

**AN APPLICATION TO TEST WEBSITES
FOR COMPLIANCE AND AWARD A
COMMENSURATE TRUST MARK –
A PROOF OF CONCEPT**

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ABSTRACT

The advent of the internet ushered in an era of vast possibilities. It has enhanced information access and sharing, data transfer and remote/online working capabilities. Furthermore, it has enhanced international trade capabilities as geographical barriers facing businesses are being broken. As such, it is now possible to say that the world is indeed a global village

Of interest to this work are the enhanced capabilities of electronic commerce (e-commerce). E-commerce involves consummating business transactions via an electronic means, thereby enhancing both business-to-business and business-to-consumers relationships irrespective of geographical distances. This work considers the latter business relationship, and thus places consumers' interest as its focus.

Like all businesses, for the e-commerce counterpart to enjoy continued patronage from consumers, efforts need to be made to manage their concerns and build online trust in them. Building consumers' online trust would require identifying and improving the factors which drive trust.

For websites, factors such as privacy, security, brand name, design and presentation, trust mark, etc. have been identified as drivers of online trust. In addition to these, this research has identified websites' compliance with regulatory requirements as an important driver of online trust; and presents survey results to justify the need for online businesses' regulatory compliance.

This work focuses on identifying means of applying regulatory requirements to websites whilst also using the means to create an objective trust mark for online businesses. This trust mark was automated as a privacy policy compliance checking application and will provide business managers with a tangible tool for evaluating their compliance level. Consumers can also use the compliance rating awarded by the tool to make informed decisions concerning whether or not to transact with a website. Case study test of websites was carried out; the results show the possibility of automating a trust mark as a tool.