

Word of Mouth Ethics Checklist

When you're planning a word of mouth campaign, ask yourself the following questions. If you get even the slightest feeling that something isn't 100 percent ethical about a campaign — don't do it! There is no gray area with ethics.



- No Stealth:** We forbid all forms of shill, stealth, and undercover marketing.
- No Deception:** We forbid the use of deceptive practices intended to mislead the public about the source of a marketing message or to disguise marketing as consumer opinion or editorial.
- True Identity:** Everyone working on our behalf uses their true identity or a clearly identifiable corporate identity. We forbid blurring or obscuring of identity in any way.
- Full Disclosure:** We insist that our advocates, employees, and affiliates always disclose their relationship with us, including all forms of compensation, incentives, or samples.
- Authenticity:** We insist that all consumers and advocates are free to express their honest and authentic opinion, including negative feedback, without manipulation or falsification.
- True Reviews:** We do not request or accept untrue positive reviews or reviews by people who have not used the product.
- Honesty:** All information provided to advocates is accurate and honest. We insist that our advocates are truthful with their followers.
- No Paid Word of Mouth:** We do not use any form of cash compensation for social media or word of mouth exposure.
- No Spam:** We will not insert our marketing messages without permission through off-topic comments, seeding, spamming, bulk posting, or other invasive techniques.
- No Cheating:** We never act contrary to the specific rules, terms and conditions, or community guidelines set by each website or venue.
- Legal:** We comply with all laws and regulations related to disclosure, advertising, social media, and word of mouth marketing. We do not engage in any practices that violate the letter or spirit of the FTC regulations on disclosure, the WOMMA Ethics Code, or SocialMedia.org's Disclosure Best Practices.
- Follow-up:** We monitor word of mouth generated by our campaigns and proactively attempt to correct misstatements, deception, or missing disclosures.
- Training:** We actively instruct our advocates and employees on these ethical practices. We require our vendors and subcontractors to meet or exceed these standards.