



How Fredrickson has reduced third party scrutiny and protected its reputation with ISO 27001 certification.

“We feel that as an organization we simply cannot afford to take an ad-hoc approach to managing information security risk. With BSI’s help we have implemented a system that has provided both an appropriate and affordable level of protection to our customers.”

Simon Jones
Fredrickson Managing Director

Customer Objectives

- Independent verification of the effectiveness of information security policies and procedures
- Reduced client and regulatory scrutiny of information security practices
- Win more business and meet pre-qualification requirements
- Gain client credibility and trust

Customer Benefits

- Greater security awareness across all levels of the organization
- Shorter second-party security audits of its system
- Enhanced customer confidence and perception of the organization

Background

Fredrickson International is a industry leading Debt Collection Agency (DCA), operating in the UK with three sites across Surrey. Fredrickson employ more than 300 staff and recover debt in excess of £100m per annum. The organization’s key corporate values are compliance, performance and innovation.

Fredrickson has enjoyed a sustained period of growth both organic and through new client acquisition. Fredrickson is pleased to count among its clients, a Central Government Department, many well respected UK financial institutions and several FTSE 100 companies.

Why Certification?

The debt collection industry is subject to increasingly intense regulatory scrutiny worldwide, and Fredrickson's clients also come from a number of highly regulated industry sectors including Banking, Finance, Utility, Telecommunications, Home Shopping and Central Government. Like most organizations, Fredrickson is facing increased security challenges and IT management demands.

Information security is fundamental to the success of Fredrickson's business with much of its work involving receiving, analysing and storing sensitive consumer and business credit information.

It is vital that the organization has appropriate controls in place to protect its systems from hackers, and prevent personal information on its systems falling into the wrong hands as there is a real risk it could be used by criminals to commit identity fraud. It is therefore imperative that Fredrickson can assure its customers and the general public that it takes the security of their personal information seriously.

The organization is regularly audited by both its clients and other interested parties and Fredrickson anticipate that moving forward, this third party scrutiny will only increase. As such, it is Fredrickson's aspiration to get on the front foot by becoming the most compliant agency in its industry. According to Simon Jones, Managing Director at Fredrickson, "rather than simply say we are compliant, we felt it would provide the market with the confidence it needed, if we were to undergo independent assessment of our ISO 27001 Information Security Management System with BSI".

Benefits

Clients and the general public can now have total confidence in Fredrickson's information security practices and the way their personal information is managed.

Fredrickson has also found that the duration of second-party audits of its information security practices has reduced substantially. According to Jan-Michael Lacey, Sales & Marketing Director at Fredrickson "being able to show we are fully ISO 27001 certified has significantly reduced the man hours needed to complete IT security questionnaires required by clients in bidding for work and on an ongoing basis after a contract has been awarded."

Implementation

For Fredrickson, seeking certification to ISO 27001 was relatively straight forward, having already been operating in compliance with the standard. The organization carried out a gap analysis, and set to work fine tuning its system.

While many of the policies and procedures required were already in existence, documents were not accessible and knowledge was only shared on a need to know basis. To remedy this, Fredrickson created an information security committee, with the objective of raising awareness throughout the company and driving the process forward. The committee used a combination of training and poster campaigns to ensure staff understood the importance of information security as well as the role they had to play. A shared drive for documents, easily accessible by staff across the organization, was also created. This process helped ensure the involvement of all employees from the beginning, which was essential in enabling Fredrickson to embed the requirements of the standard and move forward with certification.

Fredrickson is committed to setting the standard and becoming the most compliant agency in the UK. According to Jan-Michael Lacey, Fredrickson "believe that in the near future ISO 27001 certification will be a pre-requisite imposed by many of our clients when selecting outsourced partners."

BSI's Role

Fredrickson chose to work with BSI due to BSI's reputation in the industry. "BSI stands alone in terms of quality and its reputation and helped us to drive business excellence throughout the organization", explained Darren Wright, IT Director, Fredrickson.

Fredrickson's BSI Client Manager has provided information and recommendations to help Fredrickson gain certification, and prepare for the stringent, continuing assessment audits. Through these regular visits, BSI has been able to draw Fredrickson's attention to areas where improvements could be made and new ways of thinking introduced. For Fredrickson, third party certification with BSI is a way of proving to interested parties that they are compliant in this area. Darren Wright from Fredrickson explained that "there have been several high profile instances of data loss within our industry and as such reducing the risk of this happening and proving we have the highest levels of security in place is important in demonstrating to clients that we are fit for purpose. We are proud to say we achieved the certificate without de-scoping – this confirms that every single member of staff was involved in this achievement across all three of our sites."

Fredrickson is committed to not becoming complacent, and taking a continual improvement approach. Having realised its short term objectives, Fredrickson is now working to develop greater security awareness amongst staff, and ensure ongoing vigilance and awareness.

Contact us to find out how BSI can help your business make excellence a habit.

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