



# WOMMA's Practical Ethics Toolkit

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## The Ethics 20 Questions Discussion Draft For Public Comment

### Press Release

#### **20 Questions for Ethics in Word of Mouth Marketing WOMMA Publishes Ethics Tool To Protect Companies and Consumers**

Chicago, 10-26-2006 -- The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) today released the WOMMA Ethics Assessment Tool, which helps marketers identify and eliminate unethical word of mouth marketing tactics before they are implemented.

Modeled on the WOMMA Ethics guidelines of honesty of relationship, opinion, and identity, this tool guides marketers through the questions they should ask before initiating a word of mouth campaign. The answers generated will quickly identify unethical actions and point out safeguards for avoiding them in the future.

"We're empowering marketers to sort out the good ideas from the bad ones," said WOMMA CEO Andy Sernovitz. "We're ending the 'don't ask/don't tell' option for stealth marketing."

For brands and agencies, one of the ongoing challenges is to ensure that all staff and contractors are aware of the ethics rules and are given the training to recognize an inappropriate program when it is proposed.

Unethical campaigns often happen when a junior executive isn't fully aware of the ethics rules, or when agencies that use unethical practices are hired without the client understanding the implications.

"This is the first item in WOMMA's Practical Ethics program to provide the tools marketers need to ensure ethics are implemented throughout their company," said Jim Nail, CMO, Cymfony, co-chair of the project. "It ensures that all personnel know what to look for."

The Ethics Assessment Tool will put powerful economic pressure toward stamping out stealth marketing by driving clients away from unethical vendors.

"We're going to make it awfully hard for a stealth marketer to get a job," Sernovitz said. "We're going to drive business to firms that stand for ethical, consumer-protecting practices."

WOMMA is calling for public comment from marketers and consumers in order to make this tool as useful and effective as possible. For more information, or to submit a comment, visit <http://www.womma.org/20questions>.

#### **About WOMMA**

WOMMA is the official trade association for the word of mouth marketing industry. Our 300 corporate members are committed to building a prosperous word of mouth marketing profession based on best practices, measurable ROI, and ethical leadership. Learn more about us at [www.womma.org](http://www.womma.org).