

Fairguide.com/Construct Data Verlag

IMPORTANT ADVICE FROM (insert organising company name here) & THE ASSOCIATION OF EXHIBITION ORGANISERS (AEO)

Fairguide.com/Construct Data Verlag is an Austrian-based organisation registered in Switzerland that regularly publicises its services to exhibitors at events, primarily in Europe.

The company uses a misleading form, which resembles an organiser's Free Catalogue Listing Service, inviting exhibitors to sign and return the form for an entry in an on-line directory. Doing so contracts the purchaser into the three-year, non-retractable agreement.

The exhibitor then receives an invoice for EU971 which, when not paid, quickly escalates into intimidatory debt recovery tactics and threats of legal action.

Both the Austrian and UK Governments are aware of the company's activities and advice from the UK embassy in Austria and the Austrian Embassy in London is to ignore this company's requests for payment.

Attached is a copy of the Fairguide listings form.

In addition please find attached 2 press articles from the Financial Times and Daily Mirror about this company and the report from the judgement against Fairguide.com/Construct Data in the German Court of Chemnitz, which will significantly assist any exhibitor who may have entered into a contract with the company believing it to be a free listings service.

In a new development Fairguide.com have now engaged the services two debt collection agencies. Austrian company **Gravis Inkasso GmbH** and a Swiss company **Premium Recovery AG**. The advice when dealing with these companies remains the same as dealing with Fairguide.com itself. **Ignore and do not pay.**

If you are approached by Fairguide.com/Construct Data the advice for dealing with the company is as follows:

1. If you are contacted by Fairguide.com/Construct Data you should not complete the listings form.
2. However if any companies have mistakenly completed and returned the forms the advice the aeo has been given from the British Embassy in Vienna and the Austrian Embassy is that that they should **ignore demands for payment.** It has been established that Fairguide.com/Construct Data have never carried out their threat of legal action against non-payers, hence **do not be intimidated.** Fairguide.com/Construct Data also attempt to get companies to settle for one-year payment instead of three to "avoid prosecution". The advice here is not to be tempted.
3. Keep a written record of any communication with this company. If possible record any telephone calls and inform them that you are doing so.
4. We would also suggest that if any of your clients feel the need to respond to the debt chasing that they use the attached standard letter, which informs Fairguide that they have been advised, "not to pay by the UK Association of Exhibitions Organisers and by

- the Austrian Embassy in London". Also that they are aware that both the Austrian and UK Government authorities are aware of, and looking into, their practices.
5. Advise the exhibition organising company of the situation.
 6. Forward details of all communication to the following contacts:
(Non-UK exhibitors should contact the relevant authority in their home country rather than the OFT).

The Office of Fair Trading

International Coordination Team
Office of Fair Trading
Fleetbank House
2-6 Salisbury Square
London EC4Y 8JX
Switchboard: (020) 7211 8000
Email: euroteam@oft.gsi.gov.uk

The British Embassy - Austria

Dr Piers Baker – Trade Attaché
British Embassy
Commercial Section
Jauresgasse 12
A-1030 Vienna, Austria
Tel: (+43 1) 71613-6161
Fax: (+43 1) 71613-6900
Email: commerce@britishembassy.at

The Austrian Embassy – London

Austrian Embassy - Trade Commission
45 Princes Gate (Exhibition Rd)
London SW7 2QA
United Kingdom
Tel.: +44 (0)20 7584 4411
Fax: +44 (0)20 7584 2565
E-mail: london@wko.at

Association of Exhibition Organisers

Trevor Foley
Group Chief Executive
Association of Exhibition Organisers
113 High Street
Berkhamsted, Herts, HP4 2DJ
Tel: 01442 873331
Fax: 01442 875551
Email: foley@aeo.org.uk

The Austrian Government have also requested that any information or complaints be forwarded to Mr. Burger Scheidlin, who is head of white-collar crime in Austria (e-mail:maximilian.burger-scheidlin@wko.at) or by fax to Dr Thomas Wamprechtshamer at the Department of Trade of the Austria Government on 0043 1711 005403.

Further details on the activities of this company can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.britishembassy.at>

<http://www.stopecg.org/other.htm#fair>