

Consumer Options for Managing Mail

Companies in the direct marketing community want consumers to be happy with the mail they receive. In order to help them better control the type and volume mail they receive, there are several options today consumers can use to remove their names from mailing lists.

Register for the Direct Marketing Association's (DMA) Mail Preference Service (MPS)

Registration on MPS will remove a consumer's name and address from prospect mailing lists. Members of the DMA are required to use this name removal service, and non-members are encouraged to use it. Because some mailings are prepared far in advance, it may take up to 90 days for registration with MPS to become fully effective. While MPS can substantially decrease the amount of national advertising mail received, it may or may not prevent receipt of some types of mail consumers may want, such as new catalogues, coupons, announcements about new businesses in the community, and notices of special offers.

MPS, however, will not stop all commercial or advertising mail. Consumers will continue to receive mail from companies with which they already do business and from non-DMA member companies that do not use the service. In addition, most mail from local merchants, professional and alumni associations, political candidates and office holders, and mail addressed to "Resident" or "Occupant" will likely continue. MPS applies only to home addresses and is not applicable for business addresses.

You can register for MPS by going to www.the-dma.org and clicking on the gold "Remove my name from mailings lists button" in the top right corner. There is a \$1 fee, payable by credit card, which verifies the registration. (DMA uses secure payment transaction processing to protect credit card information.)

DMA regularly reviews MPS and related services to ensure that they continue to address consumer and marketplace needs.

Opt-out of an individual company's mailing list

If a consumer does not want to receive mailings from a particular company, the quickest and most effective solution is to contact the company directly and ask to be removed from their mailing list. Because many companies plan mailings far in advance, allow up to 90 days for mailings from that company to phase out.

Opt-out of pre-screened credit offers To reduce the number of pre-screened credit and insurance offers, visit www.optoutprescreen.com or call 1-888-5OptOut (1-888-567-8688) to opt-out of these offers. This is a free service to consumers offered by the major credit bureaus.

How does the Mail Preference Service work?

When a consumer registers with the Direct Marketing Association's (DMA) Mail Preference Service (MPS), his or her name and home address are placed on a "do-not-mail" file. DMA members are required to run their list of prospective customers against the file and remove individuals registered on MPS from their mailings. MPS is also available to non-DMA members, so that all marketers may take advantage of this service, and remove the names of individuals who have indicated they do not wish to receive unsolicited mail at home. MPS is updated monthly and distributed four times a year (January, April, July, and October), though some mailers choose to receive the file monthly. A name remains on MPS for five years, after which time registration is required again. Mail typically begins to decrease approximately 90 days after a name is received.

Can a consumer request deletion from a specific company through MPS?

Name removal through MPS service is general in nature. Consumers who wish to remove their name from an individual company's mailing list should contact the company directly and ask to be put on its internal "do not mail" list.

Does the MPS service include mail from charitable organizations?

Yes, non-profit member organizations of DMA are also required to remove prospective donors who have indicated they wish to receive less mail.

How can mail addressed to a deceased relative be stopped?

DMA also maintains a name-removal service to remove contact information of deceased individuals from marketing lists. Information about the Deceased Do Not Contact service is available at the same website as MPS. There is a \$1 credit card verification fee for each registration.

How can a consumer remove the name of an individual in that consumer's care from marketing lists?

DMA sometimes receives calls from family members, friends or caretakers seeking to remove the names of individuals in their care from commercial marketing lists. To assist those who are managing this process, DMA maintains a Do Not Contact List for Caretakers, which all DMA members are required to honor. Information about the Caretaker List is also available at the same website as MPS. There is a \$1 credit card verification fee for each registration.