

## .com Disclosures Twitter Chat

On March 21, 2013, FTC staff hosted a Twitter Chat to discuss updated online advertising disclosures. Rich Cleland, an FTC staff attorney in the Division of Ad Practices, worked with the Office of Public Affairs to answer questions from the @FTC Twitter account. The hashtag was #AskFTC.

Note: Tweets in their original order (reversed here for ease of reading), and without handles of individuals redacted remain publicly available on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/FTC](http://www.twitter.com/FTC).

### Tweets

Have you read our updated .com disclosures? Read now & join our chat at 2pm ET. Tweet Qs to #AskFTC: <http://go.usa.gov/2V59>

Hi. Rich Cleland here, FTC attorney in Division of Ad Practices. Hope you're getting ready to send me Qs for #AskFTC. Starting in 2 min.

Q1 MT [REDACTED] What ad disclosures allowed: Ad, #ad, -Ad, Ad:, Sp, #Spon, Sponsored etc.? Where located? When does this start? #AskFTC

A1 Ad, #ad, Sponsored all work. Beginning of tweet is best. Guides in effect now. #AskFTC

Q2 MT [REDACTED]: #AskFTC would conducting consumer surveys on what they considered "clear&conspicuous" disclosure b helpful? Any surveys?

A2 Research is always helpful. There's very little good research available. No surveys we're aware of at this time. #AskFTC

Q3 MT [REDACTED] #AskFTC What R u doing 2 promote, protect & preserve consumer protections? Why not more aggressive w/ offenders?

Q4 RT [REDACTED] How should the blogger in Example 21 make her disclosure more clear and conspicuous? #AskFTC

A4 She should move the disclosure up above the first hyperlink. #AskFTC

FYI - I'm trying to answer one question from each person before going back to all others to be fair. Thanks for all sending 'em in. #AskFTC

Q5 MT [REDACTED] Does biz ceo/spokesperson, when blogging & promoting biz, need to follow ftc guidelines, eg deceptive marketing? #AskFTC

A5 Yes, when it is clear they are not associated with the company. #AskFTC

Q6 RT [REDACTED] @FTC Rich, will the FTC create disclosure best practices guide/resources in addition to today's pdf? #AskFTC

A7 Yes. We will continue to make biz education available. For example, see blog post on guide: <http://go.usa.gov/2Vfm>

Q8 MT [REDACTED] How do you reconcile rapid change in technology & slow pace of government in protecting consumers online? #AskFTC

Oops, this is A6, not A7! Yes. We will continue to make biz education available. For example, see blog post on guide: <http://go.usa.gov/2Vfm>

A8 We continue to provide guidance to industry on important aspects of online commerce throughout year, not just w/updated guides. #AskFTC

Out of order, but here's Q7 RT [REDACTED] @FTC Does this effect all social media platforms? Twitter? Tumblr? FB? Blogs #AskFTC

A7 Yes, it applies to all commercial mediums, online and offline. #AskFTC

[REDACTED] Hi Shawn, we're just discussing .com disclosures today. Also, can't comment on specific biz practices. #AskFTC

Q9 RT [REDACTED] Do sponsored athletes have 2 incl #ad or #spon in their tweets & promotions of gear/companies that support them? #AskFTC

A9 If it's not apparent they're affiliated with the company, need to disclose. Also, don't recommend #spon, prefer sponsored. #AskFTC

Q10 MT [REDACTED] #AskFTC blog publishers tell me they r exempt fm disclosing material relationships w/guest contributors. R they right?

A10 Depends on the situation, will likely vary case-by-case. Depends on what is being said by whom. #AskFTC

[REDACTED] For Q on more examples, Yes, we will continue to provide them in future. Follow our biz blog: <http://go.usa.gov/2Vfm> #AskFTC

Q11 MT [REDACTED] Do you consider RT an endorsement? Do related brands have to disclose relationship if they retweet each other? #AskFTC

A11 Good Q. Generally, no. But there may be exceptions, depending on who is doing the retweeting. #AskFTC

██████████ re: #AskFTC, we can't discuss specific biz practices, but you can file complaint at <http://www.ftc.gov/complaint>

Q12 MT ██████████ @FTC Is it permissible to disclose the #Ad within the hyperlink? #AskFTC

A12 No, it's not clear and conspicuous if it is in hyperlink. Example 15 in guide is what we recommend. #AskFTC

Q13 RT ██████████ @FTC What enforcement is planned for individual bloggers versus incorporated "persons"? #AskFTC

A13 Enforcement will continue to be focused on the advertisers as it has in the past. #AskFTC

██████████ Argh. I did, messed up hashtag. Apologies. A4 She should move the disclosure up above the first hyperlink. #AskFTC

Q5 clarification: Are claims made by a biz rep in blogging required to be truthful? Are promo posts by biz reps the same as ads? #AskFTC

A5 Clarification. Yes and Yes. #AskFTC

Q14 MT ██████████ #AskFTC is best way to include disclosure in an online video is by having it as a part of the video content itself?

A14 Yes, at the beginning of the video too. #AskFTC

All, Sorry, out of time. Thanks for great Qs. Will follow-up w/remaining Qs individually. Also, I plan to do another chat in future. #AskFTC