

## Who you gonna call?

### Get the fullstory on the Corporate Telephone Preference Service and make sure you don't get busted...

Did you know that it is now a legal obligation for anyone making direct marketing calls to ensure that they do not call corporate subscribers who have registered their wish not to be called?

The Corporate Telephone Preference Service (CTPS) is a central register of companies who have indicated that they do not want to receive sales and marketing calls. So whether you are using your own staff or an outsourced telemarketing agency to make contact with your prospects, you must make sure your data is screened against the CTPS register.

Failure to do so can mean a fine of up to £5000 for flouting the rules and ignorance is no defence, so we asked Alison Hercock of Absolute Marketing for her advice. Alison's company makes sure that the data her clients use is legal and correct at all times, offering not just data cleansing services but also building specific targeted data for campaigns and lead generation.

For more information on who you can call or to get Absolute Marketing to do it for you, you can contact Alison on 0844 779 6789 or email [alison@absolutemktg.co.uk](mailto:alison@absolutemktg.co.uk)

If **you** would like to stop unwanted marketing and sales calls to your business, you can register on the CTPS at <http://www.tpsonline.org.uk/ctps/what/>



## “Do right and fear no man”

(15th Century English Proverb)

### How can I get safe data?

You can gather contact details yourself from events, meeting etc and then have them screened against the CTPS. Alternatively, you can work with a data provider to define the criteria of the data you are looking for, making sure that what you buy has been screened by the provider. You should bear in mind what you are going to use the data for as well as what specific details you require, like contact names or email addresses. Think about whether you need to own the data or just rent it for a year and don't buy more than you can contact in the rental period.

### Why screen the numbers?

Any company who has registered with the CTPS has the right to complain to Ofcom if they receive unwanted calls from any business or individual. If a resolution is not reached informally, then the company can lodge a formal complaint and you could be fined up to £5000! If the risk of the fine or complaint is not enough to deter you, consider the bad press you could receive if the complainant goes public about your behaviour.

### How do I check my data?

The DMA (Direct Marketing Association) have the contract (from Ofcom) to hold and manage the CTPS register, however it can be very expensive to access the register directly through them. The best way to screen your data is to work with a professional telemarketing agency who will check your data for you, as and when you need it, to make sure you stay legal. The legislation surrounding the CTPS, **The Privacy & Electronic Communications (EC Directive) (Amendment) Regulations 2004**, came into force on 25th June 2004, and requires all those companies making direct marketing telephone calls to screen their data every 28 days to make sure they are not calling anyone who is registered.

### How often do I check?

If you are making an unsolicited call to a company that you have never, or not recently, had any contact with (i.e. within the last 3-6 months), you must check the number every 28 days until you have made contact with someone from that organisation. They must then give their consent for you to be in contact with them or receive more information from you.

### How do I build the data?

Either internally or using an external company, you should gradually call through your database and update the information to include all you need to know. If you are only using email communications then you might just compile a database made up of contact name, company name and email address or, more likely, you will want to record job titles, direct dial or mobile numbers and full postal addresses. Whatever it is you need, make sure that you tell whoever does the calling what the exact objective is.

### What if I pick up contact names from a friend?

If data is given to you by a third party it is important that you know where they got it from. You could not use a list that they had hired for a limited period then just passed on to you. Data providers will put “sleepers” in data, companies who will react quite normally when you call but then report you if you cannot prove you owned the data. If the data has been compiled from collecting business cards at events or built organically by another person, you would still need to establish a name in that organisation and get permission to stay in contact, and don't forget to get it screened before you make that first call!