



Information Commissioner's Office
Promoting public access to official information
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Data Protection Good Practice Note Corporate Telephone Preference Service

This good practice note explains how companies can register their telephone numbers with the Corporate Telephone Preference Service (CTPS), and the rules that apply to calling companies that have registered their numbers.

The Regulations

The Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 restrict how organisations can make unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls. While this good practice note deals with the rights of companies under the Regulations not to receive unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls, there are similar rules for individuals that are not dealt with in this note. For more information on individuals' rights under the Regulations, please see our guidance 'Unwanted marketing'.

Registering your company's telephone number

To register with the CTPS you can contact the Telephone Preference Service Ltd. using the contact details at the end of this note. Registration is free. It will take 28 days for your CTPS registration to become effective and you will need to renew your registration annually.

Registering with the CTPS will not prevent organisations from calling your company if you have asked them to do so, as these calls would be solicited. As CTPS registration only prevents marketing calls, organisations will still be able to call you to buy or ask about your products or services, and for the purposes of genuine market research.

The CTPS register is a list of numbers, not companies. This means that if you change your telephone number you will have to register your new number if you do not want to receive unsolicited direct marketing calls. If you want to stop unsolicited direct marketing calls to all your company's telephone numbers, you will have to register every number, not just your switchboard number.

If you have an existing contact that you are happy to continue receiving direct marketing calls from, you should make it clear to that organisation that you are happy to hear from them. Otherwise if they screen their calling lists against the CTPS list they may not call you as a result of your registration.

Making unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls to companies

If you want to make unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls to companies, you should screen the list of numbers you want to call against the list of telephone numbers registered with the CTPS. If you want to make unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls to sole traders or partnerships you should also screen against the list of numbers registered with the Telephone Preference Service (TPS), as these organisations may have registered as individuals. There are a number of screening options available to organisations that are making unsolicited direct marketing calls

and you can get more information from the Telephone Preference Service Ltd. using the contact details at the end of this note.

Even if you form a relationship with a company that has registered their telephone number with the CTPS you can only make marketing calls to that company if they have notified you that they do not object to you calling.

If you have had a relationship with a company for a period of time and you discover they have subsequently registered their telephone number with the CTPS, then from that point on you should only make unsolicited marketing calls to the company if they notify you or have already notified you that they do not object to you calling. If you believe that because of your existing relationship the company would not object to receiving your calls, even if they have not notified you of this, then you may decide to continue calling that company. However, you should be aware that if the company complains to this office you may be found to have breached the Regulations. If you call a company that has registered their telephone number with the CTPS and they object to your call you should ensure that you suppress their number from your marketing list so that you do not call them again. You should suppress the number rather than delete it so that the number cannot accidentally be added to your marketing list again in the future.

Making a complaint

If you have received an unsolicited direct marketing telephone call despite your company's telephone number being registered with the CTPS, you can complain by filling in one of our complaint forms, available from our helpline on 01625 545745 or on our website (www.ico.gov.uk) under 'How to Complain'. We would normally expect you to contact the organisation first to try and resolve the matter informally. You should be aware that this office will initially aim to make sure organisations comply with the Regulations by providing them with advice and guidance. However, we will consider taking Enforcement action against organisations that persistently breach the Regulations.

Contacts

Telephone Preference Service Ltd.
DMA House
70 Margaret Street
London
W1W 8SS
TPS Registration line - 0845 070 0707
Website: www.tpsonline.org.uk

More information

For more detailed information, please see our guidance on the Regulations, available on our website (www.ico.gov.uk) under 'Privacy and Electronic Communications' and then 'Guidance'. Or, you can call our helpline on 01625 545745.