

Almost half of WhatsApp usage not legal

Submitted by: Guild Digital Limited

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41% of UK workers admit to using WhatsApp for work purposes despite it being against WhatsApp's legal terms of service to use it in ways that involve any non-personal use.

This figure rises to 53% for the under 45's, and in Greater London the percentage using WhatsApp professionally hits a staggering 58%.

These figures come from new research revealed by Guild, a messaging app built for professionals and businesses.

This usage breaches WhatsApp's own legal terms of use.

In addition, some features of WhatsApp may not comply with privacy regulation like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other legal duties like proper record keeping where their employees, customers, suppliers and stakeholders are concerned.

Recently Ireland's GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) joined other organisations in banning the use of WhatsApp by its clubs because WhatsApp is not GDPR-compliant. Furthermore, 'unsuitable material' cannot be removed from WhatsApp by administrators which creates safeguarding issues.

David Naylor, Partner at law firm Wiggin, which specialises in media, technology and IP, confirmed "It is difficult to see how WhatsApp could claim to be fully GDPR compliant and it is against WhatsApp's own terms of use to use it for work purposes. Businesses are taking risks if they allow employees to use consumer messaging apps which operate completely outside their governance, making it impossible to protect company data or comply with their own data protection obligations."

"WhatsApp users are unlikely to be aware the platform isn't for business use" said Ashley Friedlein, CEO and founder of Guild. "However businesses cannot hide behind ignorance or turn a blind eye. They need to educate their employees around the importance of using platforms designed for professional use that provide the necessary levels of control and regulatory compliance," he concluded.

For more information, visit: <https://guild.co/>

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Methodology

CensusWidesurveyed 1,261 workers in the UK (January 2020)

About Guild

Guild is an app designed for professionals and businesses who want the simplicity and ease-of-use of a

consumer messaging app, but with the privacy, legal compliance, control, sophistication and service you'd expect for business.

It has an ad-free, business and enterprise subscription funded business model. Guild is a safe space for professionals to connect, communicate and collaborate to progress their careers and build valuable networks.