

Website Compliance

So, you've started your business and set up your website. That should be it - right? Wrong!

Many people don't realise how much regulation there is of business website and most websites don't comply.

Are you one of them?

Ecommerce Regulations 2002

If you conduct your business through electronic systems, including email and the internet, you must provide certain information on your website:

- name
- geographical address at which you are established (PO boxes are not enough)
- contact details including an email address
- VAT number
- details of any associations, trade or other registers with which you are registered

Companies Act 1985 and Business Names Act 1985

If you run your business through the medium of a limited company, the following information must be posted on your website:

- company name
- registered number of the company
- place of registration
- your registered office

If you trade under a different name of that of your company, you need to put your company name on your site, together with an explanation of the difference between the two, for example, "Acme Trading" is the trading name of Acme Trading Company Limited. Even if your trading name differs only by the removal of the word "Limited" from the end of your company name, your full company name should be included.

Copyright

Your website and the copy contained in it are automatically protected by copyright in the UK. However, you should include the international copyright symbol © followed by the name of the copyright owner and the date to protect your copyright in some foreign countries. This should be included on every page of your site.

Disability Discrimination

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 is not just about putting ramps on the front steps of your offices. Any provision for services, including provision of information on a website, is covered by disability discrimination legislation.

In relation to websites, you should ensure that your site and the features on it are accessible to people with a disability. Some practical things you can do are:

- make sure that the text size of your site can be increased for people with visual impairment
- if you have text on your site, make sure that it is not coded in as an image to ensure that it can be read by the text translation software available for the visually impaired
- any copy on your site should be in plain English, with short sentences and as little jargon as possible, to assist those with learning difficulties.

stevensdrake offer a website audit service to ensure that your business meets all the legal requirements for websites and protects your rights.

For a fixed-fee, we will review your website and prepare a detailed report on any deficiencies and areas that need to be improved. The audit will cover all of the issues raised above plus other matters including warranties given to your customers, misuse of graphics or text that could be a breach of copyright, potentially defamatory statements and comparative advertising.

For further details, please contact a member of our Media & Technology team.

MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY UNIT



Mark O'Halloran

office: 01293 596981

mobile: 07810 504556

email: mark.ohalloran@stevensdrake.com

