Gorgeous Geek
Web Designer & Online Business Consultant

GDPR Website Checklist

Ideal if you have a service based business website with these functions in place:

- Sign-up forms to get people onto your mailing list
- Contact form for people to contact you via your website
- Online scheduler for people to book consultation sessions with you
- Payment collection for online digital product(s) you offer

Disclaimer: This is *not* legal advice, but recommendations based on my research. I make no guarantees, and take no responsibility that these changes will make your website 100% compliant. You should ideally consult with a local lawyer to make sure you have everything in place for your specific website and business.

Which changes do you need to apply to your website with reference to GDPR?

☐ Sign-up boxes

You need to tell people who wants to sign up on your website exactly what is going to happen before they leave their data.

- If you say "*sign up to updates from my blog*", then you can only send emails with your blog posts.
- If you say "*sign up for my freebie*", you can no longer just add them to your mailing list as well. You need to tell them that they will have to sign up for your mailing list , and that *this* gives them access to your freebie.

<u>How to do this?</u>

Rephrase the sentences above your sign-up fields. E.g. look at the before and after of my sign-up box offering the Website Planner as a freebie:

Before: After:

You need to make sure they have a link to your Privacy Policy.

- Provide a link to your Privacy Policy below the "Sign Up" button (see sentence below the button in the image on the right hand side).

☐ Contact Forms

Below the "Send" button you need to inform them how you will treat their data, and create a link to your Privacy Policy. I have done it like this:
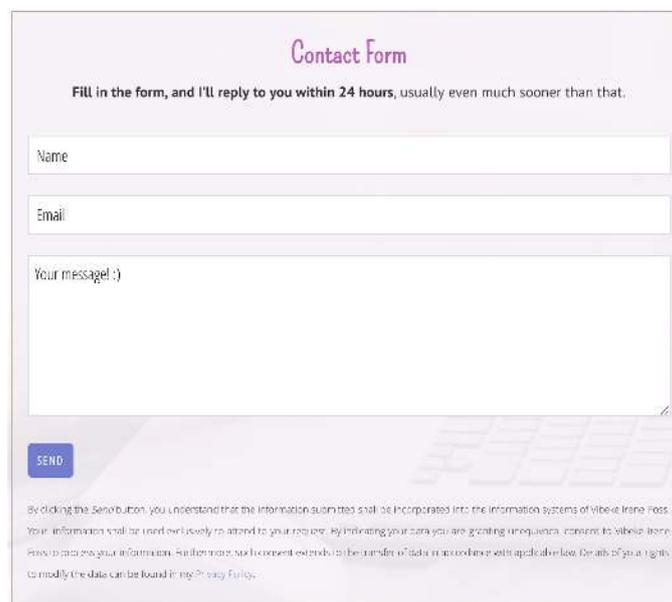
☐ Online Scheduler

In the section of your scheduler where your users add their personal data, you need to add a link to your Privacy Policy. I use the online scheduler Appointlet, and as an example, I have added a mandatory tick box just before the "Continue" button:

☐ **Cookies**

It has long been mandatory to have a cookie notification, however if you don't have one yet, it's time to get one.

- You have to have a cookie notification in place on your website asking your visitors to agree to the use of cookies if they keep browsing your website, and provide a page where they can read about what website cookies are, and which specific ones are in use on *your* website and for which purpose (in a language they understand).
- I use a plugin called Cooke Notice, which is easy to use.
- You can see my own Cooky Policy here to get an idea: GG Cookie Policy.

☐ **SSL**

Make sure you have an SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) certificate in place on your website.

- You're required to protect your user's data, and an SSL certificate ensures that any information that is entered in a form on your website is encrypted.
- Websites with SSL shows a little lock icon before your website address, and your website address starts with https:// (instead of http://), like you can see in this image:

- Your hosting company can help you with this, so get in touch with them if your website is not yet encrypted and has the SSL certificate.

When you have this in place, it's time to make get in touch with your current subscribers…

☐ Your current subscribers

When you have the above in place, it's time to make sure your current subscribers agree to your new or updated Privacy Policy for you to be able to keep sending them your emails.

It's not enough to write an email and say: "Hey, remember you can unsubscribe anytime". You have to make them take action, either directing them to a GDPR compliant sign-up form on your website for them to resubscribe, or include a click-option in an email where they can choose to stay or go. All email marketing providers can track clicks, so anyone who did not click to stay on your list by 25 May, have to be removed.

This is what I sent out as part of my last email to my mailing list:

In all your emails, you also need to have available a link where they can adjust their subscription preferences.

- If you only have one list, and only send out e.g. your blog posts, then their options would be to stay subscribed or unsubscribed. Lucky you!
- If you have built up a more complex list system, where they are receiving different categories of emails from you, e.g. blog posts, promotions, notification of events,

webinars, market research outreach etc., then they need to have the option to choose what to receive.

Puh! Won't we all be happy when all of this is finally in place?

I know what your question is right now…

How to do all this technically?

I wish I could give you an easy answer to this, but each system is different. Nevertheless, by now all of the main email marketing suppliers (MailChimp, ActiveCampaign, ConvertKit etc.), and contact form suppliers (Contact Form 7, Ninja Forms, Gravity Forms etc.), have easy to find and detailed instructions for their users on how to make their forms compliant. A quick Google will help you out (type GDPR and the name of the provider), or request the service from your web designer.

Regarding your Privacy Policy, I strongly recommend that you get a lawyer to provide you with these, as you may be obliged to refer also to local laws in the policy. You can have a look at my own Privacy Policy to understand what information needs to be included on such a page.

As for your cookie policy you can base yours on my own Cookie Policy, **but** you need to adapt the section called "*Which cookies do we use on our website?*", as this differs from site to site.

Good luck with the implementations.