

Time.lex launches ePrivacyseal EU in collaboration with German experts ePrivacy

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Combining IT know-how and legal expertise guarantees privacy and security when visiting the internet

Law firm **time.lex** has entered into a cooperation agreement with the German company **ePrivacy** which specializes in digital security to help companies to comply both with legal and technical requirements.

Because leaving behind personal data on the internet increasingly goes hand in hand with insecurity, the need for an ePrivacy seal issued to providers of online and mobile applications is growing and guarantees that the technical and legal requirements of European data protection legislation are met. Such a seal creates not only an added value for the user but is evolving to a necessary hallmark for providers of online products and services who wish to keep their customers' trust.

The saying 'If you are not on board, you are being left behind' also applies to the digital world. And not just for professionals; consumers too make daily use of the internet. All kinds of stories surrounding Big Data, cookies and other online profiling instruments threaten to harm this rising digital trend. And with good reason: 3 months ago MIT scientists analysed the anonymised credit card transactions of 1.1 million customers and 10.000 shops, and succeeded in identifying the buyers using only 3 pieces of information on the basis of each individual's apparent unique purchasing pattern.

The many dangers of using the Internet

By now, everybody knows they should be careful when making online payments and shopping on the internet. In Belgium, we have now surpassed The Netherlands on the ranking of most promising e-commerce countries, but the total share of online sales in Belgium represents only 3 percent of total retail turnover, compared to a European average of 5 percent, a clear sign of the lack of trust on the side of the Belgian consumer.

It is becoming more and more clear that surfing the web in general is not without its dangers, even without considering any criminal intent. Potential threats include an inadequate shielding of data, a preference for collecting as much personal data as possible for Big Data analysis, or a simple lack of knowledge on the part of the service provider with respect to applicable laws and restrictions.

An increasing need for the protection of consumers and internet users

Unfortunately, the same consumer often struggles to determine whether his faith (or lack thereof) is deserved, not in the least due to the current abundance of different e-commerce trust labels: “Numerous initiatives have been taken under the form of labels guaranteeing ‘security’. The majority of those labels however, limit themselves to only one specific aspect of information security, such as for instance the observance of the rules of consumer legislation, offering safe payments or complying with cookie rules”, says Edwin Jacobs, partner at law firm time.lex. “Legal regulations often lag behind reality. Technology is evolving so fast that producers of hardware, software developers and IT consultants have to work together and sit down with legal experts to assess products and services on their compliance with applicable legislation and protection of data privacy.”

ePrivacyseal EU combines a technical evaluation with a legal assessment

It is impossible for an IT expert without any legal background to assess the dangers of possible legal infringements. For this reason, time.lex, an all-round law firm for the digital society, has entered into a partnership with the German organisation ePrivacy GmbH, which is specialized in digital security and technical privacy advice.

Together, they will assist providers of online and mobile applications, cloud solutions, big data applications and other innovative services in the evaluation of their products both from a technical and legal perspective. Technically, the architecture and data flow will be scrutinised, while legally both European and national legislation will be assessed. The ultimate goal is to assign the ePrivacyseal to compliant services, which acts both as a quality seal and as a hallmark which guarantees the privacy of the user and the security of the stored data. The ePrivacy Seal shows that the investigated company respects the rules of the scheme and that the user can entrust his data in a reliable and secure way. It strengthens the confidence in the brand of the provider.

ePrivacy GmbH is certified by IAB Europe OBA and is the digital voice in Europe.

“We are particularly proud to announce our partnership”, concludes Edwin Jacobs, “because not only do we cooperate on the legal audit of existing European customers, but because Belgian companies also will now have access to the ePrivacyseal which is a well known Privacy seal in Germany”.

“We are happy to cooperate with time.lex to offer the ePrivacyseal EU now also in Belgium. As the ePrivacyseal EU is based on the strict European privacy law, it gives companies a substantive competitive advantage, when they get their products and/or technologies certified with ePrivacyseal EU.” states Prof. Dr. Christoph Bauer, Founder and CEO of ePrivacy GmbH.

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