Bureau of Consumer Protection

Jessica Rich
Director

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Dear _____

Fraudulent weight loss products cost consumers millions of dollars each year. Experts have established that certain diet claims simply can't be true – and yet those bogus promises still show up in reputable media outlets. The Federal Trade Commission, the nation's consumer protection agency, has been fighting back with law enforcement actions, advice for businesses, and tips for broadcasters and publishers on how to shut the door on diet scammers. Now there's a resource for the media you'll want to share with your sales staff.

Every time a con artist is able to place an ad for a bogus weight loss product on a television or radio station, in a newspaper or magazine, or on a legitimate website, it undermines the credibility of advertising and does incalculable damage to the reputation for accuracy that broadcasters and publishers work hard to earn. At the FTC, we do our best to root out weight loss fraud after those ads have run. But the most effective front-line defense is when media outlets have an effective in-house clearance program that screens out clearly deceptive diet ads before they harm your customers and credibility.

To help protect consumers and your reputation for accuracy, we have a new online tutorial designed especially for media sales professionals. *Gut Check: A Reference Guide for Media on Spotting False Weight Loss Claims* clues you in to the latest diet scams and schemes that fraudsters may try to sneak past you and reflects legal developments in areas like consumer testimonials. *Gut Check* features a follow-up quiz to hone your instincts for recognizing – and rejecting – ads for clearly fraudulent weight loss products.

Gut Check is available at www.business.ftc.gov/gutcheck. For more information, call Michael Ostheimer at (202) 326-2699. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Jessica Rich
Director, Bureau of Consumer Protection