



CASE STUDY

Scout24 navigates GDPR compliance challenges

Company Bio

Scout24, one of Europe's largest digital marketplace operators, helps consumers make sound purchasing decisions on their biggest ticket items—homes and cars. The company runs four well-recognized ad-supported platforms that help consumers make the right choices along the purchasing cycle, from choosing the right car or home, to finding the right insurance and financing options. The ImmobileScout24 and AutoScout24 platforms alone serve a total of close to 20 million visitors each month.

The client's growing business has been fueled by the platforms' dependability, innovativeness, and accuracy. Now that GDPR is in force across the EU, data compliance has become an essential brand and revenue strategy.

Challenge

The business has garnered consumers' trust over the years by providing each one a safe user experience. But as malicious campaigns intensify their attacks on websites around the world, the company decided to take additional security measures to safeguard their platforms and users. Moreover, like any platform provider serving EU consumers, the company must ensure it stays compliant with the GDPR.



Overview

INDUSTRY: Media Publisher

END USER: Ad/Revenue Operations and IT/Security

CHALLENGE: Mitigate GDPR noncompliance risks for digital environment

SOLUTION: Digital Vendor Risk Management to enforce security, data and quality policies

RESULTS:

- 500+ vendors executing, significantly higher than expected
- 70% violations attributed to 10 vendors
- Identified all tracking technologies to gauge GDPR compliance

This means obtaining consent from consumers before collecting their information, explaining to consumers in clear terms how and with whose help that information will be processed.

Given their ad-supported platforms, Scout24 knew they would have to detect and thwart malware-driven ads from eroding the user experience, track which cookies were collecting any information on their visitors and whether those cookies met the requirements of GDPR, and ensure ads met industry standards for viewability. More important, they would need to resolve any violations of their digital policies on privacy, security, and quality without reducing their top and bottom lines.

Solution

Scout24 needed an effective, reliable process for identifying and addressing the risks their digital vendors posed, namely infringing GDPR, losing their consumers' and partners' trust, and damaging their brand.

In the summer of 2018, the company decided to take greater control of their digital ecosystem. They sought The Media Trust's expertise in conducting continuous customer-side scanning of ad tags that touched any of their four digital marketplaces: AutoScout24, FinanceScout24, ImmobileScout24 and TruckScout24.

The company adopted the Digital Vendor Risk Management (DVRM) in order to:

- Identify vendors executing throughout the digital environment
- Detect and evaluate user tracking technologies and assess compliance with GDPR
- Pinpoint the source of any violations of security, privacy, and quality policies

- Work with The Media Trust and digital third parties to quickly resolve violations

Results

By using The Media Trust's DVRM platform, Scout24 improved their security and data protection measures around all their businesses, in particular digital advertising involving third parties. They now have actionable insights into the third-party code that runs through their various platforms, enabling them to work only with providers that observe their policies on quality, security, and data privacy, and, in so doing, comply with GDPR and protect advertisers' brands.

One of their first discoveries was the large number of third parties—more than 500 in all—mostly unknown, executing code on the marketplaces without disclosing who they were or the purpose of their code. Several violated the company's policies by exceeding the one-year limit on cookies, a few with lifespans of more than 60 years.

Another finding was how 10 vendors accounted for more than 70% of all digital violations, including cookies with lifespans longer than 18 months, security failures, and high CPU utilization. One vendor continued to drop user-identifying cookies long after it had announced its exit from the EU market, etc. Using DVRM, Scout24 was able to request all third parties to declare their identities and intention, as well as to communicate and reinforce the company's digital policies. Those who failed to respond or work within those policies were promptly terminated.

DVRM has provided Scout24 with a much-needed, extensive view of all third-party code executing across the various e-commerce platforms. This information has proven vital for the company to maintain a cadre of trusted, reliable third parties and grow their e-commerce businesses

in a very challenging regulatory environment. And, within three months of implementing DVRM, Scout24 was able to protect its marketplaces from incidents that could have affected close to a million impressions and could have victimized millions of users.

Today, Scout24 is refining and formalizing its digital policies and adopting real-time blocking of malicious code to protect the company, partners, and users. Its use of DVRM's data and various tools helps the company work with trusted upstream partners on crucial next steps, in particular optimizing the performance of advertisers' campaigns, ensuring ads do not downgrade the user experience, protecting users' data.

About The Media Trust

The Media Trust is fixing the internet by creating better digital ecosystems to govern assets, connect partners and enable digital risk management. Established in 2005, The Media Trust leverages a physical presence in 100+ countries and 550+ cities to detect and remediate security, privacy, ad quality and performance violations executing on websites and mobile apps. More than 600 media publishers, ad tech providers, agencies, and enterprises—including 40 of comScore's AdFocus Top 50 websites—rely on The Media Trust to protect their digital environment, their revenue and, most importantly, their brand.

For more information, visit www.mediatrust.com



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