

“The guidance and/or advice contained in this website is subject to UK regulatory regime and is therefore restricted to consumers based in the UK”

COOKIE USAGE

There has been a flurry of news recently from the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) regarding the introduction of the ‘cookie directive’ and what this means for both UK businesses and consumers.

The new rules came into effect on 26th May 2011, and both the government and ICO have since made clear statements that they believe the vast majority of businesses must be compliant with these changes within the next 12 months.

The new rules specify visitors are now:

(a) provided with clear and comprehensive information about the purposes of the storage of, or access to, that information; and

(b) given the opportunity to refuse the storage of or access to that information

Historically websites have ‘buried’ information about the use of cookies in terms & conditions, and relied on users ‘opting out’ - both practices which will no longer be acceptable.

If you currently collate cookie data, regardless of whether the information is actually utilised, and wish to continue with this practice, the regulator is advocating you take the following initial steps in order to understand the potential impact of any changes on your own business:

1. Check what type of cookies and similar technologies you use and how you use them.
2. Assess how intrusive your use of cookies is.
3. Decide what solution to obtain consent will be best in your circumstances.

A handy and free online resource which may help provide more background and context can be found at <http://www.allaboutcookies.org/>