

Ethical Marketing Policy

As a B Corp certified company meeting the highest standards of social and environmental performance, we believe that all our marketing efforts should provide genuine value to our target audience. Our marketing focuses not only on how our services benefit our customers, but also how they benefit socially responsible and environmental causes. We believe that this is the best way to earn our customers' attention and their trust. Our marketing strategies are based on a belief that marketing should be honest and that we will not take advantage of anyone's personal data.

We commit to absolute honesty in our marketing, and we pledge to:

- Never use dishonest marketing tactics for our marketing campaigns, including:
 - False advertising: exaggerating values and benefits of our products.
 - Fake or overly doctored reviews and testimonials.
 - Inflated analytics or results when creating messaging within our advertising.
- Only use information in our marketing and communications that are representative of our overall impact and not present misleading data.
- Provide accurate descriptions of the services we provide and use appropriate language and words to reflect them.
- Take a responsible drinking approach in all our communication.

Making sure that our marketing is honest – this takes discipline and rigour. We try to always ask ourselves the following questions when planning and executing a marketing campaign or advertising:

- Is any of our messaging exaggerated or misleading to our target audiences?
- Is our language honest about the value and impact of our services?
- Are any quotes used, whether from customers, partners or the team, accurate?

We commit to rejecting impact washing

- Impact washing is when impact-focused claims are made by a company without any demonstrable positive social or environmental impact.
- We commit to rejecting the practice of impact washing. We will not exaggerate our positive impact to gain marketing advantage or distract from any socially or environmentally negative impacts.

We pledge that;

- We will not inflate numbers, manipulate data, or mislead audiences with stories that aren't reflective of overall outcomes of our projects.
- We will not make unrealistic claims about expected results.
- We only share stories and create impact initiatives that are centred on our mission, to enable companies to prosper by helping them become a force for good, and not purely for marketing benefits.
- Our campaigns are fully honest and transparent about the social and environmental impacts of our work.
- We will review marketing and communications strategies and tactics to ensure that they are not engaging in impact-washing.

We commit to cultural sensitivity in campaign creative

Many marketing campaigns and messages have the potential to be insensitive. It takes a combination of self-awareness and inclusion of others in the creative process to avoid marketing campaigns that are insensitive.

We commit to avoiding “Saviour complex” in our marketing and advertising campaigns. This can happen when, although well-intentioned, a company perceives a need for support of a certain community without including and empowering that affected community. The company might provide a solution solely from their external position of privilege. Saviour complex is problematic because it can result in communications, solutions, and power dynamics that reinforce systems of oppression.

We commit to exploring various perspectives, knowing that any complex issue likely has multiple causes and multiple potential solutions.

We will not use images of people in need, especially stereotypical images, to elicit an emotional response and drive engagement and/or donations from our audience. We believe that this approach can lead to insensitive campaigns and messages that may disempower the communities that we are striving to empower.

We commit to:

- Take steps to avoid any exploitation, appropriation, or stereotyping of underrepresented or historically oppressed people or groups within marketing content.
- Seek out feedback on the appropriateness and sensitivity of marketing content. This looks different for different projects, but often involves seeking stakeholder input, and engaging the target audience via surveys, focus groups, or interviews.
- Ongoing internal training to increase awareness of cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness.

We commit to permission-based email marketing

This is marketing where the recipient of the marketing messages provides permission to send them marketing materials.

We pledge to focus our email marketing on:

- Creating value within any free content (including videos, blogs, online resources, social media posts, etc.)
- Being GDPR compliant.
- Maintaining the trust of email lists by continuing to offer value and restricting messaging to content related to what the original opt-in intent.

We commit to ethical digital advertising

Ensuring the accuracy and ethics of the content we promote through digital advertising.

Aside from considering the accuracy and honesty of the content, we must also consider the ethics of the targeting approach. Digital advertising brings its own unique set of ethical issues related to data privacy. Facebook, Google, and many other digital media companies have developed sophisticated tracking technologies in order to understand, profile, track, and target users online so that their paying advertisers can reach their exact target audience via their digital advertising products and services. This kind of granular targeting often comes at the cost of individual users’ privacy. As consumer attitudes and technologies change, the ethical considerations that surround digital advertising are rapidly

evolving. It is highly likely that the line of what is both legal and ethically acceptable will shift many times over the short and long term.

We are always considering issues related to advertorial advertising. We make sure that the online user can tell what is paid advertising vs what is editorial content. Influencer marketing often relies on the process of well-connected social influencers promoting products or services to their audiences, often through content that would be considered advertorial if the influencer is not transparent that the content is a paid promotion.

Marketing pop ups or pop unders are widely considered unethical marketing tactics. They often offer misleading statistics about how many people actually see their content and few users engage with this type of content. We limit the use of pop-ups and modal windows as when overused they can become annoying and degrade the user's experience of our website.

We follow these principles for modal window use:

- Use them in ways that offer clear value.
- Limit how often they are used, allow people to opt out of modal windows.
- Make it easy to close them.
- If a user completes a modal window for an opt in, it will not be shown to that user again.

We commit to ethical search engine optimisation (SEO)

Search engines use algorithms to determine what content to show at the top. In the world of SEO and content marketing, any tactics that are considered manipulative or unethical are typically referred to as "black hat" tactics. On the opposite end of this spectrum, you'll find ethical or "white hat" SEO tactics based on providing valuable and useful content that aligns with what users and search algorithms are looking for. Through the use of white hat SEO we will provide valuable and useful content that aligns with what users and search algorithms are looking for.

We practice and encourage the following best practices for white hat SEO and content marketing:

- Link building: Create valuable content that people will want to link to
- Using PR and aligned partnerships to build links
- Proper use of redirects to help users find the right content
- Creating helpful, well branded 404 pages with useful navigation
- Put the user first, focus on value, create content that aligns with our mission

Black hat SEO: tactics that we avoid and discourage:

- Purchasing links – Paying for links from other websites. Links should be built organically out of merit and from real relationships and partnerships.
- Automated link building – Using software or online bots to build links.
- Hidden content and links – Intentionally hiding content or links so that only the search engines can see them
- Automated, stolen or plagiarised content generation – Using content scraping technology, AI content development, or direct content theft to generate high volumes of content to build your site's size and perceived authority.
- Keywords stuffing, over optimisation – There is a clear line between manually optimising content for SEO best practices (white hat on-page optimisation) and over optimisation which can also be called keyword stuffing. Keyword stuffing is the unnatural use of keywords including a high repetition in on-page optimisation, keywords used out of context or blocks of content with a repetition of keywords a page is trying to rank for.

- Misdirection – Unethical redirects: Cloaking and doorway pages. There are a variety of shady redirection schemes used in black hat SEO. These typically involve redirecting people away from long form content into pages that are more focused on conversions/sales, affiliate marketing, or paid advertising. In these cases the content that appealed to the search engine algorithm which resulted in the high organic ranking is not what the user sees after they click the link

Updating this policy

We expect ethical marketing practices to continue evolving along with the technologies we use to discover, reach, and engage audiences. The line that separates ethical from unethical marketing practices can shift rapidly and we will continue to monitor the state of the field across different marketing channels and tactics and update our practices accordingly.

Symposium, Burlington and Kimia are all trading names of HG&Co Ltd.