



Digital Services Act (DSA) Compliance Checklist for Online Marketplaces

Introduction

The Digital Service Act (DSA) establishes clear obligations for online platforms, specifying what is expected of them in terms of user safety, content moderation, and transparency. Marketplaces will need to clearly understand their role in ensuring a safe online environment. This includes:

- Actively monitoring for harmful content.
- Being transparent about moderation practices.
- Addressing issues promptly.

Regulatory authorities will have more power to monitor, audit, and enforce the DSA's provisions. This includes imposing penalties on platforms that don't comply. This means that Marketplaces should expect closer scrutiny from regulators. There's a pressing need for robust internal systems to ensure compliance, and marketplaces must be prepared to cooperate with regulatory bodies.

Compliance Steps for Online Marketplaces

Step 1

Risk Assessment

- ◆ **Content Analysis:** Regularly evaluate the type, volume, and source of content hosted on your platform. Understand the different categories of products or services and their respective risks.
- ◆ **User Behavior Assessment:** Monitor user activity patterns, understanding where most engagement and transactional activity is centered. Identify areas that may attract more fraudulent or harmful behavior.
- ◆ **Feedback Loop:** Create avenues for users to provide feedback on suspicious listings or users. This can offer direct insights into potential risk areas.

Step 2

Content Moderation

- ◆ **Automated Filtering:** Deploy AI-driven tools to automatically flag or remove listings or comments that violate platform rules or the DSA.
- ◆ **Human Review:** Implement a team or service to review challenging cases or appeals, ensuring accurate and fair decisions.
- ◆ **User Education:** Regularly update users about content guidelines, clarifying what is allowed and what isn't. This can decrease the number of violations.

Step 3

Transparent Reporting

- ◆ **Efficient Reporting System:** Design a user-friendly system where users can report problematic content or behaviors.
- ◆ **Timely Response:** Ensure user reports receive a response within a specified timeframe. This builds trust and confidence.
- ◆ **External Arbitration:** Offer users the chance to have their complaints reviewed by an independent body if they're unsatisfied with the platform's decision.

Step 4

External Audit

- ◆ **Periodic Reviews:** Engage third-party experts to evaluate your platform's compliance with the DSA, highlighting areas of improvement.
- ◆ **Feedback Implementation:** Take external audit feedback seriously, making necessary changes to bolster compliance and safety.
- ◆ **Transparency with Users:** Share highlights from external audits with the user base, showcasing your platform's commitment to safety and transparency.

Step 5

Cooperation with Authorities

- ◆ **Open Communication Channels:** Designate points of contact within your organization who liaise with regulatory authorities, ensuring swift and open communication.
- ◆ **Regular Updates:** Keep authorities informed about significant platform changes, new features, or shifts in user behavior that may impact compliance.
- ◆ **Training:** Conduct sessions to keep your team updated on DSA regulations, ensuring everyone understands their roles in maintaining compliance.



Potential Pitfalls for Marketplaces

Over-reliance on Automation

◆ False Positives/Negatives:

Automated systems, while efficient, can sometimes misidentify compliant content as harmful (false positives) or overlook genuinely harmful content (false negatives).

◆ Lack of Human Nuance:

There are nuances and contexts that AI might need to catch, leading to errors in content moderation.

Recommendation: Balance automation with human review. Allow a moderation team to handle flagged content, ensuring more accurate and context-aware decisions.

Inadequate user Education

◆ Ambiguous Policies:

If content guidelines are unclear, users might unintentionally violate platform rules.

◆ Lack of Awareness:

Users must know platform regulations or the DSA can inadvertently introduce non-compliant content.

Recommendation: Regularly update and clarify platform guidelines. Host webinars, tutorials, or FAQs to educate users about what's allowed and what isn't.

Inefficient Feedback & Appeal Systems

◆ Delayed Responses:

Taking too long to address user reports or appeals can erode trust and increase dissatisfaction.

◆ Lack of Clarity:

Not providing clear reasons for content removal or account bans can lead to confusion and frustration.

Recommendation: Implement a streamlined reporting system, ensuring timely and transparent responses. Offer a straightforward appeals process for users who feel their content was wrongfully flagged.

Ignoring External Feedback

◆ Missed Insights:

Marketplaces might overlook valuable insights that bolster compliance by not engaging with third-party audits or feedback.

◆ Eroded Public Trust:

A lack of transparency can lead to diminishing trust from users and stakeholders.

Recommendation: Welcome third-party reviews and engage with their feedback proactively. Share key findings with the user base to demonstrate transparency.

Failing to Update with Regulatory Changes

◆ Outdated Protocols:

The digital landscape is rapidly evolving, and regulatory frameworks like the DSA can undergo updates. Failing to adapt can lead to non-compliance.

◆ Potential Legal Risks:

Non-compliance can lead to legal repercussions, including fines or platform restrictions.

Recommendation: Stay updated with any amendments to the DSA. Regularly review and adjust platform protocols to align with the latest regulatory changes.

Insufficient Collaboration with Authorities

◆ Communication Gaps:

Marketplaces can only catch crucial updates or guidance with open channels with regulatory bodies.

◆ Compromised Safety:

A lack of timely communication can hinder quick responses to emergent threats or harmful content.

Recommendation: Designate liaisons within the organization to regularly interact with regulatory authorities. Foster a culture of cooperation and open dialogue.

Final thoughts



Training and Updates:

Regularly train your staff and moderation teams on DSA requirements. As regulations evolve, ensure everyone is informed of the latest changes and understands their implications.

User Feedback Loop:

Establish a robust mechanism for users to report concerns or problematic content. A well-structured feedback system can act as an early warning, helping you detect potential compliance issues before they escalate.

Transparency with Users:

Make your content policies, terms of service, and DSA compliance efforts visible and understandable to your user base. Transparency can foster trust and turn your community into allies in maintaining platform integrity.

Collaboration with Other Marketplaces:

Engage in dialogue with other marketplaces, sharing best practices and learning from each other. Collective intelligence can offer insights that might be missed when working in isolation.

Engage with Experts:

Consider seeking external counsel or consultancy on DSA regulations, especially if your platform operates across multiple jurisdictions. An expert perspective can help ensure every stone is turned on in your compliance journey.

Technology Investment:

With the content volume on digital platforms, investing in advanced content moderation tools, like AI and machine learning, can significantly aid in efficient and effective compliance. Combined with manual oversight, these tools can offer a comprehensive moderation strategy.

How Besedo Can Help

Content moderators, such as Besedo, are instrumental in ensuring DSA compliance for online platforms and marketplaces. At the heart of the DSA is the need for platforms to swiftly identify and act upon illegal content or activities, and professional content moderation teams are uniquely positioned to tackle this challenge. Besedo's blend of AI-driven tools, filters, and manual oversight means that platforms can proactively detect problematic content and handle nuanced cases with human judgment, ensuring a balanced approach to content decisions.

Moreover, with the DSA emphasizing transparency and thorough reporting, Besedo offers comprehensive metrics and insights into content moderation processes. This ensures that platforms are aware of their content landscape and prepares them for the mandatory reporting requirements set by the DSA.

Partnering with experienced content moderators like Besedo is not just about compliance; it's about fostering a safe, inclusive online environment. By ensuring content aligns with community standards and regulatory guidelines, platforms can enhance user trust and brand reputation, solidifying their position in the digital landscape.



Want to know more?

We're happy to discuss this with you and how we can help. The easiest way is to head on over to besedo.com and shoot us a message. Let's talk!