
July 1, 2013 9:14 pm

'Astroturfing' does not describe EPA

From Dr Paolo Balboni.

Sir, The article "Astroturfing takes root" (Analysis, June 27) by James Fontanella-Khan offensively defined the European Privacy Association as an example of an "astroturfing" organisation, used tendentious phrases such as "the group was forced to come clean", and reported inaccurate information including "quietly changed its status in the register from think-tank to in-house lobbying group".

The EPA is a pan-European think-tank based in Brussels that brings together data protection/security experts and businesses to engage in developing new policies that enhance data protection and data security while assuring sustainability for the development of current and new business and helping data subjects successfully manage their data.

The EPA follows a liberal approach that accurately balances the fundamental rights of citizens with the prosperous and innovative market.

I would like to stress that we are not a privacy advocacy or consumer group. We are not in Brussels to define privacy ideologically. Instead, we created the EPA to enhance the debate around privacy, data protection, data and data security and, in fact, since the birth of our organisation we have followed an approach aimed at balancing individual rights regarding data and those of the companies and governments that use data to empower economic growth and innovation. We believe that through consistent balance the debate can be enhanced and that both companies and individuals can live in an increasingly prosperous and free world.

Any supporter of the EPA is strongly encouraged to provide input regarding the EPA's activities and share its best practices with the EPA. No supporter may, however, make impositions regarding content, methodology or research output.

Paolo Balboni, Scientific Director, European Privacy Association, Brussels, Belgium

You may be interested in

Stress-free trains?

Any innovation by banks has been self-serving

Singh will be remembered for his 'do-nothing' government

Cold feet that can freeze a market

Even the British left is turning against Europe

Berlin demands answers from US over spy claims

Printed from: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/0858bf16-e01e-11e2-bf9d-00144feab7de.html>

Print a single copy of this article for personal use. Contact us if you wish to print more to distribute to others.

© **THE FINANCIAL TIMES LTD 2013** FT and 'Financial Times' are trademarks of The Financial Times Ltd.