# The DMA Green15 Best Practices

*Best practices for more sustainable data-driven*

*direct marketing*

As a DMA member, your organization should adhere to DMA Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice. Part of our commitment to corporate responsibility incorporates environmental considerations that apply worldwide. The "Green15" is a checklist of best practices attuned to current data-driven direct marketing science and environmental issues. The DMA commits to public green goals to reduce environmental and social impacts associated with marketing through awareness and a widespread adoption of the "Green15."

There are a range of measurable environmental impacts associated with both digital and offline direct marketing activities.

The use of certified paper, renewable energy, and consumer messaging to encourage recycling are well-established best practices that address tangible environmental issues associated with print communications. Today, the rise of data-driven and digital communication requires marketers to address less visible environmental impacts. Toxic "e-waste" impacts people and the environment as a result of improper disposal of electronics. Air pollution, including elevated greenhouse gas emissions, is an environmental and economic consequence of the growing demand for fossil energy to power digital devices and data centers.

Through targeted action in each area of the Green 15, DMA members will help to minimize environmental impacts of both print and digital communications while benefiting from cost savings and brand enhancement.

## Taking Action

We ask your organization to establish cross-functional "green teams" consisting of procurement, data, IT, design, marketing, production, finances and operations staff. Effective green teams create value by engaging leaders in your organization and across your client and supplier networks.

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### DMA Green15 Overview:

**Resource Procurement**

1. Develop a policy that ensures legal and ethical paper sourcing
2. Require suppliers to increase environmental protection by expanding certification programs
3. Identify additional environmentally preferable attributes for paper you buy: reduced weights, recycled, etc.
4. Conduct energy audits of facilities and offices to reduce costs
5. Make renewable energy choices for offices, production and data centers

**List Hygiene & Data**

6. Comply with all DMA requirements for list management
7. Maintain "clean" mailing lists
8. Apply predictive models and RFM analytics to improve targeting

**Design & Production**

9. Test into new designs that reduce size and wasted materials
10. Use links instead of attachments when sending files or content
11. Ensure that all labeling is clear, honest and complete

**Packaging**

12. Work with suppliers to develop environmentally preferable packaging solutions

**Recycling & Pollution Reduction**

13. Purchase supplies and materials made with post-consumer recycled content where possible
14. Participate in the DMA RecyclePlease campaign to help increase direct mail recycling rates
15. Implement processes to responsibly recycle electronic devices throughout your organization

This will help us to establish realistic goals for measuring future industry progress overall and will help you quantify and grow the bottom line benefits of a more environmentally sustainable organization.

In addition to the Green15 guidelines, DMA has established added environmental resources available to your organization.

For more information, visit:

**www.recycleplease.org**

DMA members should create benchmarks to measure organizational performance on the following concerns, specific to the direct marketing discipline:

## Resource Procurement

Paper is both a renewable resource and an important part of the direct marketing process. Making environmentally conscious paper choices can contribute greatly toward reducing your overall environmental footprint. Additionally, your organization must become aware of the energy procurement decisions that power your operations and marketing campaigns, both print and digital in nature.

**Your Green 15 requirements:**

1. Develop a paper procurement policy for your organization to source only paper that is produced legally and ethically. Your policy should incorporate principles that are critical for sustainable print marketing:

- Ask your paper suppliers where your paper comes from before buying it with the intent of not sourcing paper from unsustainable or illegally managed forests.

- Only purchase paper that is certified by a recognized sustainable forestry program and/or from sources that are known to you and your suppliers.

- Require your paper suppliers to document that they do not produce or sell paper from illegally harvested or stolen wood.

2. Require your paper suppliers to expand their commitment to sustainable forestry practices that protect forest ecosystems and biodiversity as well as provide the wood and paper products that meet industry needs. Encourage suppliers to increase fiber and wood purchases from recognized forest certification programs as a verifiable way of accomplishing these objectives. Recognized forest certification programs include the Forest Stewardship Council, the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification, and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

3. Identify opportunities to improve environmental qualities of the paper you use for marketing pieces, product packaging and internal consumption. Examples: decreasing paper weights, duplex printing, and using recycled content where appropriate.

4. Conduct energy audits at offices and production facilities to identify cost saving opportunities. Bringing in a reputable firm or nonprofit to conduct a Level-I or Level-II energy audit ensures your organization receives objective recommendations, financing options and implementation steps that reduce costs over time.

5. Take control of your organization's energy procurement activities to promote a transition to renewable energy sources (energy that is not produced by burning fossil fuels), including geothermal heating, solar power, wind power, and biomass. For outsourced activities, such as data center operations and print production, leverage supplier relationships and third party reports to determine the source of the energy that powers your marketing activities.

## List Hygiene & Data Management

A "clean" list means less returned or undeliverable mail, less wasted paper, less energy consumed and higher response rates – a win for the environment and for your bottom line.

Your Green 15 requirements:

6. Comply with DMA Guidelines for list management, including:

- Maintaining in-house suppression/"do-not-market" lists for prospects who do not wish to receive future solicitations from you. Give existing customers alternatives to the method of delivery.

- Using the Mail Preference Service (MPS) monthly for your consumer prospect mail.

- Providing existing and prospective customers with a notice of an opportunity to modify or eliminate direct mail or email solicitations from your organization and provide a clear point of contact (phone, email website) to make their choices.

7. Maintain "clean" mailing lists by using USPS or commercial equivalent files where applicable for: ZIP Code correction; address standardization; change of address, address element correction, delivery sequence file and/or address correction requested.

8. Apply predictive models and/or Recency-Frequency-Monetary (RFM) segmentation where appropriate.

## Design & Production

It's not just the paper, energy and other materials you use, it's how you use them. Simple design changes to mail and electronic communications can reduce environmental impact – and often result in cost savings as well.

Your Green 15 requirements:

9. Review your direct mail and printed marketing pieces and test downsized pieces when and where appropriate. Test and use production methods that reduce print order overruns, waste allowances and in-process waste.

10. Use links instead of attachments when sending internal and external electronic communications. Optimizing the file size of images and digital content minimizes Internet bandwidth and storage requirements, thereby reducing hardware and service costs, delivery times, energy consumption, and pollution.

11. Ensure that all environmental labeling is clear, honest and complete:

- Eliminate unsubstantiated claims including "eco-friendly", "go green, go paperless", and similar environmental generalizations from your marketing communications. Refer to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) "Green Guides" summary for guidelines that will help your organization avoid legal consequences that damage your brand.

- Educate your clients and design teams on the DMA RecyclePlease logo program – an initiative to help increase consumer recycling rates for print and direct mail marketing by increasing awareness.

# Packaging

No matter what marketing channels your organization uses for direct sales, how you package and ship customer orders and other fulfillment commitments is an important environmental consideration.

Your Green 15 requirements:

12. Investigate environmentally preferable packaging solutions, including:

- Encourage packaging suppliers to submit innovative solutions as alternatives when quoting prices on approved or existing specifications.

- Help consumers and downstream recyclers understand the recyclability of your product packaging by clearly labeling materials with standard recycling codes – especially plastics. Mark mixed material packaging with the How2Recyle logo.

# Recycling & Pollution Reduction

Beyond your organization's marketing operations, there are steps you can take to reduce your environmental impact while encouraging your customers and suppliers to do the same.

Your Green 15 requirements:

13. Purchase office papers, packing and packaging materials made from recycled and recyclable materials with post-consumer content where appropriate.

14. Participate in DMA's "Recycle Please" campaign and/or in another recycling campaign. Demonstrate that your organization has programs in place to encourage recycling in the workplace community.

15. Immediately implement best practices for responsible disposal of all electronic equipment when devices reach the end of their useful life.

- Electronic devices must not be allowed to enter your city's regular waste stream. Devices include PCs, mobile phones, peripherals and wiring, monitors, servers, rechargeable batteries, and fluorescent light bulbs.

- Refer to Earth911.com or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency websites to locate nearby retailers and drop-off locations that accept electronic waste (e-waste). Larger organizations should make arrangements with a third party e-waste recycler that adheres to the E-Stewards Certification standards. This ensures your obsolete devices are recycled responsibly. Confidential data is destroyed, toxic materials are kept out of the environment, and people around the world are protected from the health impacts resulting from improper or illegal processing of e-waste.

## Links to Helpful Resources:

### General Advice

Contact the DMA's Committee on the Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility – a group of peers in marketing organizations who have the expertise to help your organization implement the Green 15, share case studies or discuss how to get started. Email: customer@the-dma.org.

DMA Environment Website – comprehensive sustainability resources for direct marketers
www.the-dma.org/environment

Create "Green Teams" to implement the Green 15 guidelines and drive sustainable change throughout your organization. For advice, contact the DMA sustainability committee or refer to these examples:

> http://sustainabilityatworkpdx.com/downloads/GreenTeamGuide_2012.pdf

> http://www.energystar.gov/ia/business/guidelines/continuous_improvement/Teaming_Up_To_Save_Energy.pdf?7301-37e6

> http://www.greenbiz.com/sites/default/files/GreenBizReports-GreenTeams-final.pdf

### Resource Procurement

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – locate printers, IT providers and other vendors who participate in the EPA's "Green Power Partnership" by powering their operations with energy from non-fossil fuel sources. EPA Green Power Partners directory: http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/partners/index.htm

Data center pollution report – It is critical to understand the source of the energy behind your organization's digital communications activities. To learn what to look for, view the environmental statistics and rankings for major data center and cloud computing providers. "How Clean is Your Cloud?" reports: http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/publications/Campaign-reports/Climate-Reports/How-Clean-is-Your-Cloud/

### List Hygiene and Data Management

Mail preference resources from DMA for both marketers and consumers, ensure you are –
www.dmachoice.org

**Design & Production**

U.S. Federal Trade Commission "Green Guides" – understand your legal requirements for making qualified environmental claims regarding products and services. Avoid "greenwashing" and prevent legal and reputational risk. Understand how to properly use standard recycling codes when labeling product and packaging materials.

> Download a summary of the "Green Guides (Less technical)
> http://business.ftc.gov/documents/environmental-claims-summary-green-guides

> Download the full "Green Guides" (Very technical) http://www.ftc.gov/os/2012/10/greenguides.pdf

> FTC "Environmental Marketing" resources for businesses http://business.ftc.gov/advertising-and-marketing/environmental-marketing

> FTC Consumer-friendly information: http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0013-going-green

**Recycling & Pollution Reduction**

DMA Recycle Please campaign – join peer organizations to help consumers increase recycling rates of direct mail and print marketing materials. Use of the logo is FREE for DMA members. www.recycleplease.org

How2Recycle – this logo program is appropriate for products and packaging containing mixed materials (not just paper). http://www.how2recycle.info/

Electronic waste (e-waste) recycling – E-waste is detrimental to the health of people and the environment if not disposed of responsibly. Find retail and municipal drop-off locations that accept used electronic devices:

> Municipal & retail e-waste recycling search tool – http://search.earth911.com/

> The U.S. EPA offers information on several enterprise solutions for e-waste recycling – http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/materials/ecycling/index.htm

> Locate enterprise recycling partners that adhere to E-Stewards Certification standards – http://e-stewards.org/find-a-recycler/