



DMA Member Starter Kit **Ethics & Self-Regulatory**

Background: DMA has, for decades, been a leader in establishing comprehensive self-regulatory guidelines for its members on all facets of direct marketing. In our experience, self-regulatory guidelines are the most effective way to address ongoing changes in technology, changes in markets, and new business practices. They provide members with generally accepted principles of conduct, prevent unnecessary regulation, and are flexible and adaptable.

As a member, you can easily be an active participant in our self-regulation by taking these steps immediately:

- Review the DMA member ethics guidelines;
- Have a strong consumer preference system in place;
- Review and report on bad actors to the DMA by reviewing marketing offers and practices and submitting a complaint;
- Stay updated by reviewing the DMA's Compliance resources pages, periodic updates in 3D and important updates from our Washington Office in Direct from Washington.

Here is an overview:

- Our goal is to keep data-driven direct channels open, safe and productive for business and consumers, helping the DMA to advance and protect responsible data-driven marketing.
- DMA and its member companies have long recognized that promoting best practices through effective self-regulation enhances consumer trust and confidence. Addressing potential concerns about emerging practices and curbing potential abuses through self-regulation is the best approach to ensuring that direct marketing (in all media) can continue to thrive. Our members understand that their success on the Internet is dependent on consumers' confidence in the online medium, and members support efforts that enrich a user's experience while fostering consumer trust in online channels.
- DMA's *Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice* (www.thedma.org/compliance/Guidelines) are used by the association's Committee on Ethical Business Practice as the standard to which direct marketing promotions and practices are compared. Please review and read them at your earliest convenience and share them with your colleagues and partners.
- Because dishonest, misleading or offensive communications discredit all means of advertising and marketing, including direct marketing, observance of these guidelines by all concerned is expected. All persons involved in direct marketing should take reasonable steps to encourage other members of the direct marketing community to follow the guidelines as well. You should report issues of non-compliance to ethics@the-dma.org. An actual example of the offer is most helpful so that we can pursue the particular company. Our complaint form is located on www.thedma.org/compliance.



- *Member principles* that represent the underlying framework for the *Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice* and provide a general statement to the public of the expectations they can have when dealing with DMA members:

Member Principles: A DMA Member...

1. Is committed to customer satisfaction, good corporate citizenship, and responsible environmental, community and financial stewardship.
2. Clearly, honestly, and accurately represents its products, services, terms and conditions
3. Delivers its products and services as represented
4. Communicates in a respectful and courteous manner
5. Responds to inquiries and complaints in a constructive, timely way
6. Maintains appropriate security policies and practices to safeguard information
7. Provides information on its policies about the transfer of personally identifiable information for marketing purposes
8. Honors requests not to have personally identifiable information transferred for marketing purposes
9. Honors requests not to receive future solicitations from its organization
10. Follows the spirit and letter of the law as well as DMA's *Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice*

Self-regulatory guidelines cover all relevant areas of advertising and marketing, including:

- Terms of the Offer
- Advance Consent Marketing
- Data Security
- Marketing to Children
- Sweepstakes
- Collection, Use and Maintenance of Marketing Data
- Mail
- Online & Digital Marketing
- Social Media Platforms & Apps
- Privacy
- DMA's International Safe Harbor for those contacting EU and Switzerland
- Telephone, Text & Mobile Marketing... and more!

DMA's self-regulatory programs address consumer concern about:

- Advertising overload
- Marketing preferences
- Privacy/security/ID theft
- Deceptive practices and fraud
- Environmental concerns



- Data stewardship and much more...

We also ensure that we enforce our Guidelines through the DMA's peer-review Committee on Ethical Business Practice/Ethics Operating:

- Reviews promotions and practices that may violate our self-regulatory ethics guidelines
- Promotions and practices come to our attention via other industry members, consumers, consumer groups, staff monitoring
- Works with companies toward correcting or stopping questionable practices
- Cooperation is voluntary, but most companies work with the Committee
- If there is no cooperation and the company is a member, the Committee refers to the DMA Board of Directors for censure, suspension, or expulsion
- If there is no cooperation, and the company is not a member, Committee may refer case to law enforcement (and there is publicity) See the list at www.thedma.org/compliance
- The DMA educates members and the public about marketing practices and companies not in compliance with DMA requirements. Its Report on Ethics Committee Findings is distributed annually.

DMA's Consumer Choice Help:

DMA believes consumers should be able to reduce unwanted marketing offers and assists consumers on a daily basis with their opt-out choices. The DMA works with thousands of consumers each year and supports its members with tools to help them offer choices and honor consumer preferences.

- **DMA members are asked to keep an** in-house suppression process/preference center and also use or ensure your list providers use the DMAchoice suppression file to remove the names of those who no longer wish to receive marketing offers nationally. This includes deceased and caretaker files. To learn how to subscribe to the monthly files, please go to <http://thedma.org/wp-content/uploads/DMA-Consumer-Choice-Suppression-Services-2014.pdf>
- DMA offers marketing choices to consumers concerned about mailed offers through its mail preference tool, www.dmachoice.org. For consumers who do not have access to the Internet, they can register by sending their name and address (with signature), along with a \$1 processing fee (check or money order payable to DMA) to:

DMAchoice
Direct Marketing Association
P.O. Box 643
Carmel, NY 10512

- For digital ads, consumers seeking choices about the behaviorally targeted ads they see when they go online may opt-out by going to www.youradchoices.com. DMA members who are using online behavioral advertising should ensure they sign up for the DAA icon program at [this site](#).



- The DMA also has a strong environmental sustainability program to ensure marketers are aware of issues impacting the environment and demonstrating environmental stewardship. The DMA asks its members to use the Recycle Please logo on their mail pieces to let consumers know that mail can be recycled once the consumer has read the mailing.

Resources:

To learn more visit our [Compliance and Ethical Marketing](#) website pages.

Email your questions or submit a complaint to ethics@the-dma.org