

# WEB STANDARDS BUSINESS CASE

## What web standards and accessibility mean for your website

When you speak to us, we'll talk to you about how we adhere to web standards and build accessible websites. Should you care? What does this really mean for you?

### What It Means

Did you know there is a body that sets the standards for how websites should be built and what they should achieve? It's called the World Wide Web Consortium, or W3C.

W3C want everyone to be able to access websites, whether they're vision impaired or even blind, motor impaired, or using unusual methods (such as mobile phones) to view websites. To guide web developers in achieving this goal, they laid out a set of "web standards".

Accessibility just means that if a site is built adhering to the W3C's standards, it will be as widely accessible as possible, for everyone from blind users to search engines.

So what's the business case, and why should YOU be on board?

### Smaller and Faster Sites

The code that drives your site will be smaller, so the space it takes up on the server will be reduced. This means your hosting costs for extra bandwidth usage go down. On top of this, your site will load faster so people won't leave in frustration.

### More People Can See You

Without standards, you've basically blocked your site to all people who might have vision or motor impairments. But it's not just people who may have disabilities – it's the technology people use as well. Standards compliant websites are more usable on mobile phones, PDAs and a wider range of web browsers.

## Search Engine Optimization

Your site will already be one step ahead of the rest if it adheres to standards. Search engines are better able to read and understand the content on standards compliant websites, so they rank it higher and more accurately.

## Browser Compatibility

The most popular web browsers are Internet Explorer, FireFox, Netscape Navigator and Safari, but there are many more. The people who make these browsers have agreed to (mostly) display standards compliant websites in the same way. This means we save time building your site (so it's cheaper) and your site will look the same across a wider range of browsers.

## Maintenance

We can make changes to your website much faster if we adhere to web standards. This, of course, saves us time and saves you money.

## No Legal Dramas

Cases are starting to emerge where users who were unable to access a website sued the website owners for not having an accessible site.

## Want to Know More?

[www.w3.org](http://www.w3.org) will tell you more, as will any number of sites that you can find on a search engine by looking up "web standards and accessibility". If you don't want the technical mumbo jumbo, add the words "in layman's terms" to your search.

**Peace of mind is a wonderful thing.**