

DMA's Commitment to Consumer Choice

The DMA took an important step in 2007 to secure the future of direct marketers' ability to communicate with consumers across channels by passing the Commitment to Consumer Choice (CCC). The CCC is the promise made by the direct marketing community that consumer choice will be honored across marketing channels.

As members of the DMA, marketers are providing a public assurance that they will follow specific practices to protect consumer privacy & honor their requests. This began in 1999 when the DMA made its Privacy Promise to American Consumers, and the CCC builds on this commitment as opponents of marketing seek Do Not Mail and do not track government mandates.

Members of the DMA, as indicated through the use of the DMA member logo, are committed to protecting consumer privacy and choices pertaining to receipt of commercial mail, thereby building the trust needed for a flourishing marketplace across marketing channels. By displaying the member logo and a point of contact on their mail pieces and catalogs, DMA marketers are showing their support for consumer choice and best marketing practices, backed by the strong education and self-regulatory function of the DMA. By participating in the cross-industry online behavioral advertising program, digital marketers are helping to honor marketing choice on-line.

The CCC applies to all DMA members that market to consumers, and to nonprofit members that raise support from the public. DMA knows that consumers want a safe and secure shopping experience, control over the type and volume of offers received, control over online behavioral ads, and a demonstrated support for environmental stewardship by the marketing community. The DMA, through its CCC, pledges to consumers that its members are the most supportive of these goals and will honor their requests. Self-regulation and a strong commitment to prospective and existing customers and donors will secure the future of the marketing community.

Highlights of the Commitment to Consumer Choice

The CCC is a set of member guidelines & tools including the www.DMAchoice.org website (at no cost to the consumer) that offers consumers the ability to opt-out of mail they no longer wish to receive and opt-in to companies and organizations they wish to hear from. Companies should be listed on www.dmachoice.org so that a consumer may contact them directly. The CCC requires that DMA members provide existing and prospective customers an opportunity to modify future mail solicitations from their organization through a consumer contact point (address, email, 800 number, website), and that they use the DMAchoice suppression files monthly. The notice should contain access to an option to eliminate future commercial mailings and may also offer other preferences for the consumer.

Marketers should provide consumers a point of contact to modify or eliminate marketing offers and to obtain the company's privacy policy (which should be on your website already). It should be easy for the consumer to find, read, understand, and act upon.

A consumer's request for in-house suppression should be honored:

- Within 30 days, and
- For a period of three years from the date of receipt of request.
- An in-house suppression request from a consumer should be interpreted as meaning that the consumer also wants to opt-out of the transfer of his or her personal information.
- Where an affiliate, division, or subsidiary markets under a different company or
- Brand name, and is perceived as separate by a consumer, each corporate entity or brand should separately honor requests received by it.
- If a consumer asks, the marketer should disclose the source from which it obtained the data about the consumer.
- Marketers should have internal policies and procedures to ensure consumer choice is honored in compliance with this guideline and at no cost for the consumer.
- Members of the DMA should use the most recent monthly release of the DMAchoice file [formerly the Mail Preference Service (MPS files)] before contacting prospects.

The CCC guidelines are included as a part of the DMA's Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice. (See www.dmaresponsibility.org/guidelines.) DMA also enforces Online Behavioral Advertising choices by consumers via the DMA complaint process. Members should participate in and honor removal requests through this important industry-wide self-regulatory program for behavioral ads. To learn more go to www.aboutads.info

Commitment to Consumer Choice

Compliance Program

The DMA:

- Gives members examples of practices and member compliance materials.
- Monitors and enforces DMA member compliance through its self-regulatory program & will refer non-compliant members and non-members to the appropriate authorities.

Applicants to the DMA:

- The DMA screens compliance of incoming members on its DMA Guidelines.
- Asks incoming members to agree to be compliant as part of the membership process, & will contact them if a consumer complaint is received.

To file a complaint, go to www.dmaresponsibility.org for the complaint form or email ethics@the-dma.org.

Direct Marketing Association, Inc.

Headquarters:
1120 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036-6700
212.768.7277
Fax: 212.302.6714
www.the-dma.org

For More Information about the DMA's CCC
and the DMA Corporate & Social Responsibility
(CSR) Department:

Direct Marketing Association, Inc.
1615 L Street, NW
Suite 1100

Washington, DC 20036-5624
202.955.5030 (phone) 202.955.0085 (fax)
Email: Consumer@the-dma.org,
or ethics@the-dma.org



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