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CUSTOMER DATABASES GET READY FOR THE BIG CLEAN-UP

Experian launches new data cleansing service for the Automotive industry

The Automotive industry is putting itself at risk, both financially and legally, by failing to keep its customer databases up-to-date. According to Experian[®], the global information solutions company, more than £40 million is wasted every year by the Automotive industry by using out-of-date and inaccurate information to mail its customers and potential prospects. Failure to adhere to the 1998 Data Protection Act or to comply with the rules regarding the Mail, Fax and Telephone Preference Services, in which people and small businesses can opt out of receiving direct marketing contact, is also putting dealers in danger of both prosecution and heavy fines.

To help the automotive industry minimise these risks, save money and improve the accuracy of its customer databases, a new, specialist version of Experian Intact, the UK's most widely used online data cleansing service which, in the last year alone, cleansed over 600 million records, has been launched. Experian Intact Automotive has been designed specifically for the automotive retail market to help the industry clean up the contents and use of its data and customer databases.

Rob Whalley, Managing Director of Experian's Automotive division, said: "Customer databases are our dealer clients most valuable asset, but without regular data cleansing, they can be rendered useless and are potentially damaging to a dealer's reputation and its relationships with its customers. Regular data cleansing is crucial, not only to comply with data protection legislation but for profitable business too – helping to cut down on costs and enabling businesses target their marketing campaigns and communications more effectively."

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One of the biggest problem areas within the Automotive industry for out-of-date information relates to the actual vehicle ownership data. By comparing the sale date or last service date with the current vehicle ownership details, Experian Intact Automotive can ensure that dealers are not wasting valuable resources on contacting customers about vehicles they no longer own.

Rob Whalley concludes: “Experian Intact Automotive, with its unique combination of consumer data, vehicle ownership data and DMS integration, allows us to bring real cost benefits to our dealer clients and we are already seeing year one net savings of over £7,000 per dealer.”

Over three million people and businesses are registered with the Telephone, Fax and Mail Preference services. And, since 25 June 2004, businesses have not been able to make unsolicited sales and marketing calls to other businesses – they must first check to ensure that the business they want to contact has not opted out of receiving such cold calls by registering with the Corporate Telephone Preference Service (TPS). If a business has opted out and receives a phone call, it is entitled to report the offending organisation to the Office of the Information Commissioner, who can punish them with a £5,000 fine. Experian Intact Automotive checks data against each of these lists ensuring dealers can protect their valuable customer relationships and avoid costly fines.

This press release can be downloaded from <http://press.experian.com>.

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About Experian

Experian is a global leader in providing information solutions to organisations and consumers. It helps organisations find, develop and manage profitable customer relationships by providing information, decision-making solutions and processing services. It empowers consumers to understand, manage and protect their personal information and assets. Experian works with more than 40,000 clients across diverse industries, including financial services, telecommunications, healthcare, insurance, retail and catalogue, automotive, manufacturing, leisure, utilities, property, e-commerce and government. Experian is a subsidiary of GUS plc and has headquarters in Nottingham, UK, and Costa Mesa, California. Its 13,000 people support clients in more than 60 countries. Annual sales exceed £1.3 billion.

For more information, visit the company's web site on www.experian.com.

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