Ethical Marketing Policy.

Charlton Morris.

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Why Ethical Marketing

We believe that all marketing efforts should provide genuine value to the target audience in order to earn their attention and their trust. We also believe that ethical marketing is an essential part of changing the way the world sees recruitment.

Our strategies are based on a foundational belief that marketing should be honest and that marketers should not take advantage of anyone's personal data. This policy statement lays out the ethical marketing practices we follow at Charlton Morris and the commitments we have made to ensure that our marketing efforts are the most ethical and valuable in the recruitment and talent space.

Honesty in Marketing

As ethical marketers we commit to absolute honesty in our marketing for our own campaigns and for customers and partner driven projects.

We pledge to:

- Never use dishonest marketing tactics for our own or client marketing campaigns, including:
- False advertising: exaggerating values and benefits of products and services or advertising 'fake' jobs on our website or any of our partner websites.
- Fake or overly doctored reviews and testimonials
- Inflated analytics or results when creating messaging for partners or within our own advertising
- Never "cherry pick" specific data points to use in marketing and communications that are not representative of our overall impact on a client
- Not withhold negative information or data from the public solely to protect our, or one of our clients' image
- Only use words that are realistic descriptors of the products, services, or impact we are promoting.

Ongoing Reflections

It is easy to claim that our efforts are honest, however it takes discipline, rigor, and at times internal conflict to ensure honesty in marketing. We ask ourselves the following questions during the ideation, creation and execution of talent projects for our clients.

- Are we clearly communicating a true reflection of a clients' workplace without exaggerating or misleading candidates, potential employees or other key stakeholders?
- Are we using language that honestly communicates the features and benefits of our products and services?
- Are we accurately quoting our customers, partners, and team when we share reviews or testimonials?
- Is our use of data and examples honest and accurate when promoting our features, benefits, or the impact of our products and services?

If so we will push back or disengage from the project.

Rejecting Impact Washing

Impact washing is similar to greenwashing and happens when a business exaggerates their positive impact to gain a marketing advantage or uses "feel good"

marketing to cover up or distract from negative outcomes that their core business model is having in other areas–socially or environmentally.

Impact washing is a broad topic that includes:

- Exaggerating impact by inflating numbers, cherry-picking data, or focusing on stories that aren't representative of overall outcomes;
- Communicating false promises or making unrealistic claims about expected results;
- Sharing stories or creating impact initiatives that aren't rooted in an authentic mission or intention for good–but purely for the marketing benefits;
- Using a social impact initiative to distract from negative social or environmental problems caused by their core processes, products, or services.

We pledge that our campaigns:

- Are fully honest and transparent about the social and environmental impacts of a client's work and that we honestly represent the working environment our clients create for their employees
- Review marketing and communications strategies and tactics to ensure that they are not engaging in impact-washing.

Dignity vs Focusing on the Problem

As marketers we choose how to represent people. Typically people who have barriers in their lives are in the best position to remove those barriers. The process of dignification, deep understanding, and empowerment are the first steps toward solving key social issues. It is also important to recognize and understand the social and economic systems that lead to the issue in the first place. Any complex issue likely has multiple causes and multiple potential solutions and it's important as marketers for organizations that are trying to address any social or environmental issue that we humble ourselves and commit to exploring various perspectives and options for how to build campaigns aimed at promoting products or services as solutions to long standing issues.

Using images of people in need, especially stereotypical images, to elicit an emotional response and drive engagement and/or donations from the audience is problematic. This approach all too often misrepresents or oversimplifies issues while dishonoring real people and communities that are in need of support. While it may be tempting to take this approach, it can easily lead to insensitive campaigns and messages that may disempower the communities that we are striving to empower.

We pledge to:

- Take steps to avoid any exploitation, appropriation, or stereotyping of underrepresented or historically oppressed people or groups within our marketing.
- Seek out feedback on the appropriateness and sensitivity of marketing content. This looks different for different projects, but often involves working with the client to seek stakeholder input, and engaging the target audience via surveys, focus groups, or interviews.

Permission-Based Email Marketing

"Permission based marketing is anticipated, personal, and relevant." – Seth Godin

The term permission marketing was originated by marketing thought leader Seth Godin in his 1999 book by the same name to describe marketing where the recipient of the marketing messages provides permission to send them marketing materials. Another way to describe this is that they have opted in to receiving marketing messages.

We pledge to focus our email marketing on:

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

Ethical Digital Advertising

All advertising content lands somewhere on the honesty spectrum– from manipulative and dishonest to accurate, ethical and honest. Charlton Morris is committed to 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.

Our Approach to Ethical Advertising Includes the following considerations:

- False advertising: This one speaks for itself. If an advertisement makes untrue claims about a product or services or clearly misrepresents what is being offered then it is false advertising which is clearly an unethical marketing tactic.
- Issues with Advertorial Advertising: It is important that an online user can tell what is paid advertising vs what is editorial content. Advertorial content is content that looks like unbiased editorial/earned media but is actually paid advertising. This type of content can take place on written articles, social media posts, written reviews, or videos.

  While advertorial content may be seen by some as an ethical grey area, it is increasingly becoming clear that misleading users into believing that a brand mention is based on editorial merit alone, when in fact the placement was paid for by the brand is an unethical marketing tactic by both the publisher and brand buying the paid content. We pledge to always communicate when content is advertorial.
- Pop ups, pop unders and modal windows – There are a wide variety of types of pop-up style promotions that websites can deploy. Pop ups or pop unders (that create new tabs or windows behind the main browser window, are now

widely considered unethical marketing tactics. They often offer misleading statistics about how many people actually see their content and few users actually engage with this type of content. The modal window is a term for using similar techniques within your own website where the pop up is part of your own web page. Modal windows are often used for contact forms, email signups and other strategies. When properly implemented modal windows can be helpful for the user and very effective for marketing, however when overused they can become annoying and can degrade the user's experience of your website.

Here are a few best practices 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 closes a modal window save that info so that they don't see them over and over again.
- If a user completes a modal window for an opt in, then you don't need to show that user the window again.

Search Engine Optimization

Search engines use algorithms to determine what content to show at the top. Anywhere where computers are making decisions that will affect business outcomes opens up the opportunity for hacking and manipulation. 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.

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 optimization – There is a fine line between manually optimizing content for SEO best practices (white hat onpage optimization) and over optimization which can also be called keyword stuffing. It takes experience and a deep understanding of the latest algorithms to learn where this line is. As the algorithm changes, the line may shift over time.

- 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.

Continuous Improvement

We expect for ethical marketing practices to continue to evolve along with the technologies marketers use to discover, reach, and engage audiences. The line that separates ethical from unethical marketing practices can shift rapidly as major online platforms such as Google, Facebook, and other search and social applications roll out updates and new options for data-driven targeting. We will continue to monitor the state of the field across different marketing channels and tactics and update our practices accordingly.

Questions and Feedback

We always strive to do the right thing for our clients and adhering to these ethical practices is part of that work. If you have questions or feedback to share that will help us do better, we encourage you to reach out and let us know.

Please contact us any of the following:

To request more information

To provide feedback

To access, edit, or delete personal information we may have about you

To register a complaint

You can contact us at info@charltonmorris.com with the subject line: FAO Ethical Marketing.

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