



# INTERNATIONAL newsletter

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## Editorial

“Be sceptical.” This is a recurring theme in this edition of the PL&B International Newsletter. Be sceptical about assertions that biometrics, in their current stages of development, offer significant advances in security. Be sceptical about the value of national ID and the expanded use of surveillance technologies. This edition also carries reports from two important conferences – one organised by our *Privacy Journal* colleague Robert Ellis Smith on the US east coast, and the other held by Computers Freedom and Privacy on the west coast.

On the European front, the European Parliament voted on 30th May for a draft directive for the protection of personal privacy in electronic communications. Last minute changes now mean that marketers will have to gain prior consent from potential customers before sending them communications over telecommunications networks (p.4).

We also report on the growing European interest in data protection on websites for children (p. 6). The usefulness of codes of conduct for satisfying EU requirements on personal data exports comes under discussion (p. 8). We examine whether a permission-based approach to e-mailing can put an end to intrusive marketing practices (p. 21). Another report examines the concerns of multinational companies about the confusion of data protection obligations they face (p. 11). The regulation of mobile phone privacy (p. 16, 24), identity theft (p. 22), the value of corporate data protection officials (p. 18) and developments in Irish data protection law (p. 30) all figure in this edition. We also carry an interview with the Mobile Marketing Association on the development of privacy in the mobile industry (p. 24).

Eugene Oscapella, Associate Editor  
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