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# DMA's COMMITMENT TO CONSUMER CHOICE



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Relevance. Responsibility. Results.

# DMA's Commitment to Consumer Choice

The leadership of the DMA through its Board of Directors 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. As members of the DMA, marketers are providing a public assurance that they will follow specific practices to protect consumer privacy. This began in 1999 when the DMA made its *Privacy Promise to American Consumers*, and the **CCC** builds on the foundation of this commitment.

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 and support needed for a flourishing marketplace across marketing channels. By displaying the member logo and **CCC** notice language 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.

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, and a demonstrated support for environmental stewardship by the marketing community. The DMA, through its **CCC**, pledges to consumers that its members are supportive of these goals and will honor their requests.

DMA's **Commitment to Consumer Choice** reflects the strong belief by the membership of the DMA that the evolving needs of the consumer must be met to be successful now and for the future marketplace. By matching this **CCC** with a strong self-regulatory program to ensure member compliance (as well as review of non-member practices as warranted), the DMA is directly responding to the advocates and regulators who otherwise would respond with their own initiatives. 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 and also provides members with tools including the DMAchoice™ website 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. The CCC requires that DMA members provide existing and prospective customers with notice of an opportunity to modify future mail solicitations from their organization in each commercial solicitation, 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.

## Details of the 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
- 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) file] before contacting prospects.

The CCC guidelines are included as a part of the DMA's Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice. (See [www.dmareponsibility.org/guidelines](http://www.dmareponsibility.org/guidelines).)

## Commitment to Consumer Choice Compliance Program

### DMA:

- Provides members with CCC orientation materials and education
- Includes video and web-based training
- Gives members examples of practices and member compliance materials
- Monitors and enforces DMA member compliance through its self-regulatory program

### Applicants to the DMA:

- The DMA screens compliance of incoming members on the CCC and its guidelines; and
- Asks incoming members to agree to the CCC as part of the membership process, and will contact them if a consumer complaint is received.

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