

Why Terms & Conditions are not a barrier to procurement

Jun 18, 2019

If you are purchasing goods from a company – for example, a mobile phone contract or car lease– there will be standard Ts & Cs attached to them. On most occasions we absent-mindedly accept the terms, but what benefits do they add and why do we need them as part of a contractual agreement?

Changing public perception

There is a dismissive attitude towards Ts & Cs that has been under scrutiny over the last couple of years. There have been a number of well publicised instances with customers unwittingly handing over personal data that has later been used for nefarious acts, or signing up for [unexpected extra conditions](#). These incidents highlight the growing number of people who fail to read the small print when entering into an agreement.

Given they are not a legal requirement, there is a perception that Ts & Cs add an unnecessary level of complexity in an already complicated procurement process. However, there is little recognition of their value as a means of holding businesses accountable and protecting customers from contractual breaches.

Why Ts & Cs are a good idea

Tunstall recently introduced Ts & Cs as part of the purchasing process for some of our Lifeline products and services. While it has been an adjustment, we have discovered a number of benefits as a result.

First, they clearly set out what a customer is to receive from us, both in terms of describing the service and how it will be delivered. Formalising the terms of an agreement can enhance client relationships by improving the channel of communication, minimising the possibility of any misunderstandings or ambiguity.

Secondly, they detail the customer's rights to use the services and any associated protections, particularly if there is an issue with delivery. By the same token it also provides a degree of accountability for the customer; by setting out payment terms and consequences of defaulting, companies can ultimately improve cashflow.

Finally, adding Ts & Cs as part of service delivery can add credibility, and become a key differentiator among peers. Companies that do not offer the additional conditions are prone to questioning regarding their legitimacy and customer rights.

As Sam Goldwyn once said: "*A verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on*". He was right: the benefits of having your arrangements committed to writing are overwhelming. Your supplier can be held to account if they don't provide what they have committed to do, and you know exactly what you are getting.

So look at the terms and conditions before clicking through to your next purchase; you never know what you might find about the rights that you have. If you need advice or assistance, or simply want to know more about our Ts & Cs, please do get in touch.