

Programme

ICOMP Conference on Privacy and Competition in the Online Market Place Museum of Musical Instruments Brussels, 27 April 2009

Theme

Privacy in the online environment is becoming an increasingly important issue for European voters. High profile cases in recent years involving the loss of sensitive personal data in a number of member states such as the UK and Germany have led to widespread public debate over the way such data is stored and secured.

But data loss by public authorities is not the only issue that worries European citizens. Policy-makers have started to look at the implications for the online marketplace of the concentration of huge amounts of sensitive personal in the hands of one or more large companies. The new European Parliament and the Commission, together with the relevant authorities in the member states will have to respond to demands from voters for better privacy protection online and to use the powers they have in order to increase people's privacy, where needed. The existing rules and regulations need to be actively enforced and, where needed, improved to increase people's privacy.

ICOMP, the Initiative for a Competitive Online Marketplace (www.i-comp.org), is therefore pleased to announce a conference that will explore the relationship between privacy and competition in the online marketplace and how it affects consumers as well as businesses throughout the EU. How can we ensure that Data Protection Authorities are aware of the impact their activities have on competition while the competition authorities take into account the effect of their actions or lack thereof on privacy? How is the right level of enforcement achieved?

This timely conference will bring together experts from the European Institutions, the member states, the private sector as well as from academia and non-governmental organisations to discuss these very topical issues.

Programme

1. Registration, coffee and sandwiches (11:30 – 12:15)
2. Welcome by ICOMP representative (12:15 – 12:30)
3. Opening speech by Robert Madelin, Director-General of the European Commission's DG for Health and Consumer Protection (12:30 – 13:00)
Followed by Q&A
4. First Panel : Regulating online privacy : making the Data protection Directive(s) work (including Q&A; 13:10 – 14:30)

The EU's data protection rules grant Internet users a high level of privacy protection. By offering even better protection online service providers such as search engines may get a competitive advantage. This section will look at the interaction between the Data Protection rules and the actual privacy practices by companies that offer privacy sensitive services such as Search on the Internet. Do the rules as implemented create an incentive for companies to continue to improve their privacy practices? What steps can and should be taken to make consumers more aware of the privacy practices of companies and the degree to which they differ? Is there a role for third party "certification"?

Speakers:

- Sophie in 't Veld, Member of the European Parliament
- Philippe Renaudière, European Commission Data Protection Officer
- Kirsten Bock, Independent Centre for Privacy Protection Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
- Javier Celaya, CEO DosDoce, Portal Cutral, Spain

Moderator: Auke Haagsma, ICOMP Director

Tea and Coffee break (14:30 – 15:00)

5. Keynote speech “Privacy and Anti-trust”, Prof. Peter Swire, C. William O’Neill Professor of Law at the Moritz College of Law of the Ohio State University, former Chief Counselor for Privacy under President Clinton. (15:00 – 15:30)
6. Second Panel: Improving privacy protection through effective competition: a role for the competition authorities? (15:30 – 16:15)

How does competition policy deal with unilateral practices that are not only bad from a privacy point of view but that can also be considered to result in competitive harm? Is further guidance on these aspects required? What should be the approach of the new European Commission? What is the situation in one of the key member states?

Speakers:

- Kirsten Bock, Independent Centre for Privacy Protection Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
- Andres Font Galarza, Partner Mayer Brown International LLP
- David Wood, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, ICOMP Legal Counsel

Moderator: Auke Haagsma, ICOMP Director

7. General Discussion and Q&A with Prof. Peter Swire and the speakers of the second panel (16:15-16:45)
8. Closing remarks (16:45 – 17:00)

Drinks reception to celebrate ICOMP's first anniversary

Registration

For security reasons only registered participants will be admitted. Identification will be required to access the building on the day of the conference.