Enquiry form audit: does every enquiry reach you?

These are the checks we run on an enquiry form before it goes live, written so an owner can run them on their own form with a phone, a computer and a second email address. A form that fails quietly loses work for months, because nobody knows the enquiry was sent. Four questions find most of it: does it arrive, who answers, how fast, and what is lost on the way. The last section is the privacy basics from the ICO, the UK's data protection regulator; it is a checklist, not legal advice.

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Audience
UK businesses that take enquiries through a website form.

01 Does it arrive?

Send each test from your phone and from a computer, and write down the time you sent it.

- [ ] A test sent through every form on the site (contact, quote, booking, the footer), from an email address at a different provider from your own, reaches the inbox, not the spam folder.
- [ ] If enquiries also go to a CRM or a shared inbox, the test is there too.
- [ ] A test filled in by the browser's autofill still arrives. A hidden spam trap that autofill can fill catches real customers.
- [ ] With JavaScript turned off in the browser's settings, the form still sends, or says how else to reach you.
- [ ] The sender gets an acknowledgement within a few minutes, saying it arrived and what happens next.
- [ ] The service that sends the form's email is authorised in your domain's DNS. Gmail asks every sender to "set up SPF or DKIM email authentication"; ask whoever runs your email.

02 Who answers?

- [ ] The notification goes to an inbox someone reads every working day, not a former employee's or an old supplier's address.
- [ ] One person owns the replies, and someone else covers their holidays and sick days.
- [ ] The acknowledgement says when you read messages, and it is true. Ours says: "We read enquiries Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm UK time, and we are closed at weekends."
- [ ] An enquiry flagged as possible spam still reaches a person, who decides. Nothing is deleted unseen.

03 How fast?

- [ ] For each test, note three times: sent, notification received, first reply from a person.
- [ ] Send one test on a Friday evening or at the weekend, and see when it is answered.
- [ ] Promise only the reply time you keep, and say it in the acknowledgement.

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04 What is lost?

- [ ] Leave a required field empty and press Send. The form says in words, under the field, what is missing, and keeps everything else you typed. WCAG 2.2 asks that "the error is described to the user in text".
- [ ] Every field you filled in appears in the notification: a long message in full, a phone number written with spaces or +44, and any attachment.
- [ ] Every compulsory question is one you need in order to reply. A question you never use comes off.
- [ ] Ask whoever built the form what a visitor sees when the email service is down. The answer should be "it did not send", never "thank you".
- [ ] Each enquiry is kept in a second place, a CRM or a log, so one failed email cannot lose it.

05 The UK GDPR and PECR basics, from the ICO

- [ ] **Tell people at the point of collection.** UK GDPR asks for privacy information "at the time when personal data are obtained", so put a short line by the Send button that links your privacy notice. The ICO lists what it must always say: who you are and how to contact you, why you use the details, your lawful basis, how long you keep them, people's rights, and their right to complain to the ICO.
- [ ] **Know your lawful basis,** decided before you collect and written down. For a quote request, the ICO's description of contract fits: the person "asked you to take specific steps before entering into a contract".
- [ ] **Ask only for what you need.** The ICO: "You must not collect personal data on the off-chance that it might be useful in the future."
- [ ] **Set a retention period** for enquiries that never become work, then delete them (ours: 12 months).
- [ ] **Marketing is a separate choice.** A box the person ticks themselves: the ICO says you cannot rely on "pre-ticked boxes, opt-out boxes, default settings". Record who agreed, when, and what they were shown.
- [ ] **Marketing email or text to an individual** (for PECR, that includes sole traders and ordinary partnerships) needs their consent or the soft opt-in: you got their details while selling or negotiating, which the ICO says includes "requesting a quote", you market only your similar products or services, and they can say no, free, when you collect the details and in every message.
- [ ] **Keep the acknowledgement a service message.** The ICO says a service message with "elements that are direct marketing" will "count as direct marketing".
- [ ] **Only the people you authorise** can see enquiries, in the inbox and in the CRM.

> If you would rather we did it, our enquiry forms service builds and connects the whole form, quoted to your business: veryseoly.com/enquiry-forms. More data checks: veryseoly.com/compliance-audit-checklist.

Sources

All opened on 10 November 2026. The ICO's guidance, at ico.org.uk:

- What privacy information should we provide?
- When should we provide privacy information?
- A guide to lawful basis
- Data minimisation
- Storage limitation
- How should we obtain, record and manage consent?
- How do we comply with the PECR electronic mail marketing rules?
- Identify direct marketing
- A guide to data security
- UK GDPR, Article 13, at legislation.gov.uk
- PECR 2003, regulation 22, at legislation.gov.uk
- WCAG 2.2, success criterion 3.3.1, Error Identification, W3C
- Email sender guidelines, Gmail Help