

Announcing DMA's New **COMMITMENT TO CONSUMER CHOICE**

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Announcing DMA's New COMMITMENT TO CONSUMER CHOICE

This year, DMA's Board of Directors took an important step toward securing the future of direct marketers' ability to communicate with consumers. The step taken, passage of the new **Commitment to Consumer Choice (CCC)**, enhances opportunities for the marketing community to respond to today's consumers. The **Commitment to Consumer Choice's** foundation is DMA's long-time public assurance that all members of DMA will follow specific practices to protect consumer privacy. This began in 1999 with the *Privacy Promise to American Consumers* and is being built upon today. The new **CCC** requirements apply to all DMA members that market to consumers. Suppliers and other businesses that provide services to consumer marketers should understand the new requirements so that they can implement them on behalf of DMA member clients.

The new program supports DMA's strong desire to empower consumers and build consumer trust. Consumers have strongly expressed their desire for choice over the types and volume of mail they receive. Today's consumers want safe and secure shopping experiences and for the many consumers who are environmentally conscious, the **CCC** gives them the ability to put their beliefs into action.

DMA's **Commitment to Consumer Choice** also reflects the strong belief within the marketing community that the evolving needs of consumers must be met to be successful in today's market. DMA believes the direct marketing community must be at the forefront of addressing consumer needs. Effective self-regulatory actions will directly respond to the advocates and regulators who otherwise would respond with their own initiatives.

Commitment to Consumer Choice requirements and implementation plan are being publicly announced at DMA07 in Chicago, IL.

Highlights of the Commitment to Consumer Choice

The CCC requires DMA members to provide existing and prospective customers and donors with notice of an opportunity to modify future mail solicitations from their organization in *every commercial solicitation*. The notice should contain access to an option to eliminate future commercial mailings, and may also offer additional modification options. The CCC also requires consumer marketers to use DMA's Mail Preference Service name-removal file *every month*. In addition, DMA will offer an optional year-round monitoring program for its members.

Details of the New Commitment to Consumer Choice are as follows:

A marketer should provide existing and prospective customers and donors with notice of an opportunity to eliminate or modify direct mail solicitations from their organization.

The notice should:

- appear in every marketing offer and
- 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 at least 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 wants to eliminate the transfer or rental of his or her personal information to other marketers.

Where affiliates, divisions, or subsidiaries market under different company or brand names, and are perceived as separate by the consumer, each corporate entity or brand should honor its own received requests.

Upon request by a consumer, a marketer should disclose the source from which it obtained personally identifiable data about that consumer.

A marketer should establish internal policies and practices in support of the CCC.

A member should use the most recent *monthly* release of the MPS file before contacting prospects.

The CCC's requirements are in addition to other guidelines for all media that are included in DMA's Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice.

(See www.DMAresponsibility.org/guidelines.)

Commitment to Consumer Choice Compliance Program Overview

DMA will:

- provide all members with an orientation on the CCC
- provide members with an instructional Web-based training video on the details of the CCC
- give its members examples of practices that meet and exceed the guidelines
- monitor and enforce DMA member compliance

Applicants to DMA Membership will:

- view the Web-based CCC training video
- certify completion of Web-based training by taking a simple online test within three months of their admission to DMA
- agree to the CCC as part of the membership process

Existing DMA Members will:

- view the Web-based CCC training video
- certify completion of Web-based training by taking a simple online test within three months of their DMA membership renewal date
- agree to CCC as part of the membership process

JOIN THE **Direct Marketing Association!** BE A **DMA Trusted Marketer.**

