

Cookie Policy 2016

This website only uses cookies for anonymous statistics - please see Google's Analytics policy for more information:

<https://developers.google.com/analytics/devguides/collection/analyticsjs/cookie-usage>

What are cookies?

Whenever you request a web page via a browser, it's not just the web page that gets sent to your computer. Websites send lots of additional information that is invisible to people but provides web browsers with useful data and instructions.

For example, information will be relayed to the browser about the format and character encoding of the requested web page. This information helps the browser to correctly display web pages without error.

This invisible data comes in many formats. One of those formats is a 'cookie'.

Cookies are a simple means of getting web browsers to remember very small amounts of data for long periods of time.

Cookies are stored on your computer's hard drive as plain text files. Because the cookie data is stored on your computer or device, they can be accessed at any time by your web browser. Thus, cookies help web browsers to remember things from one web page to the next.

For example, cookies can remember whether or not you are signed in to a website. And they can remember what items you have placed in your shopping cart. Without cookies, membership systems and e-commerce and many other things will simply not be possible.

These are legitimate uses for cookies. The privacy legislation that came into force in May 2012 does *not* impact on the use of cookies in the provision of essential web functionality such as this.

But cookies can also be used to track the activities of individual people on the web. For example, they can be used to record which web pages you visited and when. This information can be used to generate usage analytics, or to show advertisements that are better targeted to

each user's interests (based on past browsing).

It is these uses of cookies that are affected by the legislation.

Cookies are the most common technology used on the web for tracking the activities of individual web users. There are other technologies we can use to the same effect. Whatever technology is used to gather and store information about people, the online privacy legislation applies.

What are the legislative changes from May 2012?

A website owner must now have "*informed consent*" from people before they can gather and store *any* information about them, by whatever means.

For example, if you use a service such as Google Analytics to generate statistics about the activities of users on your website, then by law you now have to make it known to each user that you gather such data.

It is no longer enough to just include this information on a privacy policy page. Visitors to your website must be made aware of any devices installed in your web pages that are used to track their activities. And visitors must provide their consent before such devices can be deployed.