

Which?

Guidance for Business Websites

E-Commerce Regulations 2002

These regulations require a business providing an information society service (which can be the marketing or selling of services to consumers and other businesses, online, by interactive T.V. or by phone texting) to provide the following information:

- the full name of the business
- the geographical address at which the business is established
- contact details, including an email address
- details of any publicly accessible trade or similar register on which the business is registered - this must include the name of the register, any registration number or other means of identification used in the register
- if the business is subjected to any authorisation scheme, details of the relevant supervisory authority
- if the business is a member of a regulated profession, details of the professional body, any professional titles held, details of any other European Member States in which the titles may have been granted, and a reference to the professional rules to which the member is subjected and details of how they can be accessed

Company, Limited Liability Partnership and Business (Names and Trading Disclosures) Regulations 2015

A company must state its name in legible lettering on the following business stationery, whether in hard copy, electronic or other form:

- all the company's business letters or order forms
- all its notices and other official publications
- all bills of exchange, promissory notes, endorsements, cheques and orders for money or goods purporting to be signed by, or on behalf of, the company
- all its bills for parcels, invoices and other demands for payment, receipts and letters of credit
- applications for licenses to carry on a trade or activity
- all its websites

The company must also show in legible lettering, on all business letters, order forms and any of the company's websites:

- the place of registration
- the registered number
- the registered office address, and
- if it is being wound up, that fact

Whenever an email is used where its paper equivalent would be caught by the stationery requirements, the email would also be subject to the requirements. The same requirements are also applicable to limited liability partnerships. Where a company's business letter includes the name of a director of that company, other than in the text or as a signatory, the letter must disclose the name of every director of that company.

Which?

Guidance for Business Websites

Other things to consider

Website Photographs

If you use photographs on your website it is best to use photographs of your own work. You should not use photographs of other traders' work and any photograph you do use you need to ensure you have permission from the owner of the photograph to use it. If you do use any stock photographs then you need to make it clear that photograph(s) are stock photographs by stating 'stock photos have been used for illustration purposes only'.

Logo Use on website

If you use any logos that don't belong to you, you need to ensure that you have permission from the logo owner to use the logo. You also need to avoid using logo that imply you are a member of an association or accredited in anyway. For example using the Gas Safe logo when you are not gas safe registered.

Use of multiple telephone numbers

Avoid using local telephone numbers that do not cover the area in which you have a physical trading address. It can cause confusion with consumers about the size of the business, geographically where the business operates from, that it is local to the customers' home when the business is not.

Use of the words '*we*', '*us*', '*team*' and '*our*'

If you work by yourself and have no partners or employees avoid using the words '*we*', '*us*', '*team*' and '*our*' as it can mislead consumers as they may believe your business is bigger than it really is.

Use of the words '*best*', '*No.1*', '*biggest*', '*leading*'

Avoid using words such as '*best*', '*No.1*', '*biggest*', '*leading*'. These words tend to be impossible to verify and when used with our endorsement might confuse your customers that Which? has determined that your business is the '*best*' etc.

Other claims

You need to ensure that all the statements you make on your website are not misleading. You need to be able to verify all the statements you make. The common statements that can mislead customers relate to the time the business has been trading, that staff are fully trained when not all of them are, that you carry out services that are actually carried out by your subcontractors on your behalf and that you have been approved by a body when you haven't.

Please note: This leaflet is not an authoritative interpretation of the law and is intended only for guidance. Full details can be found by visiting www.bis.gov.uk