

Immediate Release

Data Protection related jobs double year-on-year despite COVID-19

Demand fueled by stricter local and regional data protection requirements and increasing cyber attacks

6 January, 2021, Singapore - The Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Centre, the learning and research arm of Straits Interactive, today released its annual survey of data protection-related jobs available in Singapore, which increased by 106% year-on-year despite COVID-19.

The survey, now in its fifth year, analysed job vacancies in the month of August 2020 relating specifically to data protection functions or the role of a Data Protection Officer (DPO). There were a total of 245 job posts advertised in August alone, doubling the number of 119 advertised job positions when compared to the same period in 2019.

Top Industry Sectors

Despite COVID-19, there was still active demand for data protection professionals. The top industry sectors include :

1. Health, Pharmaceuticals and Biotech (18%)
2. Business services (18%)
3. Banking & Financial Services (17%)
4. Government (17%)
5. Computer/Electronics and Software (13%)

The government and the health sector contributed close to 35% of jobs in 2020, due to the Singhealth and related breaches in the health sector during 2019. In addition, recommendations by the Public Sector Data Security Review Committee for government entities that handle public sector data to adopt enhanced data privacy practices created strong demand from the government sector.

Demand for DPOs in ASEAN to increase

Said Kevin Shepherdson, Head of DPEX Centre "The demand for data protection expertise in Singapore has been steadily growing over the years since the Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) started enforcing the PDPA in 2016. This year's 106% rise has been the largest, and can be explained by continued active enforcements, increased cyber attacks and stricter local data protection requirements in both private and public sectors. We expect demand especially for DPOs to continue to grow in the region as Thailand, Indonesia, India and China roll out their data protection laws this year - all of which have a mandatory requirement for a DPO."



The DPEX Centre had estimated back in 2017 that Singapore would require 10,000 data protection professionals over three years. Although COVID-19 has impacted jobs as a whole in Singapore in 2020, the Centre expects demand for data privacy and protection skills to continue to be strong and possibly double over the next three years in ASEAN as Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand will have a data protection law in place.

A webinar discussing the full findings of the survey will be held on 8 January 2021. Information and registration about the event can be found at <https://www.dpexnetwork.org/events/>

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Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Network

The Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Centre is the research and education arm of the DPEX Network, a first of its kind facility in the ASEAN region whose aim is to provide leadership, best practices, training, research and support for all things surrounding data privacy from an operational perspective. This collaboration of partnerships comprises 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 Malaysia, De LaSalle University, Philippines, IAPP, EXIN, OCEG and Lexxion amongst others. More information about DPEX Network can be found at www.dpexnetwork.org

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 Data Protection Trustmark (DPTM) certified, we help businesses achieve operational compliance and manage risks through a combination of cloud technology and professional services. Our quest for innovation has led to us being recognised and awarded Intercon's Top 50 Tech Companies (in recognition of the company's contribution to technology) and APAC Business Headlines' Company of the Year, 2019. 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.

Media Contact

Straits Interactive/DPEX Network

Angela Schooling
Marketing & Communications Director
Mobile: + 65 98222625
Email: Angela@straitsinteractive.com

Clearstory International

Lauren Fetherstone
Account Executive
Telephone: +353 870660479
Email: Lauren@clearstoryinternational.com