



## Outbound Telemarketing Recording: Understanding the Facts

**Fact:** B-to-B publications are more reliant than ever on telemarketing as a circulation source. Indeed, telemarketing has eclipsed written sources, to become the number-one source of B-to-B publication personal direct request subscriptions. According to the latest American Business Media Circulation Committee analysis of Paragraph 3B circulation statement data, for 2006, telemarketing accounted for 30.7% of total circulation across audited publications, versus written sources' 19.7%.

**Fact:** Advertisers and media buyers are more focused than ever on accountability and demonstrating hard return on investment for their advertising dollars.

**Fact:** Alarming increases in identity theft and concern about potential misuse of personal information are creating growing resistance to requests for such information, including the "Personal Identifier" or "PI" request that must be asked, in the absence of recording, to provide auditors with a method of verifying requests. (*Under BPA rules already in effect, the PI question need not be asked if a call is recorded.*)

**Result:** The media owner, advertiser and agency executives on the BPA Board concurred that, taken together, these facts point to the need for action that will safeguard and enhance the viability and status of the telemarketing source for the years ahead, and that outbound recording represents the most effective and efficient means to this end.

"The growing importance of telemarketing as a source is precisely the reason that media owners and media buyers on BPA's Board ultimately voted to take the necessary steps to ensure that the value of the circulation generated by telemarketing is beyond question, as far as advertisers and media buyers are concerned," summed up BPA President and CEO Glenn Hansen. "Recognizing advertisers' greatly heightened emphasis on accountability, these executives—as well as the leading telemarketers who comprise BPA's Telemarketing Managers' Advisory Committee—determined that it is in the best interests of the industry to be able to demonstrate beyond any doubt that telemarketing is a source that deserves to stand head-to-head with written and Internet sources."

Hansen stressed that concerns about potential increases in telemarketing costs were a major point of discussion among Board members, and in all of the meetings leading up to the Board vote. "Obviously, media owners are more focused than ever on controlling and reducing operational costs wherever possible, and publishers' ROI is always a critical component in shaping BPA policies," he said. "BPA is, after all, an industry service organization that is governed by its members and their respective needs. But media owners also understand the need to safeguard their interests for the longer term—including their ability to compete effectively for advertising dollars in an increasingly challenging marketplace. This is why a number of the leading B-to-B media companies have for some time voluntarily made recording capability a prerequisite for using any telemarketing vendor."

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“Further, after reviewing the facts, most media owners supported recording not only because of the accountability factor, but because there is no basis for assuming that costs will rise as a result of recording, when all is said and done,” Hansen added. “Looking at the full picture, they concluded that the advantages that come with recording—including the ability to maximize the yield and efficiency of calls, as well as reduce some auditing cost factors—will over time counterbalance, and outweigh, any short-term additional costs.”

Specifically, outbound recording enables the following operational advantages:

- **Gathering of multiple personal requests**—either directly from recipients or from recipients’ assistants—for the same publication in a single call. This is true today: Existing BPA rules allow such multiple requests, as long as the calls are recorded.
- **Foregoing the necessity to ask existing and prospective subscribers the “Personal Identifier” question.** Importantly, many leading telemarketers who already record calls report that, today, *asking the PI question is more likely to depress response* (i.e., cause business professionals to end a call, or “drop off”) than disclosing that the call is being recorded. These telemarketers point out that, whereas personal questions are viewed with increasing suspicion, people are increasingly accustomed to being informed that a call is being recorded for customer service or other reasons. Again, the BPA rules already in effect allow those who record to forego the PI question.
- **Decreased auditing confirmations, resulting in lower costs for this component of the circulation audit.** In most cases, recording enables BPA to significantly reduce the number of calls made to subscribers by its in-house staff for the purpose of verifying a subscription’s requested status. The number of calls required for statistical verification are directly reflected in an individual publisher’s cost per audit.

Additional important facts about outbound recording and the steps being taken to ensure that the industry can comply as seamlessly and cost-effectively as possible:

- **Ample time has been provided for compliance.** BPA’s Board and committees built in two years to enable member publishers to work with their telemarketers or prepare their in-house telemarketing operations.
- **Recording software and equipment technology continues to become cheaper and faster.** Telemarketers and publishers who record confirm that this factor has been an important factor in enabling them to implement recording.
- **The rules will appropriately reflect practical considerations.** For example, a reasonable reporting tolerance level will be incorporated for subscribers who refuse to be recorded, and it has been established that mandatory recording will *not apply* to subscription requests/requalifications garnered through inbound, subscriber-initiated calls.
- **BPA is actively engaged in working with publishers and vendors to ensure that they have reasonable, cost-efficient means of complying with outbound recording.** Based on research by BPA’s Telemarketing Managers’ Advisory Committee and other advisory committees, BPA is developing a *detailed, practical guide to all specifics associated with outbound recording*, including compliance with state and international recording disclosure requirements; information on available, cost-efficient recording technology; and test-based recommendations for minimizing costs and maximizing response. This guide will be distributed to all BPA members in the B-to-B arena, including media owners and associate members (telemarketers, fulfillment bureaus, etc.). It will also be made available to the industry in general via posting on BPA’s Web site, [bpaww.com](http://bpaww.com).

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- **BPA will support outbound recording with a variety of member education, outreach, and customer service initiatives.** BPA is committed to providing all members with the educational and customer support services they will need to implement recording. In addition to BPA's Guide to Outbound Telemarketing Recording, BPA will offer free Webinars and live educational programs. Members will be apprised on an ongoing basis, via our enewsletters and special member email and Web advisories, of all recording rules/policy developments, and offered insights/advice from media owners and telemarketers regarding specific steps that can be taken to minimize costs and maximize results/efficiencies.

BPA staff, including our full-time team of Member Relations Managers and all auditors, will receive special training in all facets of outbound recording and the questions members are likely to have regarding recording.

- **BPA will support the advertiser benefits of outbound recording through outreach to the advertising/media buying community.** BPA will employ all available communications channels, including BPA's regularly published enewsletter for media buyers/advertisers, and regular speaking opportunities at advertiser/agency industry events and on-site presentations at agencies and marketer companies, to ensure that our 6,000-plus advertiser and agency members are fully aware of the circulation quality assurance benefits that they will derive as a result of BPA media owners' commitment to outbound recording.

In return, the advertising community will be urged to support this commitment by recognizing, in their decision-making processes, the higher circulation quality and value that BPA-audited B-to-B media bring to their advertising programs and investments.

BPA encourages members to contact their regional Member Relations Managers with any questions. Visit the link below for your MRM's contact information:

[http://www.bpaww.com/contact/member\\_relations.htm](http://www.bpaww.com/contact/member_relations.htm)