



Universal Design Toolkit for Customer Engagement

Business Case and Overview

Now, more than ever before, your focus is on running an effective and efficient business. Time, personnel and funds are limited and all your focus is on the day-to-day running of the business and bringing in money.

When it comes to engaging with your current customers and targeting new ones...

- Is the warm welcome being translated into a better experience for your customers, and more revenue for your business?
- Are you communicating with your customers as well as you can in your print materials, on your website, over the phone and in person?
- After you make the first sale, how are you keeping customers engaged?

Better communication can increase the spend by your customer, widen your market, improve brand recognition and customer loyalty.

Three good reasons to use this Toolkit

52% of customers purchase more from a business as a result of a good customer experience.

58% of customers are more likely to tell others about their customer service experiences today than they were five years ago.

24% of customers will continue to use service providers for two or more years after good experiences.

Universal Design for customer engagement is the design of all forms of customer communications so that they can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability and disability.

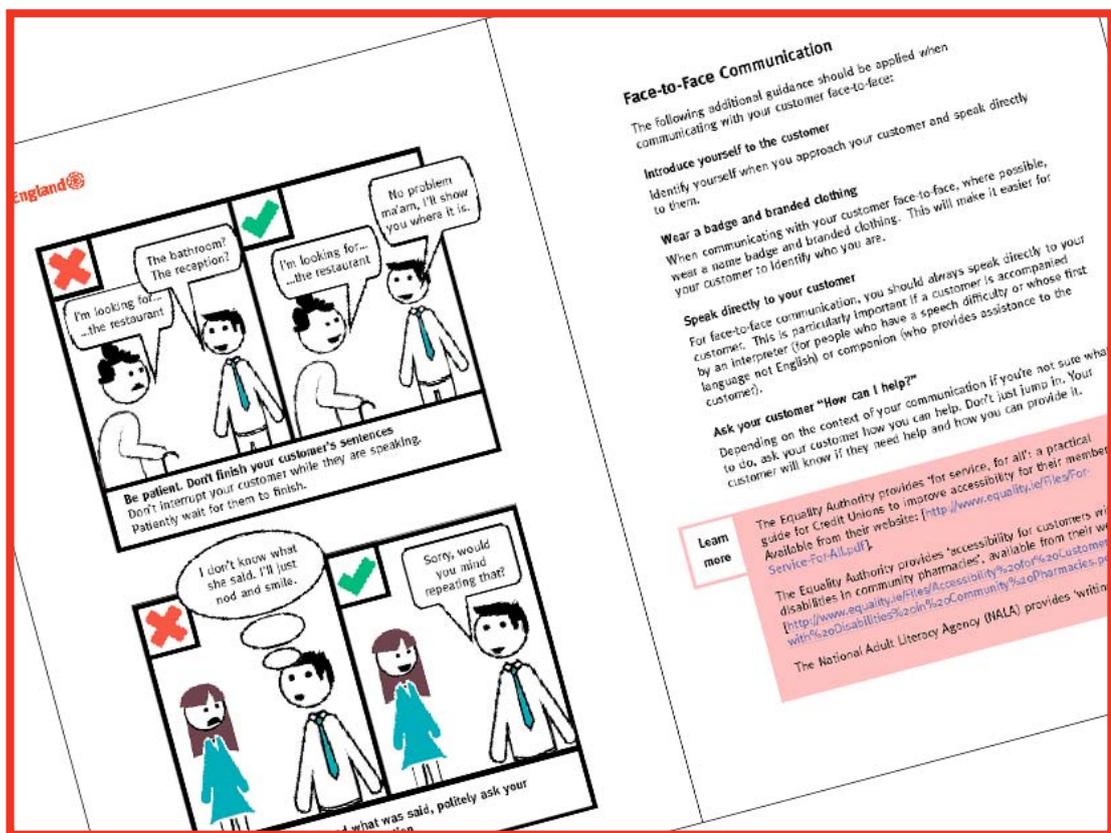
Universal Design can work for you

Following the guidance in this Toolkit will help you to:

- Increase your number of repeat customers.
- Improve word of mouth referrals and online reviews.
- Improve how you successfully communicate to a wider market.
- Increase spend by your customers.

This Universal Design Toolkit will help your tourism business achieve better customer communication.

It shows you the most important things to get right and gives you simple to follow guidance that makes sense and is easy to apply. It helps you check that what you are doing is correct and offers good and bad practice examples. Finally it enables you to recap on the most important points so you and your staff don't forget!



“We implemented training using the Toolkit to improve our customer engagement; this has resulted in our online bookings increasing 300%”.
(Peak Edge Hotel, Derbyshire).

Who is the Toolkit for?

This Toolkit is for all businesses that provide services to tourism customers. This ranges from local B&Bs to large hotels, from small coffee shops to large restaurants as well as music venues, cultural institutions, tour and transport operators, and everything in-between!

3 ways to use the Toolkits

1. Training - in the classroom or on the job

Use the guidance for training staff in good customer communications. The Toolkit is useful as a quick reference guide, for classroom training and for testing your knowledge on what you have learnt.

2. Keep the guidance to hand - and refer to it often

Use it when designing new forms, brochures, signage, websites or apps, or asking someone to do it for you. Base your designs on the guidance in the Toolkits.

3. Need a refresher - just check the checklists!

Pull out or copy the checklists and keep them posted somewhere that staff can see and use them. Good practice never gets old.

The information in this Toolkit:

- Is designed for quick and easy training of staff.
- Can be applied at little or no extra cost.
- Is practical, easy to use and understand.
- Can be read and understood quickly.

Why use the Toolkit?

The three key reasons why Universal Design is important to customer engagement:

- The Business Case
- The Demographic Case
- The Legal Case

The Business Case

All businesses should be focused on meeting the needs of as many existing and potential new customers as possible. This Toolkit will help you to provide a better service and experience to your customers and potential customers. The impact of this will be an increased market reach, making your services available to a larger number and broader range of potential customers.

Key reasons for using the Toolkit are:

- **All your customers will benefit**

This Toolkit will help make communication more accessible to, understandable and usable by as many of your customers as possible. The more flexible your service is and the more options it gives your customers, the more likely a service is to meet the diverse needs of as wide a customer base as possible.

As your customers get older, they are more likely to experience difficulties.

Between 2006 and 2014 the number of domestic holidays taken by the 55+ age group has grown by 26%.

This is because there are an increasing number of tourists over 65, who have money to spend and more leisure time than other customer segments.

- **A good reputation makes good business sense**

A satisfied customer will tell other people about your service, increasing awareness and potentially creating new customers. Two thirds of customers are willing to spend an average of 13% more with a business they believe provides good customer service.

Increasingly, TripAdvisor and Facebook (among others) are places where potential customers learn about you based on reviews and feedback from previous customers. This has changed the dynamics of how you can engage with your customers. Your customers' purchasing decisions are often made before you ever get a chance to talk to them and sell them your service. This is why this Toolkit is important.

70% of people in the UK use online review sites at least occasionally when deciding where to go on holiday.

- **What's good for society benefits your business**

If you incorporate a Universal Design approach in your business, you are likely to receive a reputation for a high level of corporate social responsibility. Welcoming all customers to use your service not only increases your bottom line - it benefits your local community and society as well.

In 2014, 73% of domestic overnight holiday bookings were booked online.

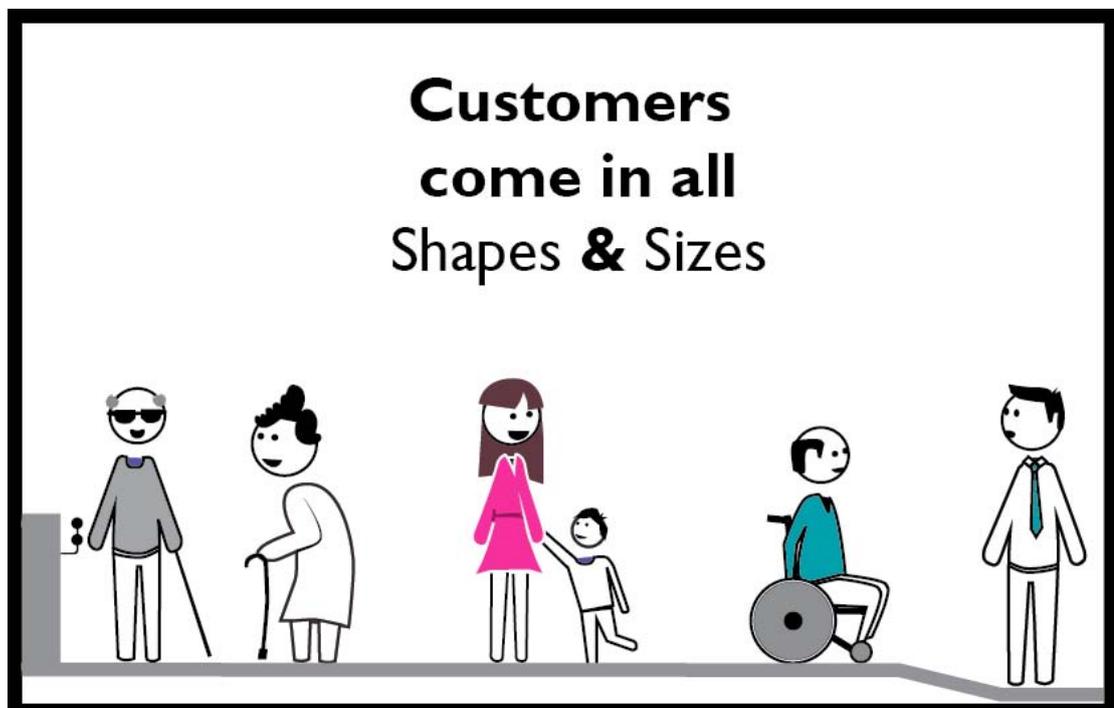
1 Source: BDRC Holiday Trends 2015: <http://bdrc-continental.com/projects/holiday-trends-2015/>

2 Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey 2014: https://www.visitengland.com/sites/default/files/england_all_trip_purposes_2014.pdf

The Demographic Case

There are no typical tourism customers. They can be male or female, of all ages and all different in size. Tourism customers typically consist of a range of nationalities, where English may not be their first language.

It is important to remember, that at some stage we all will experience some form of difficulty, such as only having the use of one arm because you're carrying a baby, or having difficulty hearing because of loud background noise. However this additionally may include more long term impairments, ranging from hearing and sight loss, to mental health and physical impairment. There is estimated to be 1.27 billion disabled people globally.



The key message therefore is that there are no typical tourism customers. All businesses have a broad range of customers with different needs and difficulties.

The Legal Case

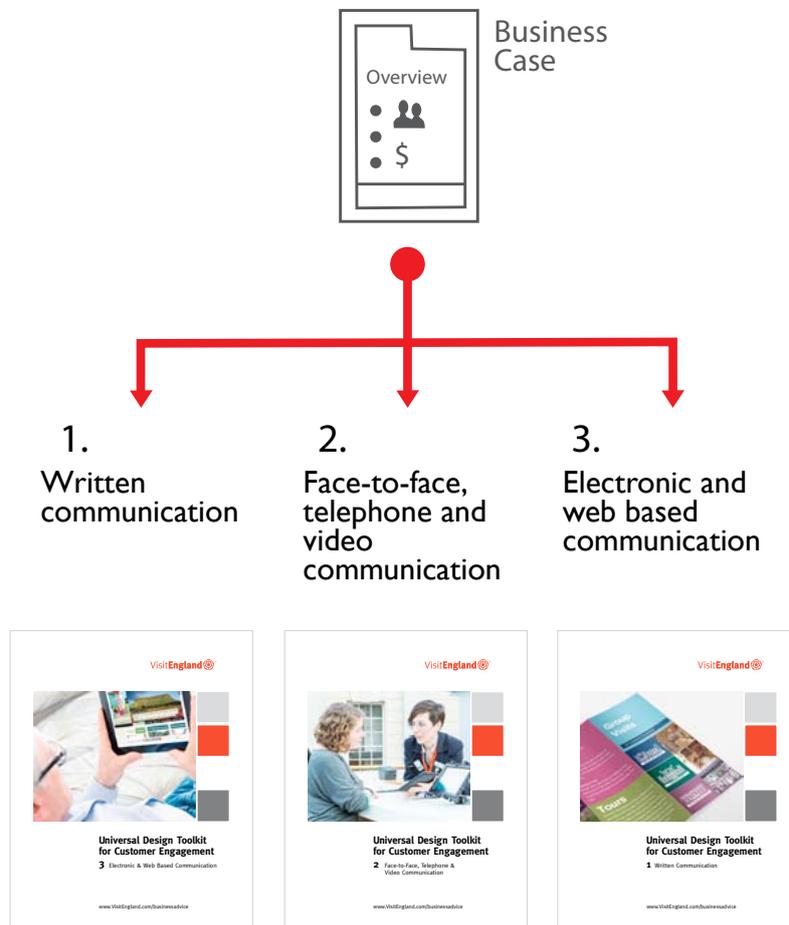
Under the Equality Act 2010, all providers of goods and services are legally required to treat all customers without discrimination.

What is the Toolkit?

This Toolkit provides you with practical and useful guidance on how to use Universal Design as a tool for better engaging with your customers.

Key areas of customer engagement

1. Written communication.
2. Face-to-face, telephone and video communication.
3. Electronic and web based communication.



Each Toolkit section is composed of:

- An **introduction** to the Toolkit Section.
- **Good practice guidance** supported by visual examples.
- **Checklists** that provide summarised good practice to assess your current offering or to develop new communications.
- A **Test your knowledge** section to test what you have learnt from the Toolkit.
- **Tourism Communication Design** to help you develop new ways to communicate with your customers.



VisitEngland is the country's national tourist board responsible for driving forward England's Strategic Framework for Tourism with industry partners. We work in partnership to lead the development of a thriving tourism industry, supporting our national and local partners to achieve economic growth and increase investment and employment by encouraging the development of excellent visitor experiences and effective business practices. For information on the wide range of support and opportunities we offer to the different sectors involved in England's visitor economy visit [visitengland.com/biz](https://www.visitengland.com/biz) and for further information on England, visit [visitengland.com](https://www.visitengland.com)

The Universal Design Toolkit for Customer Engagement was developed by the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design at the National Disability Authority, in partnership with Fáilte Ireland. It was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders involved in the tourism industry.

The Toolkit is based on the specifications contained in the Irish Standard (I.S.) 373:2013 'Universal Design for customer engagement in tourism services', published by the National

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