



**[BILLING CODE: 6750-01S]**

**FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION**

**[File No. 132 3084]**

**Network Solutions, LLC; Analysis of Proposed Consent Order to Aid Public Comment**

**AGENCY:** Federal Trade Commission.

**ACTION:** Proposed Consent Agreement.

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**SUMMARY:** The consent agreement in this matter settles alleged violations of federal law prohibiting unfair or deceptive acts or practices. The attached Analysis to Aid Public Comment describes both the allegations in the draft complaint and the terms of the consent order -- embodied in the consent agreement -- that would settle these allegations.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before May 7, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested parties may file a comment at

<https://ftcpublic.commentworks.com/ftc/networksolutionsconsent>

online or on paper, by following the instructions in the Request for Comment part of the

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below. Write “Network Solutions, LLC - Consent Agreement; File No. 132 3084” on your comment and file your comment online at

<https://ftcpublic.commentworks.com/ftc/networksolutionsconsent> by following the instructions

on the web-based form. If you prefer to file your comment on paper, write “Network Solutions, LLC - Consent Agreement; File No. 132 3084” on your comment and on the envelope, and mail

your comment to the following address: Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Secretary, 600

Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite CC-5610 (Annex D), Washington, DC 20580, or deliver your

comment to the following address: Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Secretary, Constitution Center, 400 7th Street, SW, 5th Floor, Suite 5610 (Annex D), Washington, DC 20024.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** James Evans, Bureau of Consumer Protection, (202) 326-2026, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to Section 6(f) of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. 46(f), and FTC Rule 2.34, 16 CFR § 2.34, notice is hereby given that the above-captioned consent agreement containing consent order to cease and desist, having been filed with and accepted, subject to final approval, by the Commission, has been placed on the public record for a period of thirty (30) days. The following Analysis to Aid Public Comment describes the terms of the consent agreement, and the allegations in the complaint. An electronic copy of the full text of the consent agreement package can be obtained from the FTC Home Page (for April 7, 2015), on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.ftc.gov/os/actions.shtm>.

You can file a comment online or on paper. For the Commission to consider your comment, we must receive it on or before May 7, 2015. Write “Network Solutions, LLC - Consent Agreement; File No. 132 3084” on your comment. Your comment - including your name and your state - will be placed on the public record of this proceeding, including, to the extent practicable, on the public Commission Website, at <http://www.ftc.gov/os/publiccomments.shtm>. As a matter of discretion, the Commission tries to remove individuals’ home contact information from comments before placing them on the Commission Website.

Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for making sure that your comment does not include any sensitive personal information, like anyone’s Social Security number, date of birth, driver’s license number or other state identification number or

foreign country equivalent, passport number, financial account number, or credit or debit card number. You are also solely responsible for making sure that your comment does not include any sensitive health information, like medical records or other individually identifiable health information. In addition, do not include any “[t]rade secret or any commercial or financial information which . . . is privileged or confidential,” as discussed in Section 6(f) of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 46(f), and FTC Rule 4.10(a)(2), 16 CFR § 4.10(a)(2). In particular, do not include competitively sensitive information such as costs, sales statistics, inventories, formulas, patterns, devices, manufacturing processes, or customer names.

If you want the Commission to give your comment confidential treatment, you must file it in paper form, with a request for confidential treatment, and you have to follow the procedure explained in FTC Rule 4.9(c), 16 CFR § 4.9(c).<sup>1</sup> Your comment will be kept confidential only if the FTC General Counsel, in his or her sole discretion, grants your request in accordance with the law and the public interest.

Postal mail addressed to the Commission is subject to delay due to heightened security screening. As a result, we encourage you to submit your comments online. To make sure that the Commission considers your online comment, you must file it at <https://ftcpublic.commentworks.com/ftc/networksolutionsconsent> by following the instructions on the web-based form. If this Notice appears at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!/home>, you also may file a comment through that website.

If you file your comment on paper, write “Network Solutions, LLC - Consent Agreement; File No. 132 3084” on your comment and on the envelope, and mail your comment to the following address: Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Secretary, 600 Pennsylvania

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<sup>1</sup> In particular, the written request for confidential treatment that accompanies the comment must include the factual and legal basis for the request, and must identify the specific portions of the comment to be withheld from the public record. *See* FTC Rule 4.9(c), 16 CFR § 4.9(c).

Avenue, NW, Suite CC-5610 (Annex D), Washington, DC 20580, or deliver your comment to the following address: Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Secretary, Constitution Center, 400 7th Street, SW, 5th Floor, Suite 5610 (Annex D), Washington, DC 20024. If possible, submit your paper comment to the Commission by courier or overnight service.

Visit the Commission Website at <http://www.ftc.gov> to read this Notice and the news release describing it. The FTC Act and other laws that the Commission administers permit the collection of public comments to consider and use in this proceeding as appropriate. The Commission will consider all timely and responsive public comments that it receives on or before May 7, 2015. You can find more information, including routine uses permitted by the Privacy Act, in the Commission's privacy policy, at <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/privacy.htm>.

#### **Analysis of Proposed Consent Order to Aid Public Comment**

The Federal Trade Commission ("Commission") has accepted, subject to final approval, an agreement containing a consent order from Network Solutions, LLC ("Network Solutions"). The Commission has placed the proposed Order on the public record for thirty days for receipt of comments by interested persons. Comments received during this period will become part of the public record. After thirty days, the Commission will again review the agreement and the comments received, and will decide whether it should withdraw from the agreement and take appropriate action or make final the agreement's proposed Order.

Network Solutions advertises and sells web hosting services. The company's web hosting services allow customers to make webpages available on the internet by storing their webpage information, including programming code, images, and videos, on web servers owned or leased by Network Solutions, and by providing the technology and internet connectivity required to serve the webpages on the internet. Network Solutions has sold its web hosting services subject to a thirty-day money back guarantee. It has advertised that guarantee on its website.

The Commission’s proposed Complaint alleges that Network Solutions failed to disclose adequately that its web hosting thirty-day money back guarantee could be subject to a cancellation fee. This cancellation fee was sometimes a substantial portion of the purchase price. Network Solutions did not disclose the cancellation fee on its webpages advertising the guarantee. Instead, at the bottom of those webpages, Network Solutions included a hyperlink to “Terms and Conditions” for the guarantee. This link often appeared in smaller print than the rest of the webpage and sometimes also appeared in blue text against a black background. The link opened a pop-up window that disclosed the existence of the cancellation fee. The Commission’s proposed Complaint alleges that, coupled with the triggering representation that it offers a thirty-day money back guarantee, Network Solutions’ failure to disclose adequately the cancellation fee is a deceptive act or practice under Section 5 of the FTC Act.

The proposed Order contains provisions designed to prevent Network Solutions from engaging in the same or similar acts or practices in the future. Section I of the proposed Order requires Network Solutions to clearly and conspicuously disclose the material terms of any money back guarantees applicable to web hosting services, including the existence and amount of any fee applicable to money-back guarantees. It also requires Network Solutions to refund the full purchase price of web hosting sold under a money back guarantee, in response to a request that complies with the terms of that guarantee, unless any applicable fees are disclosed clearly and conspicuously. Section II of the proposed Order broadly prohibits misrepresentations with regard to refund or cancellation policies or any other material fact concerning the web hosting services that Network Solutions offers or sells. Sections III through VI of the proposed Order are standard reporting and compliance provisions that allow the Commission to better monitor Network Solutions’ ongoing compliance with the Order. Under Section VII, the Order will expire in twenty years, with certain exceptions.

The purpose of this analysis is to aid public comment on the proposed Order. It is not intended to constitute an official interpretation of the Complaint or proposed Order, or to modify in any way the proposed Order's terms.

By direction of the Commission.

Donald S. Clark,  
Secretary.

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