

From: [REDACTED]@nw-marketing.co.uk>
Sent: 26 February 2020 11:46
To: directmarketingcode
Subject: Direct marketing consultation - comments

External: This email originated outside the ICO.

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am hugely disappointed by the ICOs representation of Marketing throughout the direct marketing consultation. The distinction between 'service' and 'marketing' messages in no way considers the best interest of the customer or the incredible value that Marketing can and does provide to customers.

How often do we receive 'service' messages that we deem irrelevant and 'self-serving' of the organization that sent them? I feel I get these weekly and they are usually filed in the bin without being read – which is not the intention and not in the customers interests. The new ICO consultation will effectively enforce this practice, whereby any attempt to ensure relevancy, reflect brand personality or offer the customer additional choice or guidance means that these comms become 'direct marketing'. This also completely fails to recognize the intent of the regulators themselves e.g. the FCA ask for regulatory material because they want to ensure that customers are informed and that organisations are acting to ensure best outcome for the customer. Not as a tick box exercise and certainly not the communications to be viewed as irrelevant by the customers receiving them.

As a Marketing professional and someone who truly believes in the value of Marketing to ensure organisations do the right thing by their customers and potential customers, I am so disheartened that an organisation such as the ICO would present such an outdated view of Marketing and Direct Marketing as something that attempts to 'sell at any cost' regardless of the customers interests. I feel it would be far more valuable to spend time enforcing against bad business practices and organisations who mislead, misuse customer data and in no way attempt to do the right thing by their customers rather than introduce additional regulation that effectively reinforces bad communication practice.

Yours sincerely,

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