



National Consumer Council

www.ncc.org.uk

About our client

The National Consumer Council is a consumer policy and research organisation with a special focus on the needs of disadvantaged consumers. They look for the big consumer issues of the future and lobby to shape today's consumer policy debate. They are independent of government, but benefit from a close working relationship, pressing their case in a way others cannot. They also have sister organisations in Wales and Scotland, and strong links in Northern Ireland, providing a good basis for them to represent all consumers in the UK and in Europe.

They are a non-profit-making company limited by guarantee and funded mostly by the Department of Trade and Industry.

Business requirements

The National Consumer Council (NCC) required a flexible solution that would allow them to cope with their imminent re-branding quickly and cost effectively. On completion of the re-branding exercise it was essential their new identity could be adapted for the website, providing them with a consistent corporate look and feel across all their marketing materials and business tools.

They required a fast, accessible and easily updatable website which had to adhere to accepted build standards. The website had to be available as text only and be screen reader friendly. Further technical requirements were password protected micro sites, discussion boards and the functionality to add, delete and edit their own content.

An additional prerequisite of the website was that it was to be a repository for their publications and reports. It was necessary that NCC employees could effortlessly post these documents and that they could be easily accessed and downloaded by users.

Project Type

- Website
- Integrated media
- Online identity
- Training & support

Keywords

- Discussion boards
- Micro sites
- Bespoke functionality
- Accessibility
- Usability
- CD ROM

Keymedia solution

We worked closely with the NCC to achieve their complex requirements. The first step was to define their key audiences and therefore, the structure for the navigation of the site.

The creation of the new NCC website was an intricate process requiring our expertise in website usability and accessibility. Due to the broad user base, we ensured the site was robust across all browsers, removing any software or hardware restrictions on the end user. The site uses our text-conversion utility that converts web pages to a more accessible form providing a plain-text alternative allowing the use of screen readers with the site. The site is clean, fast, and easily navigated in whatever form it is viewed.

Visually, the site is based on the new NCC corporate branding. We took their offline identity and transferred it to an online setting. The use of their logo and corporate colours provides continuity throughout their marketing collateral and translates effectively into the virtual environment. We also adapted the design for the Scottish Consumer Council website and for a training CD-ROM providing complete online design coordination.

We developed the website so that it provides the NCC with the functionality they require to make their reports available online. We trained staff in Dreamweaver to quickly and simply upload new publications with minimum effort. All documentation is instantly available at a minimal cost.

As a part our ongoing support service, we recently provided an “umbrella” site, www.consumercouncils.org.uk, which pulls together the consumer councils of England, Scotland and Wales. We set up a search tool that covers all of the sites in the group. We have also built password protected discussion forums, micro sites and provide on going technical support and hosting.

Business benefits

The NCC website is the main public source of consumer information in the United Kingdom. It provides:

- Up-to-date information that is easy to maintain in-house
- Equal access by adherence to usability and accessibility standards
- Cost effective online publishing of news and reports
- Design continuity throughout all NCC collaterals