

# READY FOR THE FUTURE ISSUE 8

#R4TF



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SOLICITORS



## How a data breach will hit your brand

Data breaches can be very bad news for a brand – any loss of customer data, especially financial information, feels much more invasive and personal than a consumer difficulty, as one global company discovered last year.

The company had already had major IT problems in 2017, but last year hackers stole customers' details, including three-digit CVV security codes, via a method called 'skimming' which trawls for financial information.

They issued prompt and widespread apologies, but may still be hit by a massive fine – under GDPR a company can be fined up to four per cent of turnover – and that would be in addition to any compensation customers who had suffered from resulting fraud might claim.

Swift action, with clear communication and a clear plan of action to deal with the breach, can help to fight the fire and restore customers' faith, but it does take time to repair the damage to a brand's reputation.

I will be looking at how to minimise the risk to your brand 'if you find you have had a data breach', at the GDPR event on May 14 at Hilton Puckrup Hall, Tewkesbury – come and join us for some practical advice, top tips and a chance to pick the experts' brains on your GDPR business challenges.



**James Ashe,**  
Managing partner, Alias

## DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

### GDPR ONE YEAR ON – WHERE ARE WE NOW?



**14th May 2019**

**Hilton Puckrup, Tewkesbury  
GL20 6EL**

**Starts at 8.30 for 9am, and  
closes at 12.30 with bookable  
one-to-one slots with our  
GDPR experts afterwards.**

## OUR SURVEY SAID...

We're asking business leaders about their GDPR journey, and to share their top tips for being compliant. Take part in our survey today.

[www.hcrlaw.com/gdpr-survey](http://www.hcrlaw.com/gdpr-survey)



**Talk to Robert Capper, Partner, Head of Commercial Team and Sectors**

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# Brexit is making it harder to deal with the UK

Many Dutch firms are concerned about how Brexit will continue to affect them, and some are finding it harder to trade with UK companies, as revealed in feedback from an event we held recently in the Netherlands.

Our Brexit seminar in Middelburg brought together more than 60 business leaders from the Netherlands. They either had existing business ties with the UK, or were contemplating expansion into the UK or cooperation with British partners.

In partnership with Dutch firm Adriaanse van der Weel, HCR's international team explored how Dutch businesses are interpreting our progress with Brexit, what they feel its impact is likely to be on their businesses, and how they are preparing for what may come. We also gave advice on how Dutch companies can best take advantage of opportunities, learn from experience and reduce risk.

Half of the businesses at the seminar, which included food producers, construction firms and professional services firms, have ties with the UK in some form. Less than half of the delegates (42%) said Brexit is making it more difficult to deal with the UK, but these concerns are becoming increasingly real as 29 March draws closer.

Concern over the consequences of a no-deal Brexit was expressed by 69% of those at the seminar. However, many have already taken action to prepare.

Frederic Mussche, Sales Manager at Scheldebouw, part of Permasteelisa Group, said: "In our field of business, the UK will remain a strong market. In our programmes we do and can allow for delays at customs/borders; we discuss and agree this now with our clients to build in sufficient leeway to try and absorb this.

"Nevertheless we are expanding our focus to other markets within Europe to be less dependent on the UK, in case it slows down. Brexit also provides business opportunities for us as some companies relocate [from the UK] to other parts of Europe and require new office and residential buildings for their employees."

Scheldebouw is a multi-national manufacturing company that provides cladding solutions for iconic and skyline-changing buildings and constructions.

Nicolas Groffman, head of international at Harrison Clark Rickerbys, said: "There is opportunity from Brexit. For many years UK businesses have focused on the markets in front of their noses and while the EU is a very important market for the UK, so is the rest of the world."

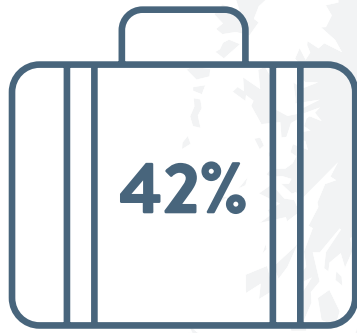
So while the world is potentially feeling 'bigger' there are still markets close by, and the Netherlands is definitely open to business with the UK.

Jaap IJdema, partner at Adriaanse van der Weel, said: "There is a strong sense that businesses in the Netherlands still very much want to do business with the UK. It's important to find opportunities to strengthen relationships and work collaboratively to find solutions to any of the challenges that arise from Brexit. We await the outcome of the 'deal' with interest."

Has the European opinion of the UK changed? 56% of the businesspeople at the seminar say their perception of the UK is more negative because of how Brexit has been handled, but 39% say their perception is unchanged.

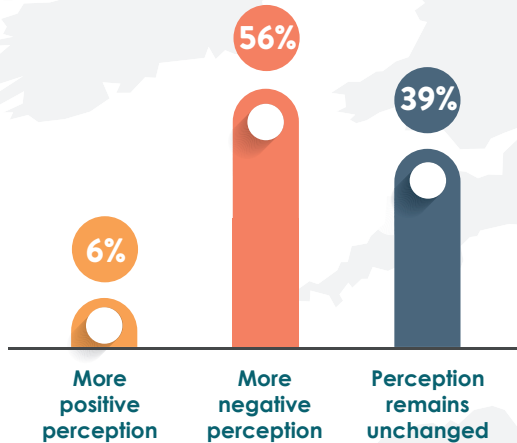
Overall, there is real concern about Brexit, but pragmatic business leaders are planning ahead to mitigate the possible effects. Many want to continue their links with the UK; some want to copy the successes of UK companies that have benefitted from Brexit; all await developments with interest.

## WE POLLED BUSINESSES IN THE NETHERLANDS:

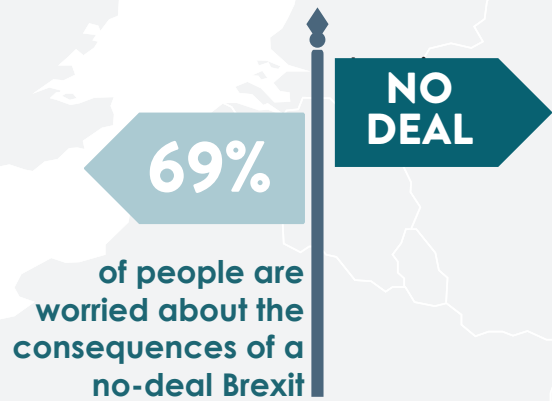
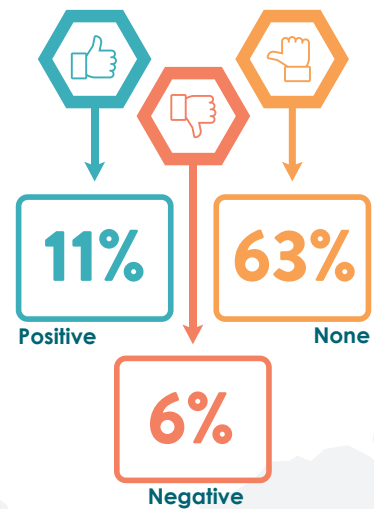


feel that  
Brexit is  
making it  
harder to  
deal with  
the UK

Has your perception of the UK  
changed because of how  
Brexit has been handled?



What effect has Brexit had on  
your company so far?



### TOP TIPS FOR DEALING WITH UNCERTAINTY

Uncertainty is part of business life – risk management and preparedness are priorities for successful companies around the world, not just in Brexit-focused Britain.

“Make a plan!” is Neill Ricketts’ number one tip for businesses in the run-up to Brexit - the executive chairman and CEO of advanced manufacturing company Versarien plc said: “It sounds obvious but it’s critical.

“We’ve carried out extensive scenario planning at Versarien, ensuring that whatever happens or doesn’t happen on 29 March, or indeed in the months that follow, we have a number of viable options that will ensure the continuity of our business. One of these scenarios involves moving the technical team from our current base in Gloucestershire over to Spain. The more uncertainty there is in business, the greater the need to plan.”

Simon Jones, director of Seating Direct Ltd, agrees: “Don’t ignore the uncertain. Just like you would regularly review and plan within your usual business cycle, do the same to plan for the major event that is Brexit.

“Using a simple risk management tool such as ISO 9001 can be really effective. Its framework can help you understand risk around your suppliers, customers, stock, lead times, cash flow and forecast. Open your mind to change and uncertainty becomes opportunity.”





## Brexit from both sides of the Channel

When it comes to Brexit, what UK companies say and what they do may be different, Nicolas Groffman, head of our international team, told the Middelburg seminar; what they do is much more reliable as an indicator of flexibility and responsiveness.

He told the seminar that he had observed some companies localising – looking for employees in the UK rather than in the EU, using British raw materials wherever possible. Others, however, were doing the opposite: looking beyond the EU for better opportunities in the wider world.

Some are taking no action, either because they don't trade beyond the UK or because they already trade outside the EU, or because they feel powerless. For those with the scope and capacity, learning to do business outside the EU is a lucrative option – it needs more support from experts such as Nicolas' team, but gives the greatest scope for growth long-term.

As for Dutch companies – what should they be doing while observing the UK's travails? Pouncing on any trade gaps left by retreating UK firms, Nicolas advised – multinationals that see the UK as losing its cachet as a hub for EU business are likely to buy the line that Dutch companies can step into the breach.

Dutch firms can also follow the example of UK companies looking beyond the EU – they have the advantage of an EU treaty with Japan, and could access larger markets. More importantly, the Dutch, like the British, have a long history of engaging with the wider world and are well-suited to it.

They could also benefit from the UK's need for EU friends – the two countries have plenty of historic and current links and have always traded with each other. The fact that Dutch people speak English so well has helped to develop that affinity, and trading relationships could easily be strengthened to the benefit of all.

### Talk to Nicolas

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# HAVE YOUR SAY

Take the GDPR survey  
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