



SHREDDERS & SECURITY

Identity fraud – one in four are affected!

BY JANE SMITH

The dramatic rise in identity fraud and other security issues associated with confidential waste has increased demand for shredders. Secure shredding services are also on the increase. One quarter of UK adults have had their identity stolen or know somebody who has been the victim of ID fraud, according to a new survey by Which? Magazine. Identity fraud is one of the fastest growing crimes in the UK, increasing 400% in five years and costing the country an estimated £1.3bn a year. Another piece of research by the MORI Social Research Institute, commissioned by Fellowes recently, also shows that concern about fraud is extremely high.

ID thieves use many techniques to gain access to sensitive information, including raiding dustbins for documents. The report urges people

to shred sensitive paperwork before disposing of it. A high profile advertising campaign from Capital One credit cards, featuring Alistair 'RecycleNow' McGowan shows how easy it is for criminals to impersonate you by stealing utility bills and bank statements from your bins. Consumers and businesses alike must be vigilant.

According to the Which? report approximately half the UK population now destroy utility bills and receipts but we should all be doing it. The British Security Industry Association (BSIA) has welcomed the report.

News about the increase in identity theft is pervading conversations as never before and everybody is becoming much more security conscious. Jill Organ, senior category manager, Rexel Business Machines, told us, "Although much of the recent publicity has been

concerned with personal identity theft, at Rexel our shredder sales have rocketed across the board. From budget-priced home office models to high security cross-cut machines, sales are up overall by almost 50%."

The rest of the industry concurs with these figures, with leading distributor JG Business Machines advising us that many budget purchases are too low a specification and, as a result, the upgrade market is building with a move toward more mid range models. Tyron Hill, European marketing director for Fellowes shredders commented, "Five years ago, shredders were used primarily by businesses, but today, due to the dangers of ID fraud and protection of privacy, shredders are now an essential for the home environment as well." >>

Elke Hahmann at GBC (manufacturers of the Shredmaster range) told us, "Identity theft is now such a problem that we are increasing our manufacturing capacity to meet market led demand. We at GBC believe the day is coming when insurance companies will make it mandatory to shred media and paper in order to maintain cover." Now there is a thought!

Mike Owen, UK sales manager for DAHLE shredders told us about new legislation coming into effect in the USA. On 1 June 2005, the disposal portion of the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 will become law. This requires that any personal information relating to consumers/customers or employees is 'destroyed' at the point of disposal. Andrew Cummings, sales and marketing director of Aurora Electronics is also aware of the legislation and observes, "Legislation such as this is bound to follow in the UK, so we may as well all get shredding now!"

Some of the reason for the increasing importance being placed on security shredding within businesses in the UK is The Data Protection Act 1984. It requires organisations to take appropriate measures to ensure personal data is not disclosed. This includes secure disposal of all printed information. Yet an Experian report in December 2003 revealed shocking breaches, including mortgage applications containing full financial details discarded by a broker, a surgery that had discarded medical records and a travel agent who had thrown out photocopies of customer passports!

5 TOP TIPS TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT SHREDDER

1. TYPE OF SHRED – Straight/strip cut or cross-cut.

Usually depends upon the security level required.

2. SHEETS PER FEED – This is the number of sheets you can feed into a shredder at the same time – an important consideration to avoid overloading and constant jams.

Also consider whether there is a requirement to shred media such as CDs.

3. ENTRY WIDTH – Some customers such as IT or finance departments need to shred paper wider than A4. Instead of having to fold paper to shred there are machines available with wider entry widths.

4. BIN CAPACITY – Usually referred to in litres. Cross-cut waste will compact under its own weight reducing the bulk and reducing the frequency with which the bin needs to be emptied.

5. RUNNING TIME OR DUTY CYCLE – This is the amount of time you can use the shredder before it reaches a thermal overload and cuts out to allow the machine to cool down. With some cheap imports these are as low as one to two minutes but for the well-known brands this is much higher at around seven minutes.

SPAGHETTI OR CONFETTI?

Another aspect of shredders that manufacturers are keen to educate people on is the advantages of a cross-cut (confetti) variety as opposed to the strip cut (spaghetti) variety. Cross cut machines are up to 10 times more secure than a strip cut and the tiny chips compact under their own weight, so the shredder bin needs emptying less often. This can be a big advantage in commercial environments where large amounts of confidential paperwork are generated and ready for disposal on a daily basis.

The size of spaghetti or confetti produced by various shredder models is linked to five recognised security levels. The model of shredder can therefore be selected based upon how sensitive the information to be disposed of is.

NATO has five classifications for determining the sensitivity of their information, with their top (CTS – Cosmic Top Secret) classification stipulating a particle size of 1x13mm. All the manufacturers we spoke to have products to meet DIN security level 5.

Some manufacturers are going a step further with even smaller particle sizes and higher security levels: DAHLE's Xtreme Cross Cut range, for example, has a particle size of 1x4.7mm. DAHLE now supply NSA in USA who stipulate security level 6 with a particle size of 1x5mm. HSM also have shredders that exceed the standards of security Level 5.

But it's not just paper we need to be concerned about. The potential theft of electronic data is also of growing concern. Companies





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**TYRON HILL,
EUROPEAN MARKETING DIRECTOR,
FELLOWES SHREDDERS**

and organisations should consider what information is being taken out of their premises, especially now that the use of CDs, memory sticks and so on, means that a high quantity of data can be stored on something relatively small.

HSM have told us that they are addressing this very area with the launch of two products specifically for this purpose. The first is a separate, small shredder specifically for CDs and other such items including credit and debit cards and the other a special insert for the standard HSM shredders to catch the non paper particles so that shredded paper is not contaminated and can still be recycled. They are not alone, other key brands also have models to address the secure destruction of

media including Aurora, IDEAL, DAHLE, Intimus, Rexel and Fellowes.

If shredding all of your confidential waste is just impossible for your organisation to cope with (usually due to volume or time) then another alternative to consider is an outsourced solution. There are a number of companies out there who offer confidential waste disposal, including one called Shred-it who offer a mobile shredding service. Locked consoles are placed strategically around your premises and then a Shred-it truck arrives on a scheduled basis to empty the consoles and shred the contents whilst on site. A certificate of destruction is issued and the waste is taken away for recycling. ■

SECURITY LEVELS

This is a German standard that reflects how small the shredded 'bits' are in accordance with DIN32757.

DIN Level 1 – General paperwork/old documentation max strip width 6mm

DIN Level 2 – Internal documentation/printouts and drafts max strip width 6mm

DIN Level 3 – Confidential or personal documents max strip width 2mm

DIN Level 4 – Critical business information max particle size 2x15mm

DIN Level 5 – Top secret or classified max particle size 0.8mmx12mm