

**COMMENT ON EMAIL AUTHENTICATION
SUMMIT ISSUES**

AGENCY: Federal Trade Commission (“FTC” or the “Commission”)

This comment is submitted by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations, Inc. (“CASRO”) in response to the Commission’s Notice announcing that an Email Authentication Summit has been scheduled for November 9-10, 2004, and requesting comments on issues related to email authentication.

CASRO is a not-for-profit industry and professional association representing nearly 250 research companies and institutions engaged in survey research regarding a wide variety of public policy, forensic, health, scientific, economic and other public and private areas of inquiry. Its members are responsible for the overwhelming majority of the survey research conducted each year in the United States and a major portion of global survey research.

Survey research contributes significantly to the public interest by providing reliable, verifiable analyses of a wide variety of public policy, sociological, legislative, regulatory, political, forensic, scientific, public health and economic areas of inquiry. Survey research is an invaluable and irreplaceable tool of behavioral science used to measure, track, analyze and predict public attitudes, opinions, awareness and preferences. Survey research is virtually the only source of statistically reliable and verifiable information of this type, on which government, business and private interests rely to formulate their actions and decisions.

Among the principal missions of CASRO is the establishment, maintenance and enforcement of professional and ethical standards in survey research and the protection of the privacy interests of those who participate in survey research. These principles reflect the

social utility of survey research and the need to protect and respect the industry's most valuable resource -- its survey respondents.

As one of the leading representatives of the U.S. survey research industry, CASRO has an interest in articulating the compelling public, governmental and business need for protecting not only survey research, but also the rights and concerns of the public and survey respondents. We believe that privacy is one of these important concerns. Accordingly, CASRO supports the Commission's actions in protecting consumers' right to privacy.

In furtherance of this goal of protecting consumers' privacy interest, CASRO supports the FTC and the National Institute of Standards and Technology ("NIST") in their decision to host an Email Authentication Summit (the "Summit") on November 9-10, 2004.

One of the greatest hurdles facing the survey research industry today is the practice of emailers concealing their true commercial purpose by posing as survey researchers. This practice, known as "sugging" or "selling under the guise of research" involves marketers masking their solicitations or advertisements as invitations to participate in surveys. This practice has dissuaded potential survey respondents from participating in surveys for fear that they will become the targets of unsolicited email marketing. The Commission already explicitly prohibits sugging by telemarketers as a deceptive trade practice.

The current "open" nature of email technology, together with the lack of a uniform email authentication system contribute to the grave difficulties that regulators face in trying to curb sugging and other forms of spam. CASRO therefore supports the efforts of the Commission to offer a practical solution under the CAN-SPAM Act to alleviate this problem.

In connection with its planned Email Authentication Summit, the Commission has requested answers to thirty specific questions. CASRO respectfully offers the following in response to that request:

Question 1. Whether any of the proposed authentication standards (either alone or in conjunction with other existing technologies) would result in a significant decrease in the amount of spam received by consumers.

Answer: We believe that instituting a domain-level authentication standard would result in a significant decrease in the amount of spam received by consumers.

Question 2. Whether any of the proposed authentication standards would require modification of the current Internet protocols and whether any such modification would be technologically and practically feasible.

Answer: We believe that all of the current authentication standards would require revisions to the current Internet protocols; however, we feel that these revisions would be both technologically and practically feasible.

Question 3. Whether any of the proposed authentication standards would function with the software and hardware currently used by senders and recipients of email and operators of sending and receiving email servers. If not, what additional software or hardware would the sender and recipient need, how much it would cost, whether it would be required or optional, and where it would be obtained.

Answer: Existing mail servers and client servers will have to be enhanced to support the proposed standards. This enhanced software would be obtained from the software