UK Fitness Bloggers Simple Guide to EU Cookie Law

Please note that we are not lawyers and this document has been designed as a guide to make bloggers aware of their obligations and how to meet them. Please consult a legal professional for more comprehensive information or to check legalities.

The Cookie Law

Ever seen a "Cookies Warning" pop up on a website before? Sadly not the tasty kind, but a warning box informing you that a website uses cookies on their site. On May 26th 2012, an EU law came into effect stating that it's illegal for websites to install certain cookies on a visitor's computer without their knowledge or consent.

A cookie is a piece of text that a website may store on your computer to track you. They record your preferences about particular websites, rotate banner ads according to your browsing history, remember your shopping cart when online shopping, auto-complete forms and keep you logged in to websites, amongst many other uses. However, some people have complained about privacy and this has led to the law coming into effect. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) will be monitoring sites to make sure that they comply with this new legislation. It's unlikely that bloggers will be targets, but this isn't an excuse to not comply.

Does it affect you?

You may think as a blogger that this isn't relevant to you, but the law basically states that if you are using cookies, then you need to get consent from your visitors. Do you use any of the following on your blog? If so, then you are using cookies.

- Content management system (Blogger, Wordpress)
- Google Analytics
- Google Adsense
- Contact forms
- Comments system
- Mailing list
- Shopping cart
- Social media buttons / plugins
- Affiliate links

This list is by no means complete, but it is designed to give you an idea of how cookies are used. The majority of websites will be using cookies in some way and so they need to make it clear to visitors.

How to comply

There are two things you need to do as a blogger.

- Provide a visible cookie warning when someone visits your blog
- Write a Cookie Policy

Neither of these things are as tricky as they sound.

Blogspot

Is your blog hosted on Blogspot? Congratulations! Your blog already complies as they have automatically added a warning and policy to all blogs. You can stop reading.

Wordpress

First of all, create a Cookie Policy. Create a new page and call it "cookie policy". You can either put together your own one, using various templates found on Google as a guide, alternatively, visit http://cookiepolicygenerator.com/. Input your blog information, contact information and check the boxes to state what you believe your blog uses cookies for. They will then generate a Cookie Policy for use on your own blog which will be emailed to you. Copy and paste into your cookie policy page. Save.

Next, install a suitable plugin. We recommend using "Cookie Law Info". This is a searchable plugin, or visit https://wordpress.org/plugins/cookie-law-info/. Once activated, go into settings. You can amend the default text here if you wish and whether you wish it to appear at the top or bottom of your blog. Click on "customise buttons" and scroll down to the "read more" section. Put the link to your "Cookie Policy" here.

Congratulations – you have now a functioning cookie warning and cookie policy.

Sources

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTTP_cookie

http://www.openglobal.co.uk/articles/192-how-to-comply-with-the-new-cookie-laws-eu-privacy-and-communications-directive.html

http://cookiepolicygenerator.com/cookie-law-introduction/

We will aim to update this document on a regular basis and have put this together with the best of our knowledge.

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UK Fitness Bloggers (http://fitnessbloggers.co.uk)