

DMA Field Marketing Council Best Practice Guidelines

BEST PRACTICE
CAMPAIGN PLANNING
CONSUMER SAFEGUARDS
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS
DMA COMPLIANCE
LEGISLATION
RAISING INDUSTRY STANDARDS

2nd EDITION



FIELD MARKETING
Council

CONTENTS

Foreword	3
The DMA Field Marketing Council	3
The FMC vision	3
The FMC mission	3
Best Practice Guidelines – An Introduction	4
Scope of the Best Practice Guidelines	4
Interpretation	4
Basic Principles of Field Marketing	5
Responsibilities of the field marketing company	6
Ethical and professional behavior	6
Representation of services	6
Client brief	6
Quotations	6
Other points to be agreed	7
Contracts with clients	7
Confidentiality	7
Communication	7
Value added tax	7
Employment law	7
Environmental Responsibilities	8
Inland Revenue	8
Insurance	8
Agreements with field staff	8
Field team briefing / training	8
Standards in the field	9
Visiting members of the public	9
Health and safety	9
Complaints procedure	10
Recommendations for responsibilities of the client	11
Client brief	11
Timing and deadlines	11
Quotations and payment	11
Confidentiality	11
Communication	11
Results	11
Training	11
Cancellation	11
Complaints and procedure	11
Glossary of different terms and services	12
The field marketing service status	12
Field marketing services	12
Additional services	13

FOREWORD

The DMA Field Marketing Council

The FMC was set up as part of the DMA in May 1999. The council has evolved from the Field Marketing Association (FMA), which was established in 1992, by a number of leading companies in the field marketing industry.

The Field Marketing Council (FMC) is one of 15 councils in The Direct Marketing Association (UK) Ltd (DMA).

Members of the FMC, who are all respected practitioners in the industry, have been involved in the production of Best Practice Guidelines. The intention is to set best practice in field marketing and to give useful guidance to those involved in this sector. To ensure that the industry develops in a professional and correct way, the Best Practice Guidelines will also be used as the enhanced standard for new companies entering field marketing.

The FMC vision

To achieve widespread brand owner recognition of the value and the importance of FM for the personal expression of their brands.

The FMC mission

Our mission is to ensure that FMC members operate to the highest professional standards producing the best possible project outcomes, making FMC members the automatic first choice for every client.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES AN INTRODUCTION

Best Practice Guidelines have been established to promote high standards of ethics in field marketing via self-regulatory practices intended to complement the existing frameworks of national and international law.

They are also established as an expression of the field marketing industry's recognition of its social responsibilities in respect of commercial activities and communications.

In the view of the FMC, Best Practice Guidelines establish a fair balance between the interests of all parties concerned - clients, consumers and field marketing companies. The Council considers it to be fundamental and in the interests of society as a whole that business, while observing the principles of fair competition, should be free to choose between different marketing methods.

The Best Practice Guidelines are designed primarily as an instrument for self discipline for field marketing companies, but it is also intended for use by legal or administrative bodies as a reference document within the framework of applicable laws.

These guidelines are not mandatory for DMA members, except where there is an overlap with the law or with the DMA Code of Practice. However, the extent to which a company has followed them may be considered relevant by the Direct Marketing Authority in any adjudication of a dispute under the provisions of the DMA Code of Practice.

For applicants to (and holders of) the DMA Field Marketing Best Practice Accreditation, these guidelines become mandatory standards which should be adhered to.

Scope of the Best Practice Guidelines

Best Practice Guidelines apply to all Field Marketing Council members, and it is hoped that this will in time be extended to all field marketing companies as the membership grows, and the guidelines, together with the DMA Code of Practice become the established industry standard.

The Best Practice Guidelines should be read in conjunction with other guidelines and codes that may apply to field marketing.

The FMC recommends that all members adhere to these Guidelines.

Interpretation

The Best Practice Guidelines should be applied in the spirit as well as the letter, bearing in mind the different degrees of knowledge and experience of those to whom field marketing activity is directed - client, agency and consumer.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES AN INTRODUCTION

Basic Principles of Field Marketing

- All activities should be legal, decent, honest and truthful;
- Every activity should be carried out with a due sense of social responsibility;
- No activity should not be carried out which would impair confidence in field marketing;
- All activities should conform to the principles of fair competition as generally accepted in business, in particular with regard to:
 - the terms of the offer, including price and modes of payment, and the methods and form of the contact with the consumer;
 - the methods of presentation and demonstration of the product;
 - the fulfillment of any obligation arising from the offer or any operation connected with it;
- Field marketing companies should assume responsibility towards the consumer with respect to fair sales methods, product value and product information, and should make every effort to ensure consumer satisfaction. Field marketing companies should also make a commitment to their responsibility for the field employees and workers;
- Field marketing companies should be fully briefed by the client or agency as to the characteristics of the goods and services offered, to enable them to provide the target audience with the information they are likely to need;
- Every activity should be carried out with a due sense of social responsibility, inspiring trust and confidence. The field marketing personnel should act in an ethical and professional manner, showing due sensitivity for consumers' time restrictions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD MARKETING COMPANY

Ethical and professional behavior

Members should conduct their business in an ethical and professional manner at all times and must comply with the spirit as well as the letter of the DMA Code of Practice and Field Marketing Best Practice Guidelines.

Representation of services

Members should not provide quotations for, nor attempt to undertake activities which do not fall within their areas of competence or which they are incapable of undertaking.

Members should not undertake any activity that could be regarded or described as dishonest, indecent or illegal.

Members should not advertise, publicise or present services in a deceptive or misleading manner.

Client brief

Members should recognise that many clients need assistance in preparing a clear and comprehensive brief to which the field marketing agency can respond. Members should therefore ensure that they have either received a written brief from the client or that they have confirmed in writing to the client their understanding of the brief, which contains the following:

- the objectives of the activity - what is to be achieved and why;
- the type of field marketing support required – strategic or tactical;
- the service required – selling, merchandising, demonstrating, sampling or auditing;
- the call universe – number of calls, type of outlet, nominated or random, how to be identified and by whom;
- the call frequency;
- the commencement and completion date of the activity;
- the availability of support material – samples, POS, presenters, leavebehinds;
- the format and timing of reporting required.

Having agreed the brief with the client, members should ensure that they have not only responded in sufficient detail to meet the client's needs, but that they have enhanced the brief wherever possible, using their knowledge and experience of the added value which field marketing can bring to the project.

It is the member's responsibility to ensure that the client is made aware of any aspect of the proposed activity that is unreasonable, illegal or dishonest. It is in the interests of both client and agency to clarify any possible areas of misunderstanding at the time that the brief is agreed.

Quotations

All quotations for field marketing activity should be confirmed in writing. All items of cost should be clearly identified, whether or not they are included within an hourly rate, a daily rate or a call rate.

The quotation should clearly identify:

- What costs are included.
- What costs (if any) are based on estimations and therefore may vary.
- What costs (if any) are not included.

Quotations should include the member company's Terms and Conditions of Trading.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD MARKETING COMPANY

Other points to be agreed

In addition to the points covered within the 'Client brief' and 'Quotation' sections above, the following other points should be agreed prior to contracts being signed:

- Payment terms.
- Notice periods and cancellation fees.
- Hand over at the termination of the contract (if applicable).
- Time scales and deadlines.
- Lines of communication.
- Commitment to responses. Including for example letters answered within five days; telephone messages answered within two days; faxes, emails etc as for a letter etc.
- Restrictions by exclusivity (if applicable). Including a definition of competition and need for exclusivity; a definition of the geographical areas to which exclusivity applies; a definition of the duration of exclusivity).
- Any required commitment to performance (e.g. sales volume, calls per day etc). Where a commitment exists this should be clearly stated and allow for regular reviews in case market forces dictate these to be too high or too low.

Contracts with clients

These should be agreed between both parties early in the working relationship and before work commences on a project. The contract should be clear and unambiguous.

Confidentiality

Members should be mindful of any potential client conflict that may arise; seeking at all times to act in an honorable and straightforward manner.

Members should respect and protect the confidentiality of any information that may be made available to them by clients, potential clients or other members of the FMC by ensuring that all head office and field staff operate under a written confidentiality agreement.

All members should comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Communication

Members should establish and maintain appropriate levels of communication with clients to ensure that opportunities are maximised and problems are identified and resolved to the client's satisfaction.

Reporting requirements should be agreed between client and member companies. Reporting should be accurate and prompt and designed to meet the client's defined requirements.

Members should at all times offer guidance and assistance to clients in all aspects of activity undertaken.

Value added tax

VAT is levied on all personal services provided by VAT qualifying companies at the appropriate rates. Extreme care should be exercised to ensure that VAT is not 'double charged' on bought in items, for example where VAT has already be levied.

The VAT charged by field marketing companies is reclaimable in all, but excluding the most extreme cases.

Employment law

All Field Marketing Council members must adhere to all legislation affecting permanent and temporary workers. Workers should be paid under the terms of their Letter of Engagement/Terms and Conditions.

It is the responsibility of the field marketing company to be aware of changes to all relevant legislation as it applies to employment law, and to implement its requirements.

All field marketing companies must operate their employment in line with UK and EU laws.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD MARKETING COMPANY

Environmental Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all Field Marketing companies to ensure that they have policies and procedures in place to ensure that all Field Marketing activities make adequate provision of all relevant environmental issues – such procedures should include – disposal of excess samples, shared travel arrangements (when team dynamics dictate), journey planning, making clients aware of environmental issues with the items they are producing etc

Inland Revenue

All Members must comply with the Inland Revenue as required by law and their local tax office.

All issues should be dealt with accurately and proper records should be kept for all issues including personnel. Responses to Inland Revenue related matters for personnel should be dealt with promptly.

If a Member Company is operating field marketers on a self-employed basis under Schedule D as a Revenue Approved operator, a letter from the Inland Revenue must be available stating their agreement with this.

Insurance

Members should ensure that personnel, equipment and materials are adequately insured to protect the interests of both clients and field personnel. Statutory insurance together with public liability and personal injury cover should be in place. It also is recommended that members take out professional indemnity insurance.

Agreements with field staff

Members should ensure that written statements of Terms and conditions are in place with all field staff prior to commencement of work. The written statements should comply with section 1 of the Employment Right Act 1996.

Members should ensure that field staff are advised of payment dates prior to any contracts being agreed, and that these payment dates are adhered to at all times.

A disciplinary procedure (including a grievance procedure) should be formally presented to all workers. This should be clear so that if a query arises the procedures can be easily understood.

Field team briefing / training

Members should seek to ensure that all personnel utilised to undertake field marketing on behalf of clients are fully briefed and/or trained in the defined activity prior to commencement of work. Written briefing / training documents should be supplied to clearly explain to the field worker:

- Who the client is.
- Why the activity is being undertaken.
- What their objectives / duties are.
- Timeframes of the activity.
- Who the staff member is responsible to. (I.e. who to go to in case of questions / problems).
- How results are to be fed-back / reported.
- Health & safety considerations.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD MARKETING COMPANY

Standards in the field

Members should use best endeavors to monitor the quality of performance in the field, implementing such procedures as necessary to rectify sub-standard work or client dissatisfaction.

All staff should undergo an application and active selection / interview process before being allowed to represent a client.

For each activity, members should match the field staff skills, abilities and experiences to the activity requirements in order to create the field team or book the activity. (Although geographical location and/or possession of required equipment may be taken into account, field staff should not be selected purely on these criteria alone).

Members should have a structured quality assurance procedure in place to ensure that results reported from the field are accurate and truthful, including back-checks and physical audits where appropriate.

Visiting members of the public

There are times when field marketing personnel are required to visit members of the public in their homes.

Members of the council should ensure that they show a due sense of responsibility for these staff, and for the public. This should include (though not exclusively):

- Ensuring that staff are vetted carefully to ensure that they are suitable to visit the public in their homes, and that satisfactory references are obtained and followed through very carefully;
- Ensuring that staff are supplied with a photographic Identification Badge with details of a telephone number and contact point to enable the householder to telephone a help desk to check the validity of the agent if they feel necessary;
- Ensuring that staff are working in a suitable area in a team, particularly in relation to ladies working in the evenings.
- Ensuring that visits should not be carried out after 8pm without prior arrangement with the householder.
- Ensuring that specific training is carried out for that project depending on the brief received from the client i.e. product knowledge tests or sales training. This will include clear statements being made to verify that the customer has understood what they have purchased and the commitment they have undertaken;
- Ensuring that codes of conduct are developed in conjunction with the client as guidance for the field staff when dealing with customers, and are understood and adhered to at all times.

Health and safety

Members should ensure that full attention is given to all relevant health and safety issues. As a minimum, a health and safety policy should be in place, supported by suitable risk assessments relating to all activities undertaken. Officers of the business are reminded that personal liability can arise in certain instances of neglect or poor health and safety management. The use of independent and professional advisors is recommended.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD MARKETING COMPANY

Complaints procedure

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction by a client about a particular service, transaction or activity. It does not apply to general inquiries or comments regarding the members business or activities.

Members should deal with complaints promptly and normally within five working days. If the complaint is complex or cannot reasonably be dealt with within ten working days of receipt, then it should be acknowledged. Members should keep full records of the complaint and the final outcome.

If a complaint is found to be justified, members should settle it quickly, effectively and courteously. If a complaint is not justified, this should be politely explained to the complainant. Where there is any uncertainty, the member should give the customer the benefit of the doubt.

If the complaint is still not satisfied, the member should advise them of the services provided by the Direct Marketing Authority.

Field Marketing Council members are recommended to bring this document to the attention of clients, particularly the section detailing what is expected of them.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CLIENT

Client brief

- To supply a clear brief stating the goals and objectives of the exercise;
- To inform the field marketing company in writing of any changes to plans and requirements, to ensure they can respond accordingly.

Timing and deadlines

- To give sufficient notice of requirements, so that an exercise can be correctly planned and professionally executed;
- To meet the deadlines as indicated to the client by the field marketing company.

Quotations and payment

- To agree the quotation with the field marketing company prior to commencing work, and to confirm this in writing;
- To pay the field marketing company within the time scales agreed and to pass all invoices promptly.

Confidentiality

To observe the confidentiality of the field marketing company's quotation, other work and documents and not make these available outside the client business.

Communication

- To communicate at a level that is appropriate for the work to allow the field marketing company to be able to make decisions and deal with issues promptly;
- To agree the level and the timing of any reportage prior to commencement of the work.

Results

The client should share information on the sales & marketing impact with the field marketing company, to enable both parties to enhance their future performance.

Training

To supply product knowledge as appropriate for the field marketing company to be able to have all the necessary information for any training/briefing sessions.

Cancellation

If any activity needs to be cancelled or postponed after costing and time scales have been agreed in writing, the field marketing company should receive immediate notification. The facility for a prompt meeting with the client to discuss the commitments already made by the FM company on the client's behalf should be offered so that these can be resolved.

Complaints and procedure

To register any complaints to the field marketing company promptly in writing and allow time (as stated in the Responsibility of the Field Marketing Company Complaints section) for them to investigate the issue and report back.

In the event of a complaint being referred to the Compliance Unit at the Direct Marketing Association, there is an established procedure for dealing with members who fail to comply with the DMA Codes of Practice. Where necessary, the matter will be referred to the Direct Marketing Authority, a body independent of the Association.

GLOSSARY OF DIFFERENT TERMS AND SERVICES

The field marketing service status

Strategic

Ongoing activity which is usually the subject of a rolling contract between client and the field marketing company and involves calling on the same outlets at regular specified intervals with the same basic brief. As far as is possible the same personnel are used on each phase of activity and comparative data can be collected and analysed according to client requirements.

Tactical

Short term projects that are completed within a limited time frame are considered tactical. These are also sometimes termed as blitz activities.

Field marketing services

Sales

The use of field marketing personnel as a client's sales team or to supplement the activities of their own sales function and/or to meet specific coverage or time requirements.

Ex-car sales

Field marketing personnel are supplied with product (either direct from client, via cash and carry or via a wholesaler or distributor) which is sold over the counter to the retailer for cash.

Transfer order sales

Client products are presented to the retailer and orders taken and then transferred to a wholesaler nominated by the retailer/client for processing, invoicing and delivery.

Direct sales

Field marketing personnel are used to sell direct to the public either in a traditional retail environment, in their homes (door to door) or at exhibitions/events.

Door to door sales

Field marketing personnel used to approach potential customers in their own homes (subject to stringent controls).

Data/Order Capture

With advances in technology, field marketing personnel are increasingly used to capture data or orders by electronic means (e.g. hand held computers, laptop computers, automated telephone reporting). High levels of data analysis are usually offered by most field marketing companies, depending on client requirements and budgets.

Merchandising

Involves the placement of either product or point-of-sale material, usually in a retail environment, to ensure store compliance with agreements reached between client and retailer. Implementation of planograms in branches of major multiples forms part of this area of activity.

Auditing

Field marketing personnel are used to audit products and services: presence; facings; volume; point-of-sale material; positioning; relevance.

Sampling and demonstrating

Usually takes place within a controlled retail environment and involves presentation of food, drink, equipment etc to the consumer.

Mystery Shopping

The use of field marketing personnel as 'normal' members of the public to assess sales levels, product knowledge, service levels, satisfaction etc. Generally mystery shoppers are not asked to identify themselves at the retail point but occasionally do so in order to present awards etc.

GLOSSARY OF DIFFERENT TERMS AND SERVICES

Education and training

Field marketing companies will insist on the briefing and training of field marketing personnel who will be operating on behalf of their clients. Whilst clients can expect certain basic training and experience to have been acquired by field marketing personnel, specific training in their marketplace, products etc will always be required.

Leaflet distribution

Field marketing personnel are used to undertake this activity in high streets, shopping centres, exhibition environments and can also be used for door-to-door distribution.

Experiential, road shows and events

Included in this area is event marketing, roadshows, exhibitions, brand experience, etc. where field marketing personnel are used to support the sales effort of the client within a specific environment. Promotions field marketing personnel are usually high profile extrovert individuals with high levels of sales performance.

Additional services

The above describes a range of field marketing services which may be offered by field marketing agencies. Some agencies may also offer supplementary services including:

- Handling, warehousing and distribution;
- Telesales/telemarketing;
- Coupon/competition redemption.