

Press release: Disconnected: online advertising company shut down in public interest

TBL (UK) Ltd (TBL) was incorporated in March 2016 and traded as UK Business Locator, a derivative of its business directory: www.ukbusinesslocator.com.

However, TBL shared a common director and continued similar business to that previously carried out by a linked company, Movette Ltd (Movette), which was wound up on 28 July 2017 on the grounds that it operated against the public interest.

The Insolvency Service investigated the company's affairs following complaints from customers. But the investigation was severely limited due to a lack of co-operation from TBL's director who failed to produce business documents.

On 20 August 2018, the High Court sitting in Manchester heard the petition presented on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy.

The investigation established, and in winding up the company the Court accepted, that:

- the company had been abandoned by its director despite customers being sold annual advertising space in the online directory it purported to operate
- customers received little or no commercial benefit to the advertising space that they purchased from TBL on an annual basis
- TBL failed to make clear to customers that they were agreeing to a 12-month rolling contract which automatically renewed with customers stating these terms were not explained to them
- TBL improperly sought payment from members of the public where they had not agreed to purchase services from the company and used inappropriate and objectionable methods of debt collection
- TBL had continued the objectionable business model previously carried on by Movette by continuing to target the customers of Movette

Having seen all the relevant evidence filed by the Secretary of State and in the absence of evidence submitted by the company, which was not present or represented at the hearing, District Judge Obodai wound-up the company, in the public interest.

Commenting, David Hope, Chief Investigator with the Insolvency Service, said:

This company engaged in behaviour designed to extract money from advertisers under false pretences. Organisations contacted were duped into booking advertisements they had no need of placing, and

which were of little or no commercial benefit to them.

The Insolvency Service will take action to shut down such rogue businesses. Additionally, the business community should take steps to verify the credentials of any third party that contacts them claiming to be continuing the services previously provided by Movette Ltd and/or TBL (UK) Ltd.

TBL (UK) Ltd – company registration number (10084021) – was incorporated on 24 March 2016. The company's registered office is at Unit 77 Cariocca Business Park, 2 Sawley Road, Manchester, M40 8BB.

The petition to wind-up TBL (UK) Ltd was presented under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986 on 5 July 2018. The company was wound up on 20 August 2018 and the Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit (North) has been appointed as liquidator.

Movette Ltd – company registration number 08705982 – was incorporated on 25 September 2013. The company's registered office is at 86 Stonemere Drive, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 1QX and it traded from 23 New Mount Street, Manchester M4 4DE.

The petition to wind-up Movette Ltd was presented under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986 on 12 May 2017. The Official Receiver was appointed as provisional liquidator of the company on 18 May 2017. The company was wound up on 28 July 2017 and the Official Receiver has been appointed as liquidator.

UK Business Locator Ltd – company registration number 08010418 was incorporated on 28 March 2012 under the name Marston & Law Ltd. It changed its name to UK Business Locator Ltd on 11 October 2012. The company's registered office was Unit 77 Cariocca Business park, 2 Sawley Road, Manchester, M40 8BB. The company was dissolved on 24 May 2016.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Further information about live company investigations is available [here](#)

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies. The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

By virtue of the appointment of the Official Receiver all public enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 2nd Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place, London Road, Manchester, M1 3BN. Tel: 0161 234 8531 Email: piu.north@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910 or 020 7596 6187

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