10 simple, practical questions to consider when choosing the most suitable GDPR Shredders

To help meet GDPR requirements in the secure destruction of sensitive media for businesses, we have set out below our best practice guidance in choosing the most suitable products to allow your staff a practical way of destroying all of your confidential waste. To ensure secure waste is properly destroyed, it is imperative to develop a robust staff training procedure to eliminate any potential threats in your destruction process. It is worth noting with GDPR fines up to 10% of your turnover, training is a small cost of the potential downside to your business in the event of a data breach. You may also need to witness the physical destruction to provide an extra level of confidence, to vet the staff involved in the disposal process to an appropriate level, and keep an audit trail to confirm material has been shredded to your agreed requirements. Make sure all staff understand the full GDPR implications of not properly destroying all confidential waste and always provide the most appropriate shredding machines available as the most expensive part of any shredder is the cost of the staff who do the shredding.

Please check the ShreddingMacines.co.uk website and our unique Shredder Wizard to choose your best machines

1   Know how much waste may need to be shredded: it is important to this try to determine the scale of your requirement, as the type or size of shredder needed will depend on your specific workload. The larger the job, the larger the shredder or shredders required, so how do you determine your potential requirement

Paper - check and log how much paper will need to be shredded in EACH Department, and on EACH Floor

- Ask your purchasing department what volume of paper they purchase for your building in each department
- How many Staff are employed - as an average UK staff use up to 10,000 sheets per annum, per person
- Audit printed copies produced on all of your printers & copiers and documents scanned on your scanners
- If you currently outsource your shredding – STOP NOW, log your past usage and shred on your premises
- Remember your shredder could last potentially up to 10 years, so try to assess future usage requirements

2   What type of items will need to be shredded as it is not just about paper: it is vitally important you also consider, how you plan to destroy other data carriers like redundant digital memory, optical disks, hard disks, hard drives, magnetic tapes, microform, paper, SIM / smart cards, or even visual display units, as all these items store your data in a very accessible, and easily readable form.

Media – all the above data carriers store your sensitive data and must be securely destroyed as required

- Record purchases of laptops / PC's / tablets / phones / printers / copiers
- Audit destruction of all as hard drives in each of the above contain your confidential information
- Media can generally be shredded with specialist shredding machines or magnetic media degaussed
- Record purchases and audit the destruction trail of storage devices like thumb drives, CD's, DVD's

3   Determine the optimum shred type and security level required: the purpose of shredding is simple - to stop others reading your sensitive information. So how small the shredded particles produced, directly relates to how secure the information has become once shredded. The smaller the shreds the less information can be viewed so for GDPR purposes we do not advise the use of strip cut shredders as it is possible to put strips back together. Only use cross-cut, micro-cut, crypto-cut or highest security cut shredders with the P (Paper) ratings below.

To help look for the unique GDPR Logo for our recommended GDPR shredding machines:

P-1, P-2, P-3 shredders: we **DO NOT** recommend strip/confetti cut shredders as pieces can easily be reconstituted

P-4 cross-cut, P-5 particle-cut shredders: recommended **MEDIUM SECURITY** for most **Commercial** Requirements

P-6 crypto-cut high security shredders: **HIGH SECURITY** for all higher **Commercial & Government** requirements

P-7 highest security: **HIGHEST SECURITY Government & Military** use – shreds **1 x A4 sheet to 20,000 pieces**!

4   How many sheets will you need to be shredded in 1 pass: we recommend that you try to purchase machines with the highest capacity sheets per pass, as you can to save time and effort splitting down files. From a practical perspective if you are likely to want to shred say a 20-sheet documents with covers, you will need to choose a machine which has a capacity of say 30 sheets or the machines motor will jam. Remember that manufacturers tend to quote the number of sheets a machine will shred using 70-gram paper, but most copier paper is 80 grams, so the number of sheets that your machine will accept may be less than you may expect. Also, machines shredding capacities will decline with age and use so regular oiling of the shredders cutting head will increase how many sheets you can shred in one pass. Use the analogy: 'Riding a bicycle with the chain greased is much easier than riding when it is dry'

TO NOTE – consider the use of **Auto Feed** shredders which represent up to 30% of all larger commercial shredders now sold. **STACK – SHUT and GO** shredders do not require manual feeding and can shred up to 750 sheets of paper and use just **15 seconds** of your time, saving up to 98% of the time. Simply load a quantity of paper into the feeding tray of the Auto Shredder and walk away.

5   How many floors levels are within you building: we would recommend at least 1 shredder is situated on each floor as staff are unlikely to want to walk to another floor to shred. Also, the use of several machines doted around is often better than 1 large shredder in a department.

6   Will you need to destroy paper items wider than A4: all shredders will shred A4 sized documents, but should you have requirements to destroy larger A3, computer width, or even wide format plans, consider choosing machines with a wider throat size.

7   How many of your staff will use the machine: the number of users normally equates directly to the size of model required, although a judgment call may need to be made here as some single users may need to destroy more paper than several other users in another office or department. As a guide choose:
- Desk Side - 1 User
- Small Office - 1-4 Users
- Medium Office - 4-6 Users
- Departmental – 6 to 20 Users
- Industrial Heavy Duty
- Shredders with Balers

8   Consider the size of the shredder collection waste bin: your shredder will collect the shredded pieces into a collection bin or sack so as a general rule it is handy to choose a shredder which will shred all of your requirements, without having to empty the shredder during the day. Also, the smaller the shreds, the more you

can store in the waste bin, and it is possible to push the shreds down a couple of times to make more space. Details are provided within our specifications table

9 **What is your budget verses how long your shredder will run for:** sometimes budget and cost are a very good place to start with your shredder purchase, as some customers are happy to spend longer shredding than others, and may accept a cheaper machine that does not shred so quickly. Note that the run time of your shredder may require some downtime, so it is useful to choose shredders with a 24hour run time which is suitable for continuous use

10 **Always look after your shredders with a suitable Service Plan: t**o facilitate the longevity of all shredding machines we recommend that they are placed under a 'Preventative Maintenance Agreement' which long term saves time, money and downtime on unnecessary machine breakdowns. Your machine will last longer, a contract will not negate your warranty, and will ensure you do not contravene your Health & Safety requirements