

What is the service that SDM provide?

We provide a download of the FCA register extract via electronic delivery. The download is provided from our website www.sdm.co.uk , via FTP or HTTP protocol.

How easy is it to import the extract into our systems?

Very easy. The data is provided in a number of common formats, including CSV, pipe-delimited and 'traditional' tape format. Clients rarely have any problems importing the data.

Do SDM amend the data in any way?

No. We convert the data into different formats, but do not amend the data.

Do you provide the data in the format provided in the CD supply?

Yes, that is one of the formats we supply.

Do you push the data to us, or do we pull it down?

By default the data is pulled down by our clients. We can push the data to your servers, but normally we charge for this.

What is SDM's background?

We have supplied the extract since 1988, just after the Financial Services Act came into force. We have supplied the data electronically since the early 2000's.

What is the nature of SDM's client base?

We have a varied client base but in general our clients are financial services companies; banks, building societies, insurance companies, motor companies and more besides.

How does the licensing work?

In order to use the extract, you have to take out a licence agreement with the FCA. This is your principal agreement, any agreement with SDM depends on the FCA agreement being in place.

What is the nature of the FCA licence agreement?

The FCA licence the extract according to the licence year, which runs from April to March. When you take out your initial agreement, it will last until March the following year. A two month cancellation notice applies, so that you can terminate the agreement by giving notice next January. If you do not, the licence automatically renews next April.

How does the licence fee structure work?

The price depends on your usage (compliance or marketing), the frequency of download (monthly or weekly) and whether you require firms only data or firms and individuals' data. If you take out the licence during the course of the licence year then approximate (not exact) fees apply. For instance, a licence from November to March would have about 5/12 of annual fees applied.

Can I take out a compliance licence?

Yes, if your primary usage is compliance and you yourselves are FCA registered.

If I have a compliance licence can I also use the extract for marketing purposes?

If the extract is being used for any kind of commercial gain and/or behalf of a client, a subscriber must have an Own Use or Reuse agreement with the FCA.

Can we get a discount as we only want a subset of the extract?

No. The FCA offer the same licence terms to all clients regardless of what section of the extract they are interested in. In practice, all clients are only interested in a subset of the extract anyway; few if any are interested in every firm and individual authorised past and present.

Can I purchase a one off supply of the register extract for compliance purposes?

No. For compliance purposes you should in any event plan to download a regular update of the extract for such an important function.

Can I purchase a one off supply of the register extract for marketing purposes?

You can purchase a one off supply for other own business (marketing) purposes. However, we would not recommend this, such is the ever changing nature of the marketplace. The FCA price the extract in such a way that is usually more cost effective to purchase a monthly download of the extract anyway.

Can I have a tailored report or data set?

Yes, a number of our clients receive this bespoke service. The report may be based on a particular set of firms that you specify in your 'watchlist', or a particular subset of the extract (for instance firms with particular permissions). The output can be a data set, or a report highlighting recent changes, tailored to your own specific requirements. Reports can be emailed to you on a regular basis each time the extract is updated. We can discuss your particular requirements and provide a quotation for this service.

What is the ordering process?

Please complete the FCA order form, which can be downloaded from 'The Ordering process' section of www.sdm.co.uk. They will then send you a licence agreement for your signature. Once signed, the FCA will give us the go ahead to supply you with the extract.

How long does the order process take?

The above normally takes a week or two to complete. If you take out a free trial with SDM in the meantime, this speeds up proceedings as we can very quickly give you access to the full extract by switching the account to live as and when we get the go ahead from the FCA.

Do I need an agreement with SDM?

No, most of our clients do not have an agreement with SDM; this is because of the accuracy of the data and the timeliness of its supply are beyond our control. That being said, the service is very reliable and we do have a standard agreement which we can send you. If we do not have an agreement with you, you have the security that you are covered by your own standard terms and conditions on any purchase order you supply.

Is there an API?

Yes, the FCA supply an API which accesses the live register and is free of charge. There is a time limit imposed for each query, to avoid their servers being hammered, and a limit to the data that can be returned. The API may or may not be the best solution for you; that is your decision. You can of course use the API and subscribe to the extract.

Can I get just the individuals' data and not the firms' data?

No. The individuals' data refers to the firms' data, principally via the FRN (firms reference number) but does not contain any firms' data as such. Hence, it is useless without the firms' data and cannot be licensed in its own right anyway.

Does the extract contain email addresses?

Unfortunately email addresses are not contained within the extract and neither are websites or dates of birth. We do work with trusted partner companies who do supply email addresses and can refer you to them.

Can I load data into Excel?

This depends on the version of Excel that you are using. We would in any event recommend using a database package to select the records that you are interested in before importing into Excel, otherwise Excel tends to struggle with very large numbers of rows of data. We do supply a sample report which shows, via Excel lookups, how the various tables link to one another.

Can we automatically download the extract?

Yes, please refer to our download which specifies how to do this.

Is there a limit to the number of user accounts we have?

No, but in practice we recommend no more than (say) three user accounts for housekeeping reasons.

Can we use a third party to process the data?

Yes, a number of clients use third party processors.

Does the data require a high level of security?

No, this is public domain data readily available on the FCA website. If we run a bespoke report for you, we will treat your watchlist confidentially as who you work with should not be divulged elsewhere.

Does the data take long to download?

No, it takes seconds even on a domestic broadband.

Do SDM provide an API?

No, we used to but this has been superseded by the FCA's own API.