



## RESEARCH

# ACCESS DENIED

Top UK websites neglect their duties to disabled internet users

**T**HE MAJORITY OF THE UK's leading websites are guilty of contravening legislation that requires organisations to provide accessible online services to disabled people. This is the key finding of the Web Accessibility Study 2004 by web testing specialist SciVisum, which examined over 200 sites on basic accessibility.

The survey tested 105 leading UK organisations with a major web presence and a further 111 companies that claimed to be compliant with industry guidelines. Overall, 79 per cent of the leading UK sites tested failed basic compliance checkpoints.

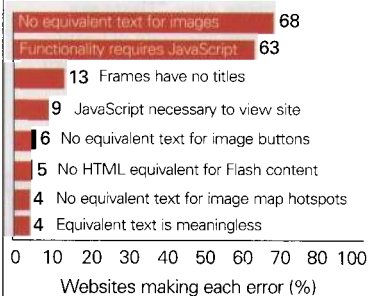
Worryingly, 100 per cent of travel and financial service websites failed what is classified as the lowest level

of compliance and high street retailers and utilities all reached failure rates of greater than 90 per cent. The best performers were local government, with 40 per cent of sites failing, closely followed by central government, banks and building societies.

### SLAMMING THE DOOR

"It's appalling that the majority of UK websites are turning their backs on supporting basic web accessibility," says Deri Jones, CEO of SciVisum. "It is not only a legal requirement and a social responsibility, but those organisations are slamming the door in the face of a highly receptive online market. There are around 1.7

MOST COMMON ACCESSIBILITY ERRORS  
SOURCE: SCIVISUM



million blind and partially-sighted people in the UK alone, plus an aging population. Over 20 per cent of elderly people shop online."

For more information, visit [www.scivisum.co.uk](http://www.scivisum.co.uk). ■