators, Billy Hawkes recently said that adopting a ‘one stop shop’ regulatory approach for companies operating across borders was the right move. He said: “The idea of having a single regulator responsible for oversight of a multinational company makes sense.”

“Our experience of dealing with multinational companies here would suggest that it is best if a particular regulator has to become very familiar with the business of a

(Continued on page 17)

Merkel campaigns for single rules for internet companies

The Irish government is facing pressure from Germany to improve oversight of how Irish-located internet companies (with US Headquarters) such as Google and Facebook process data they collect on European users.

Responding to the ongoing Edward Snowden controversy, German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, has called for European Union wide data protection rules and transparency from internet

giants such as Google and Facebook. Merkel said that, in discussions on a European privacy protection agreement, Berlin would be taking ‘a very firm stance’ on the issue.

“Internationally, we should also negotiate an agreement. It would of course be good if Europe spoke with one voice”, the Chancellor added.

Pointing the finger at

Ireland to ensure that it stays on top of the companies, Merkel added “We have great data protection laws in Germany but if Facebook is based in Ireland, then Irish law applies.”

The EU’s Justice Commissioner, Viviane Reding, has urged all EU Member States to follow Merkel’s demand for strict privacy rules to ensure companies

(Continued on page 17)