



Helpful guide: 192.com



Do you know . . .

. . . If you log on to 192.com to search for a telephone number, you may just come face to face with yourself, in data form?

There are some 700 million records, freely available to view on the site, and yours could be amongst them. It could include anything from your address, name, age, date of birth and telephone number; to those of everybody living at your address; and there is no guarantee of accuracy. You are also asked to register, providing yet more basic information as you do so.

Basic information published on the site can be viewed by anybody, and looked at in greater depth by those who have purchased credits. The data is gathered together here from other databases where it is already in the public domain, for example:

Directory enquires – Your telephone provider licenses the information to BT, who maintains the database. They then sublicense it to 192.com amongst other directory enquiry providers. If you've chosen to become ex-directory, these details will not be sublicensed elsewhere.

Electoral roll – 192.com obtains data via a credit reference agency. From 2002, electoral registration forms started offering the option to 'opt out' of the edited electoral roll. If, when filling in your form you ticked the opt out box, your details should not have been passed to 192.com or any other organisation.

Directors database – This is a public database compiled by Companies House. The information provided is more usually related to businesses, and as long as the form has been filled in correctly, only the business details will be available to view. Of course, if you run your business from your home, those details will be published.

As well as unwanted sales calls, the existence of your personal data in the public domain puts you at greater risk of social engineering. Criminals can use your details to try and manipulate you into giving away financial information via telephone, email or even your social network account. Failure to recognise a fictitious request could leave you vulnerable to identity theft.

How do I . . .

. . . Stop my information appearing on 192.com?

To remove your directory enquiries information, you have to contact your telephone provider and ask to become ex-directory. Unfortunately, this can take some time, as they then have to cascade the new information to 192.com and other directory enquiry services.

A Record Correction (C01) form is available to download and fill in from the 192.com website, so you can remove or amend your electoral roll details in this way. However, this will only remove them from the 192 site, and other, similar directory enquiry providers may still hold your data. It is best to contact your local council, who can offer advice on how to opt out of the edited electoral roll. Remember, opting out does not roll over each year, so make sure you tick the box every time you receive a new registration form.

