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AI Trust Mark in Practice: Providing a global framework to assess trust in AI products - Webinar Summary Report

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Executive Summary

This report summarizes the key insights from the "AI Trust Mark in Practice" webinar hosted by Nemko Digital on November 20, 2025. The event provided an in-depth exploration of the Nemko AI Trust Mark, its underlying frameworks, and its practical application for businesses navigating the evolving landscape of AI regulation. The primary objectives were to detail the certification process, explain the business drivers for adopting such a mark, and offer a clear roadmap for organizations to prepare for AI compliance. The webinar was targeted at professionals in roles involving AI governance, risk, and compliance, as well as product managers and developers working with AI-enabled systems.

Introduction

The webinar was led by Mónica Fernández Peñalver of the Nemko Digital team and Stuart Beck, Director of Nemko Group Certification. Nemko Digital, established in 2024 as an extension of Nemko's cybersecurity services, specializes in AI compliance, governance, risk, and related digital services. The speakers brought a wealth of experience, with Mónica's background in the ethical, legal, and social aspects of AI, and Stuart's extensive 32-year career in certification.

The session aimed to move beyond an introductory overview of the AI Trust Mark, offering a deeper dive into current projects and lessons learned. The goal was to

equip attendees with the knowledge to better prepare their organizations for pursuing a trust mark, in light of upcoming regulations like the EU AI Act.

The Nemko AI Trust Mark: Foundation and Framework

The Nemko AI Trust Mark is built upon three core pillars of AI governance and risk management:

- The EU AI Act: The forthcoming European regulation that sets a global precedent for AI governance.
- ISO 42001: The international standard for AI management systems.
- NIST AI Risk Management Framework (RMF): A widely recognized framework for managing the risks associated with AI.

The certification is process-focused, meaning it assesses the implementation of trustworthy AI processes rather than conducting direct technical testing of the AI model itself (e.g., bias or performance testing). It verifies that an organization has the necessary procedures in place and can justify its adherence to best practices.

A key feature of the Trust Mark is its risk-based approach, which aligns with the EU AI Act. Products and systems are categorized into three risk levels:

- R1: Low or minimal risk
- R2: Limited or medium risk
- R3: High risk

This differentiation allows for a proportionate application of requirements based on the potential impact of the AI system.

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Business Drivers for AI Trust Marks

Stuart Beck elaborated on the key business drivers for pursuing a voluntary AI Trust Mark:

Business Driver	Description
Competitive Advantage	Differentiates a product in the marketplace by providing third-party verification of its trustworthiness, building consumer and business confidence.
Compliance Alignment	Acts as a bridge to formal compliance with regulations like the EU AI Act, helping organizations prepare for mandatory assessments.
Risk & Quality Management	Evidences a commitment to safety, risk mitigation, and continuous improvement of AI systems.
Market Expansion	Facilitates global acceptance and streamlines entry into new markets by demonstrating alignment with international standards.

Understanding Risk Categorization

The webinar emphasized the importance of correctly categorizing the risk level of an AI system. This involves a detailed assessment of the product and its individual AI features. The criteria for certification are applied based on this risk level, with more stringent requirements for higher-risk features. For example, while some criteria apply to all features, others are specific to high-risk applications like biometric identification.

The Certification Process

To achieve the Nemko AI Trust Mark, organizations must provide supporting documentation that demonstrates the implementation of a robust AI governance framework. The key areas of focus include:

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- AI Impact Assessment: A thorough assessment of the AI system's impact across its lifecycle, including on vulnerable groups.
- Risk Management System: A documented policy and process for risk identification and mitigation.
- Data and Data Governance: Proper practices for handling training, testing, and validation data.
- Cyber, Accuracy, and Robustness: Evidence of testing procedures and results that align with identified risks.
- Transparency for Deployers: Clear instructions for use that enable deployers to monitor the system effectively.
- Record Keeping: Systems to support post-market monitoring.

Bridging the Gap: Trust Mark and EU AI Act Compliance

The Nemko AI Trust Mark is designed to bridge the gap between organizational-level certifications like ISO 42001 and the specific conformity requirements of the EU AI Act for AI systems. It provides a pathway to compliance by aligning its criteria with the obligations of the AI Act.

There are two primary routes for conformity assessment under the EU AI Act: internal control and assessment by a Notified Body (NB). The Trust Mark can serve as valuable evidence in both scenarios. By preparing for the Trust Mark now, organizations can shorten the period of alignment with harmonized standards (for internal control) and facilitate the assessment by a Notified Body, ultimately minimizing delays to market entry.

Practical Challenges and Solutions

The webinar addressed the "standards lag" – the period between the publication of a regulation and the development of harmonized standards. This creates uncertainty for businesses seeking to demonstrate compliance. The speakers advised that in the absence of harmonized standards, the evidence gathered for the Trust Mark can be used as input for Notified Body assessments, providing a proactive approach to managing this challenge.

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Real-World Case Studies

Several case studies were presented to illustrate the diversity of AI systems and their risk categorizations:

- AI for Student Admissions Support: A RAG-powered chatbot providing information on eligibility criteria was presented as a lower-risk example.
- AI to Optimize Air-Conditioner Airflow: An AI that automatically adjusts airflow based on thermal load was another example of a system with a different risk profile.
- Multiple AI Features in a Surveillance Camera: A surveillance camera with multiple AI analytics features, including domain-neutral surveillance, was discussed as a more complex, higher-risk case.

Audience Questions and Answers

The Q&A session addressed several key questions from the audience:

- AI as a component: When AI is a component of a larger piece of equipment with multiple tasks, the intended use and the specific functions of the AI determine the risk level and compliance requirements.
- Internal data scoring: If a company collects product usage data to calculate internal scores (e.g., for wear and tear) that are not shared with the user, the need for compliance with the EU AI Act depends on the nature of the data and the potential risks associated with the scoring process.
- Nemko's status: It was clarified that Nemko is in the process of becoming a Notified Body for the EU AI Act.
- Conformity assessment: For high-risk systems, conformity assessment will generally require a Notified Body, though some exceptions may apply.

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2025/Early-2026 Acceleration Checklist

The webinar concluded with a practical checklist for organizations to accelerate their AI compliance efforts in 2025 and early 2026:

1. Create an AI System/Product Inventory.
2. Determine the Risk Category for each system.
3. Conduct AI Impact Assessments.
4. Evaluate Business Goals (regulatory compliance vs. building customer trust).
5. Plan Timelines and Resources.
6. Monitor Regulatory Developments.

Key Takeaways and Next Steps

The main takeaway from the webinar is that proactive preparation is key to navigating the complexities of AI regulation. The Nemko AI Trust Mark offers a structured and credible way for organizations to demonstrate their commitment to trustworthy AI, align with upcoming regulations, and gain a competitive edge. As a next step, attendees were invited to apply for a chance to win a free AI Risk Categorization assessment.

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Conclusion

The "AI Trust Mark in Practice" webinar provided a valuable and timely overview of the challenges and opportunities in the field of AI governance. By offering a clear framework, practical guidance, and real-world examples, Nemko Digital has equipped attendees with the necessary knowledge to begin their journey toward AI compliance and build trust with their customers and stakeholders. The proactive adoption of frameworks like the Nemko AI Trust Mark will be a critical success factor for businesses in the age of AI.