

Direct Marketing Association Releases New Guidelines for Endorsements and Testimonials

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This week, the Direct Marketing Association announced new changes to their [Guidelines for Ethical Business Practice](#) for endorsements and testimonials.

Among other things, the new Guidelines require marketers to do the following: (a) clearly and conspicuously disclose the generally expected results of an advertised product or service, if the results described in a testimonial are not typical; (b) disclose any material connections between marketers and their endorsers that a consumer would not expect; and (c) ensure that celebrity endorsers disclose their relationships with marketers when making endorsements outside the context of traditional ads. The DMA also clarified that the Guidelines apply not only to traditional of marketing, but also to marketing in social media, such as blogs and word-of-mouth marketing campaigns.

These amendments bring Guidelines into alignment with the Federal Trade Commission's latest [Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising](#). As we explained in a [post last month](#), the FTC's new Guides pose various challenges for many companies, particularly in the context of social media. Click here for an [article](#) (starting on page 19) that provides some tips for dealing with these challenges.