

Media Release

De La Salle University and Straits Interactive launch region's first Masters Program in Data Protection

Course modules provide competency roadmap complement the provisions of the Philippine's Data Privacy Act of 2012 and relevant issuances of the National Privacy Commission

Manila, Philippines, 12 November, 2019 - De La Salle University (DLSU) and the Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Centre, the education and research arm of Straits Interactive (SI) today announced the launch of the region's first Masters Program in Data Protection. The degree, which will roll out in early 2020, is targeted at both data protection officers as well as compliance, legal, and information security professionals.

The announcement follows the signing of a memorandum of understanding by DLSU to join the DPEX Network, where the university will collaborate with Straits Interactive as well as other members such as the Singapore Management University and the International Islamic University of Malaysia to promote data protection excellence in ASEAN.

"In pursuit of our mission to serve as a leading academic resource, we are undertaking this pioneering program. We are proud to be the first university in the Philippines to offer a data protection qualification for professionals," said DLSU President Raymundo Suplido FSC, PhD.

He added that the announcement comes at a time when data privacy is not only a national concern, but a global one. "With the Data Privacy Act fully in force, we expect a demand for data protection professionals. By partnering with regional experts in data privacy, we look forward to building our own local expertise through the Data Privacy Council with guidance from the National Privacy Commission, to enhance the competencies of the data protection officer," he pointed out.

According to the Philippines Data Protection Act (DPA), organizations processing personal data shall designate an individual or individuals who are accountable for the compliance of the organization to DPA. The modular course curriculum which takes into account the roles and responsibilities of a Data Protection Officer (DPO) and those interested to enhance their career opportunities, will cover a range of subjects including data protection trends and standards, privacy management, and operational excellence, and global and regional data protection principles.



Candidates will have the flexibility to take the courses separately at their own pace and then sign up officially for the full master's degree program. Passers of the National Privacy Commission's (NPC) DPO ACE (Accountability, Compliance and Ethics) program as well as those who are IAPP (International Association of Privacy Professionals) certified professionals will be granted certain exemptions from the modules.

Raymund E. Liboro, NPC Commissioner, said that "The National Privacy Commission is always supportive of such industry efforts to beef up new competencies and skillsets required by DPOs to effectively do their job to demonstrate accountability under the DPA. We see this dedicated executive master's degree program complementing our local DPO ACE program as it will provide a full competency roadmap to all DPOs. It will also bring credibility to the Philippines in terms of our international data privacy efforts, as we build global competitive skills to meet the impending shortage of data protection expertise. We encourage more initiatives like this from different sectors to help us promote data privacy and security in the country."

According to the International Association of Privacy Professional, there is a global shortage of up to 75,000 DPOs worldwide. Singapore had also forecasted a shortage of a minimum of 10,000 DPOs.

Kevin Shepherdson, CEO, Straits Interactive and Head of the Data Protection Excellence Center, said "The goal of the DPEX Network is to promote data privacy excellence in the ASEAN region. We are proud to contribute to the curriculum of this master's degree with inputs from DLSU and the National Privacy Commission. This would certainly contribute to our regional efforts to complement ASEAN's privacy framework, which is currently led by Singapore and the Philippines."

More information about the Master's Program in Data Protection will be announced in 2020.

Further information about the DPEX Network be found at www.dpexnetwork.com

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About De La Salle University

De La Salle University positions itself as a learner-centered and research institution of higher learning, building the foundation of tomorrow's leaders. The University is renowned for its academic excellence, groundbreaking research, and empowering community engagement.

Acknowledged as a premier institution of higher learning, it serves as a significant resource for the Philippines and the ASEAN region by developing leaders and achievers in business, science and technology, social sciences, education, and the arts.

DLSU is among the top 5% of higher education institutions worldwide, according to the 2020 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. The University is the only Philippine private university on the list.

As a Catholic coeducational institution founded in 1911 by the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, DLSU continues to pursue Christian, educational ideals geared towards social transformation and people empowerment.

About the DPEX Network

The Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Network is the first of its kind facility in the ASEAN region whose aim is to provide leadership, best practices, training, research and support for all things surround data privacy from an operational perspective. This collaboration of partnerships comprise certification bodies, law firms, universities and organisations who provide professional services and technologies relating to data privacy. An ever-growing network, members currently include Straits Interactive, Singapore Management University, International Islamic University of Malaysia, De LaSalle University, Philippines, IAPP, EXIN, OCEG and Lexxion amongst others. More information about DPEX Network can be found at www.dpexcentre.com

About Straits Interactive

Straits Interactive delivers end-to-end governance, risk and compliance solutions that enable trusted business and responsible marketing, especially in the area of data privacy and protection. Recently voted one of the Top 25 Compliance Solutions Providers in the Asia Pacific by Asia Pacific CIO Outlook magazine, we help businesses achieve operational compliance and manage risks through a combination of cloud technology and professional services. Our software-as-a-service solutions include DPOinBox and Governance, Risk & Compliance System (GRACIAS), all of which are supported by professional services that include advisory services, audits, and training. More information about the company can be found on www.straitsinteractive.com.

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