

# dealgroupmedia slams spyware as invasion of privacy

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dealgroupmedia slams use of Spyware  
as invasion of privacy

The intrusive use of advertising supported software, known as spyware, has been slammed by dealgroupmedia, a leading UK online marketing agency, as an increasingly significant and unacceptable invasion of privacy.

The condemnation comes as several anti-spyware bills are being put before the U.S. Congress, one of which threatens malicious spyware authors with criminal penalties. Microsoft, which estimates spyware is responsible for half of all PC crashes, is also planning to upgrade the security features of Windows XP to ward off the unwanted programmes.

Spyware is placed on someone's PC without their knowledge or consent and can be used to gather information from the user's machine, monitor online activity and transmit it back to the originator, often an advertiser.

Nicky Iapino, Chief Operating Officer of dealgroupmedia, said: "Security firms estimate the infestation of spyware has risen ten fold in the past year. The entire practice is unacceptable to legitimate advertisers and marketers. Apart from the very obvious moral issues surrounding Spyware, we also have a responsibility to our clients to keep abreast of changes in the market and to act accordingly in working only with the best of breed sites that comply with our terms of business.

"According to the privacy policies of the companies involved, there will be no sensitive or identifying data collected from the user's system and the user remains anonymous. But it remains a fact that the user's PC is sending information about themselves and their surfing habits to a remote location, which is an invasion of privacy.

"dealgroupmedia's network is spyware free. We do not condone spyware and we continually monitor and investigate any occurrence of spyware within our network. Publishers using spyware are removed. This has always been our position on Spyware, but due to the increasing use of spyware technology we feel that it is appropriate to adopt an official policy which will be published on our website in the coming weeks."

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Notes to Editors

dealgroupmedia is a leading online marketing group. The company uses a range of online channels and media to deliver the highest possible return on investment for its clients, including performance based marketing, online advertising on major portals and targeted websites, and search engine marketing. All business is assessed to ensure return on investment is delivered for clients with over 60% percent of fees performance-based, i.e. clients only pay on results.

Founded in 1999, the company now has more than 350 clients, including the AA; BT; First Direct; John Lewis; Powergen; RAC; Tiscali; Virgin Wines; William Hill and Woolworths. Marketing and media buying agencies using dealgroupmedia include: Carat; Ehs Brann; Manning Gottlieb Media; Tequila; Zenith and more.

dealgroupmedia delivered customers worth more than £150 million in sales to its advertisers in 2003 - an estimated 20 percent of the total sales generated by the performance-based marketing sector.

In October 2003 the company merged with IBNet plc in a reverse takeover and is now listed on the London Stock Exchange (AIM).

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