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Terms of Use

A terms of use statement is a legal contract between the site creators and the users. "Where intellectual property is concerned, Terms of Use may be set up in order to let an audience know specifically what can and cannot be done to the work with or without the creator's permission." (Terms of Use) It is legally binding and should therefore be written clearly and precisely. It is important to clearly define how any information given may be used. Also it is important to outline the responsibilities of each party. By using the site the users are agreeing to the terms outlined in the terms of use section. "We have the privilege of writing our own Terms Of Use. Internet is a much less regulated field than any offline business, where you seldom have a way to make every customer sign your disclaimer and terms of use prior to using your service. On the Internet, by the mere use of your website, visitors may be bound by your Terms Of Use Agreement." (How to Write Terms of Service)

While you can write a terms of use document yourself it is a good idea to have someone, such as a lawyer at least help with it so you do not miss any legal loopholes. "The only way to ensure your Terms of Service are legally airtight is to have someone familiar with the law look them over. Contact him before you begin writing to ask if there are any specific things that you should include." (How to Write Terms of Service) If you can't afford to have a lawyer do it for you it is better to write your own than to not have one. It's better to have some protection with a few holes than it is to have no protection at all.

Each Terms of Use is different, depending on the needs of the site. When you are writing yours you need to think of what sections you need. Some things to think about are what services are you providing; what information are you collecting and how will you use it; what you expect from the users; liability limitations; and who has the copyright for content posted to your site, if you allow users to post things.

Terms of use statements are design to protect the administrators and the clients. By having a clear understanding what information will be used for, what the clients may use the site for, and other areas of possible conflict it is far easier to avoid problems. Also by having the contract which the users have agreed to if it is broken you then have a legal base from which to build your case against them.

References

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