

DMA Advice for Protecting the Environment & Your Bottom Line

– Communicate, Communicate & Communicate –

As the market for “environmentally friendly” products and services continues to grow, direct marketers should assess how they communicate their environmental messages. It’s not just a social or governmental concern. It’s also a business concern, a scientific matter and an element in marketing position and strategy.

Successful marketing communications depend on finding and implementing the aspects of an environmental message that make sense and resonate with your vendors, shareholders and investors, consumers, and government.

This fact sheet discusses the steps you can take to communicate your environmental message – research, know your audience, and know your message.

Step 1: Research -- Before communicating your environmental message you should:

- ❑ Research other companies’ efforts.
 - ❑ Review case studies and continue to learn about environmental best practices throughout the industry.
- ❑ Explore partnerships.
 - ❑ Seek avenues for partnering with environmental groups, other companies or local citizen groups to help “green” your marketing efforts, and make positive environmental contributions to your local community.
- ❑ Ensure that your environmental claims are accurate and authorized.
 - ❑ Research labeling terminology and usage.
 - ❑ Verify proper use of recycling logos/terms before placing on products or communications by utilizing the resources of the Federal Trade Commission, state laws, legal counsel, vendor data, etc.
 - ❑ For instance, see <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/gmrule/guides980427.htm> for the *FTC’s Guide for Environmental Marketing Claims*.

Step 2: Know Your Audience -- You should understand who your audience is and develop messaging that resonates with all publics, which includes:

- Employees;
- Customers, prospects, clients;
- Vendors;
- Shareholders and investors;
- Community such as nonprofit groups/service organizations, op-eds;
- Government

Step 3: Know Your Message, Be Consistent, Honest & Proactive -- Sample ideas for environmental messages are:

- Encourage customers to reuse, return or recycle materials.

- Advise your customers about what is or is not recyclable and, if available, where to recycle materials.
- Consider providing a toll-free number for customer suggestions.
- Include information in your catalog or on a package insert about your recycling and environmental efforts.
- Support DMA's "Recycle Please" campaign to encourage consumers to recycle and direct consumers to www.recycleplease.org for recycling information and resources in their local communities.

For more information, please visit:

- www.recycleplease.org – for an overview of DMA's "Recycle Please" campaign and details on how DMA members can participate.
- www.the-dma.org/environment – for the complete DMA Environmental Resource for Direct Marketers.
- www.the-dma.org/government – to access DMA's legislative resources. In addition, The DMA sponsors an annual Government Affairs Conference in Washington, DC which gives marketers an opportunity to be briefed on the issues and meet with their elected officials.
- www.bsr.org – to access the Business for Social Responsibility's community outreach resources.
- <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/grnrule/guides980427.htm> – for the *FTC's Guide for Environmental Marketing Claims*.