

Data Publishers Association (DPA) Sustainability Code of Practice - Forest Floor to Front Door

Introduction

The Data Publishers Association (DPA) is the industry body representing data and directory publishers in the UK. Its role is to protect and promote the interests of the industry, both in print and electronic media. This is a sector which today contributes well over £1bn to the UK economy.

This Code of Practice specifies requirements for managing the environmental impact of 'Business to Consumer' (B2C) printed directory production and distribution. It should be read in conjunction with the 'Delivering Sustainable Directories' study that was sent by the DPA to Defra on 15 July 2008.

B2C directories' environmental footprint is low compared to comparable paper-based industries and has been significantly reduced over time due to the efforts of B2C directory publishers, central and local government partners, and consumers. It is the DPA's intention to maintain and further develop its strong environmental drive so that the undoubted economic and social benefits of B2C directories continue to be delivered sustainably.

This Code of Practice focuses on the management of environmental aspects relating to B2C printed directory production and distribution by setting environmental aims and objectives. It also details methods of measuring and reviewing environmental performance against these aims and objectives.

Applicability

The Code is applicable to all current DPA B2C printed directory publishers and its founder signatories are:

- Data Publishers Association
- BT Directories
- KCOM Group Plc
- Thomson Directories Ltd
- Yell UK

Code of Practice

Directory Production

1. All publishers will maintain their directory products' 100% recyclability properties.
2. All signatories shall ensure that the paper used in directory production is sourced from sustainably managed forests which are certified under independent forestry certification schemes such as those operated by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) etc.
3. The DPA shall collate and publish aggregate figures for recycled fibre content (RCF) and paper basis weight.
4. It is recognised that a responsible balance must be struck between the level of RCF, paper strength, opacity, paper basis weight availability and cost. A combination of these reasons may make it necessary to adjust the level of 'virgin' fibre to avoid the requirement to import recycled fibre, itself involving an environmental impact. Ultimately the directory paper has to be fit for purpose and meets the needs of the consumer and advertiser.
5. All signatories shall continue to work closely with paper, pre-press, print and delivery partners to ensure best practice is shared and that environmental policy excellence is maintained and improved across the supply chain.

Directory Distribution

6. All signatories shall maintain opt-out schemes that enable consumers to choose not to receive a printed directory.
7. All signatories shall maintain service level agreements with distribution companies that include as a minimum the following provisions:
 - directories are delivered to specific addresses
 - directories are not delivered to addresses that have chosen to opt-out of receiving a printed directory
 - protocols for where directories are left if occupiers are not present
 - investigations being carried out and appropriate sanctions being applied if directories are mis-delivered

Directory Recycling and Recovery

8. B2C directory publishers have achieved an aggregate recycling rate of over 69 per cent. The Government's 2013 target is 70 per cent for comparable sectors¹.
9. All signatories shall engage appropriately with recycling agencies such as WRAP Recycle Now in England, Waste Aware Scotland, Waste Aware Wales, and Wake up to Waste² in Northern Ireland and will, when appropriate, carry their respective logos in their directory products with the agency's agreement.
10. All signatories shall ensure that their printed directories include details of how to recycle old directories, with appropriate website and telephone helpline details.
11. The DPA Sustainability Steering Group shall use its best endeavours to try to maintain and continue to improve recycling rates.
12. All signatories shall continue to work with local authorities, householders, Government and end users e.g. newsprint mills, board manufacturers etc to ensure progress is maintained on maximising diversion from landfill. All signatories will continue to outperform relevant EU and UK targets in this area.
13. The DPA will continue to work with its European partners to learn and ensure that the UK directory industry is cognisant of European directory industry practices for directory recycling etc.

¹ 'Defra Waste Strategy for England 2007', market research by directory publishers / industry tonnage data

² The Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland (2000) provides a framework for the development and achievement of sustainable waste management practices in Northern Ireland, as required by EC Directives. Wake up to Waste is the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) – an agency within the Department of Environment in Northern Ireland – programme of working with local councils, voluntary organisations, business and schools and colleges in Northern Ireland to encourage greater reuse, recycling and reduction of waste. See: <http://www.wakeuptowaste.org/index/about-us.htm>

Waste Industry Support

14. All signatories shall continue to seek additional opportunities to promote best practice on environmental and sustainability issues. All signatories shall actively support recycling initiatives and environmental excellence wherever possible both at a community and national level (such as Waste Watch and Community Recycling Networks).

Reporting and Compliance

15. The DPA shall produce, and make available on its website, an annual sustainability report by no later than June for the prior calendar year.
16. The report will include:
 - measurement of aggregate DPA performance against the various measures contained in the Code of Practice
 - activity over the prior twelve months
 - future developments and opportunities
17. The DPA shall establish a Sustainability Steering Group on which each signatory shall be represented. The Sustainability Steering Group shall meet at least twice a year.
18. All DPA members involved in B2C printed directory production and distribution shall be expected to comply with this Code of Practice.