

Expo Guide / FairGuide.com / Construct Data Verlag and other questionable practices

Hong Kong Exhibition Services Ltd and Messe Dusseldorf (China) Ltd would like to advise all exhibitors to beware of a series of scams targeted at exhibitors of major trade exhibitions.

Who are these companies

Fairguide.com/ Construct Data Verlag has been carrying out this scam for several years now. They have been known to be registered in various countries including Slovakia, Austria and Switzerland.

Separately, an organisation called Expo Guide, operating out of Mexico, has also been carrying out similar scams. Due to the evasive practices of these companies, similar operations may sprout from other parts of the world under different names in the future.

How the scam works

Expo Guide and FairGuide claim to offer online listing services. They use a misleading form which resembles an Organiser's free catalogue listing service, inviting exhibitors to sign-up and return the form for an entry in an on-line directory. Doing so contracts the purchaser into a three-year, non-retractable agreement.

The exhibitor then receives an invoice for about US\$981 which, when not paid, quickly escalates into intimidatory debt recovery tactics and threats of legal action. Fairguide.com has engaged the services of two debt collection agencies, an Austrian company Gravis Inkasso GmbH and a Swiss company Premium Recovery AG to harass these exhibitors.

What to do

If you are approached by Fairguide.com/ Construct Data/ Expo Guide, their debt collection agencies, or similarly suspicious operations, we suggest that you follow the advice below.

1. You should not complete the listings form.
2. However, if you have mistakenly completed and returned the forms, the advice is to ignore demands for payment. It has been established that Fairguide.com / Construct Data / Expo Guide have never carried out their threat of legal action against non-payers. Hence, do not be intimidated. Fairguide.com / Construct Data / Expo Guide will also attempt to get companies to settle for one-year payment instead of three to "avoid prosecution". The advice here is not to be tempted.
3. Keep a written record of any communication with this company. If possible record any telephone calls and inform them that you are doing so.
4. UFI, The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, provides legal counsel advisories, media articles, letter templates for rejecting payment and other useful information at http://www.ufi.org/Public/Default.aspx?Clef_SITESMAPS=142&Clef_SITESMAPS=161.

請小心處理由第三者(Fair Guide / Expo Guide / Event Fair)提供之推廣優惠

主辦機構注意到 Fair Guide (由 Construct Data 所擁有)、Expo Guide (由 Commercial Online Manuals S de RL de CV ("Commercial Online Manuals") 所擁有) 和 Event Fair - The Exhibitors Index 向參展商發出邀請，讓參展商更新或更正於他們的展覽名錄內刊登之參展商資料。

香港展覽服務有限公司及杜塞爾多夫展覽(中國)有限公司特此澄清及重申: Fair Guide、Expo Guide 和 Event Fair 一概與主辦機構或主辦機構的任何展覽完全無關。

UFI，一個代表全球展覽業利益的國際組織，已經警告展覽業要小心警惕 Fair Guide、Expo Guide、Construct Data、Commercial Online Manuals 和其他類似的指南和組織。UFI 報告表示，收債公司與這些指南和組織有夥伴關係，從而恐嚇參展商付款。Construct Data 之經營手法已被奧地利保障公平競爭協會 (Austrian Protective Association) 視為不公平及誤導。最近有資料顯示，Construct Data 已從奧地利轉移其運作到墨西哥和/或斯洛伐克。

由於 Fair Guide 及 Expo Guide 的信件與訂單內容及語句幾乎完全相同，Construct Data 與 Commercial Online Manuals 可能是相關或連繫之公司。因此閣下應盡量小心謹慎處理該等邀請，以免作出不必要的財務承擔。主辦機構特此呼籲閣下在簽署任何合約 (包括以細小字體列印的合約) 及附件之前，應細閱有關文件和尋求法律意見，以保障閣下的利益。

主辦機構並不建議閣下簽署任何從 Construct Data、Commercial Online Manuals 及/或 Event Fair 收到之文件。如閣下在錯誤情況下與 Construct Data、Commercial Online Manual 及/或 Event Fair 訂立合約，閣下應以書面通知 Construct Data、Commercial Online Manuals 及/或 Event Fair 指出基於錯誤或被誤導之情況下簽署該文件，有關合約無效。閣下應該就如何應對您可能會收到的付款要求尋求法律意見。

欲瞭解更多信息關於 UFI 對 Fair Guide、Expo Guide、Construct Data 與 Commercial Online Manuals 採取之行動，請瀏覽此網頁 http://www.ufi.org/Public/Default.aspx?Clef_SITESMAPS=142&Clef_SITESMAPS=161。

ProWine Asia @ HOFEX 2017

Exhibitors Information & Service Forms

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www.prowineasia.com/hk/manual