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Information Sheet 9/10/2008

Is Your Website Legal?

If you do business through emails, mobile phones or a website you need to comply with the Electronic Commerce (EU Directive) Regulations 2002, which came into force in August 2002. Businesses that ignore the rules can be forced to take down their website and face a claim for damages.

All business websites, even those that do not sell goods or services online, must show:

- The name of the business.
- A geographic address.
- Contact details including an email address.
- Any supervisory authority under which the business operates.
- The business's VAT registration number.

Limited companies must also show:

- Their registration number.
- Their place of incorporation.

Sites that sell goods to the public must give further information before a customer places an order, including:

- Details of the steps required to conclude the contract
- Details of how the customer can find and correct errors
- A display of the terms of business, if the customer is asked to indicate acceptance
- Details of the customers right to cancel an order within seven days

Where the website can collect information about users, such as names and addresses, it must also comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

