Federal Trade Commission

Privacy Impact Assessment

FTC.gov and Other Commission Websites, Resources, Blogs, and Tools Hosted on FTC.gov

September 2014

SECTION 1.0 – SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF THE FTC'S USE OF FTC.GOV

1.1 – What is the specific purpose of the agency's use of FTC.gov, and how does that use fit with the agency's broader mission?

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC or Commission) is responsible for implementing and enforcing Federal laws and regulations to promote consumer protection and competition. The FTC's work is divided among the bureaus of Consumer Protection, Competition, and Economics. The Bureau of Consumer Protection (BCP) protects and empowers consumers by preventing fraud, deception, and unfair business practices. The Bureau of Competition (BC) promotes healthy competition by surveying the marketplace for anti-competitive behavior and enforcing antitrust laws. Finally, the Bureau of Economics (BE) provides economic expertise to BC and BCP, and also prepares economic analyses of government regulation and policy recommendations regarding consumer protection and competition that may be shared with Congress, the Executive Branch, and the public.

The agency's website, www.FTC.gov, is the primary online source for public information about the FTC, its activities, and the resources that it makes available to consumers and businesses. This website includes content about the FTC's customer-facing departments; links to publicly published cases, reports, events, and resources; downloadable audio and video education files; RSS feeds; links to the Commission's social media accounts and blogs; and much more.

FTC.gov was developed using the content management system (CMS) Drupal. The Drupal CMS permits authorized FTC staff to electronically administer (e.g., upload, revise, delete) the content of these FTC sites (e.g., articles, video, blog comments). The FTC.gov site is hosted on the FTC's Public Web Hosting General Support System (GSS), which has been authorized to process information at the moderate level using National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) guidance.

In addition to www.FTC.gov, the FTC manages multiple websites and blogs and maintains a social media presence. The website, www.FTC.gov, includes links to other Commission websites, resources, blogs, and tools. Some of the websites, resources, blogs, and tools used by the FTC are part of www.FTC.gov itself, some are hosted externally on behalf of the FTC using webpages that are designed to look and feel like part of www.FTC.gov, and some are hosted externally by FTC contractors on sites other than www.FTC.gov. In all cases, however, the websites, resources, blogs, and tools are managed internally by authorized FTC staff members. The following list of existing FTC websites, blogs, resources, and tools are covered by this PIA [Note: Other websites, blogs, resources, and tools etc. on FTC.gov not included in the following list are covered by existing PIAs as described in Sections 2.1 and 2.2, below.]:

- **FTC.gov** – All components except for those additional websites, resources, and tools that are identified below in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 as having their own PIAs. All current and future FTC blogs, which currently run or will run on the same platform, are therefore covered under this PIA.

- **Event Registration:** In support of its general law enforcement, rulemaking, and community education and outreach programs, the FTC conducts workshops, seminars, and events. The FTC webpages for these events sometimes include an FTC e-mail address for individuals who wish to register voluntarily in advance of the event. Individuals are asked to provide only basic information, such as name, e-mail, and telephone number, and the form that collects this information includes a Privacy Act Statement. This PII is used only by the event organizers for the purposes of event logistics, such as space management and nametag preparation, and the data are collected and maintained in the Data Center GSS. See Data Center GSS PIA.

- **Community Engagement Projects:** In support of its education and outreach programs, the FTC occasionally invites the public to submit stories, comments, or other feedback that may be shared in whole or in part with other members of the public. For these projects, the FTC creates webpages with submission and content instructions, which include a Privacy Act Statement and a link to the FTC's Privacy Policy. Individuals who choose to participate may be asked to provide basic information, such as name and e-mail address, along with their submission. This PII is used by the organizers to identify and process submissions and, if necessary, to follow up with submitters.

- **Registered Identification Number (RN) Database:** This Oracle database contains registration information for manufacturers, retailers, and other companies subject to the label requirements of the Textile, Wool Products, and Fur Labeling Acts. The database is hosted on the FTC internal data server and accessible through the RN program pages at www.FTC.gov. The FTC's RN pages also contain a link to the Canadian RN database, which is operated and maintained by Canada's Competition Bureau, and is not under the FTC's control.

- **NCPW Website** and MCPW Website: National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW) and Military Consumer Protection Week (MCPW) are coordinated public and private sector campaigns to encourage consumers nationwide to take full advantage of their consumer rights and to make better-informed decisions.

Unidirectional Social Media Applications, Communications, and Outreach

Unidirectional social media applications allow users to view relevant, real-time content from predetermined sources. Dynamic communication tools such as podcasts, audio, and video streams, and Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds broaden the FTC's ability to disseminate content and provide the public with multiple channels to receive and view content.

In addition to the email subscriptions to FTC resources available through the GovDelivery system and the social media tools, both of which are identified in Section 2, below, the following unidirectional tools are currently used by the FTC:

1. **Audio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and Podcasts:** Users may listen to FTC PSAs via MP3 or WAV files that can be accessed from pages throughout www.FTC.gov. In addition to standard audio files, some FTC websites such as the Business Center

provide podcasts. Users may download or simply listen to FTC audio content. The FTC may provide direct links for users to share the content on other websites. The FTC does not collect, track, or otherwise have access to PII from users who download, listen to, or share these files.

2. **Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds:** Visitors to www.FTC.gov may subscribe to the agency's press releases via RSS feeds. This subscription feature relies on RSS software that the user clicks or otherwise activates on his or her own computer, Web browser, or mobile device when visiting the FTC's RSS page. The FTC does not collect, track, or otherwise have access to PII from users who subscribe to its feeds.

3. **Videos:** The FTC provides the public with access to multiple educational videos. Visitors to www.FTC.gov/video can watch pre-recorded FTC videos via the Brightcove platform. See Video Hosting PIA.

4. **Webcasts**: A webcast is audio and video material that is available live from www.FTC.gov while an event is occurring, via the KnowledgeVision live presentation platform. See Video Hosting PIA. Visitors to the FTC's archival webcast page can also access previously recorded and archived events, also provided on the Brightcove platform as described above.

The FTC.gov website is maintained by the FTC's Web Team in the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), and only authorized FTC staff members have administrative access to the website and its components.

1.2 – Is the agency's use of FTC.gov consistent with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies?

The President's January 21, 2009 memorandum on *Transparency and Open Government* and the OMB Director's December 8, 2009 *Open Government Directive* call on Federal departments and agencies to harness new technologies to engage with the public. This website helps the FTC communicate with consumers.

With respect to the information that the FTC disseminates to the public through www.FTC.gov, the FTC Act authorizes the FTC to prevent unfair and deceptive acts and practices in interstate commerce and, in furtherance of this mission, to gather, compile, and make information available in the public interest. See 15 U.S.C. 45, 46(a), (f).

In accordance with Federal guidance, including OMB Memorandum M-10-23, the FTC provides exit scripts to website visitors who click on links that will take them from FTC.gov and other official FTC resources to a website hosted by non-governmental third parties (e.g., commercial or social media sites). These exit scripts advise visitors that they are leaving FTC.gov, that the FTC's Privacy Policy will no longer apply, and that the third-party website might collect personal information.

In compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, the E-Government Act of 2002, guidance issued by the United States Office of Management & Budget (OMB), and the FTC's own Privacy Policy, the FTC attempts to limit its collection of information from website visitors to assess and improve user experience, respond to consumer concerns, and conduct investigations and other program activities. To the extent that the FTC's web hosting provider collects standard web log data, such as IP address, date and time of visit, etc., for cyber security purposes, such collection is in compliance with existing OMB-issued guidance and the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 (FISMA).

This Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) explains what Personally Identifiable Information (PII) the FTC collects about individuals throughout the various touch points on www.FTC.gov, how the Agency collects it, who is allowed to use this information and for what purposes, and what steps the FTC has taken to identify, secure, and reduce any privacy risks to that information.

SECTION 2.0 – IS THERE ANY PII THAT IS LIKELY TO BECOME AVAILABLE TO THE AGENCY THROUGH THE USE OF FTC.GOV?

2.1 – What PII will be made available to the FTC?

The FTC's websites, including www.FTC.gov and its blogs, participate in the General Service Administration's (GSA's) Federal Digital Analytics Program, which uses a Federal government-specific version of Google Analytics Premium to collect and analyze data from website visitors to help the FTC improve its websites, share FTC information more effectively, and create a more engaging experience for website visitors. For more information, please see the Google Analytics through GSA's Digital Analytics Program PIA, which describes the use of persistent cookies and explains how the program anonymizes information before it is stored to prevent the collection of PII.

In addition to the Digital Analytics Program, the FTC also uses temporary ("session") cookies on FTC microsites, blogs, and tools to track information such as user IDs and preferences while the user is on an FTC site. The session cookies provide a particular functionality and/or a more streamlined experience for the user. For more information about cookies and the information that the FTC collects when you visit an FTC site, see the FTC's Privacy Policy.

Unidirectional Social Media Applications, Communications, and Outreach

Except as noted in the Video Hosting PIA and the GovDelivery PIA, the FTC's unidirectional social media applications do not collect, use, or disseminate any PII other than as described in this section.

Social Media

When leaving www.FTC.gov via a "Stay Connected" or external social media link, where applicable, visitors are shown an exit script, as described in Section 1.2 above. In addition, each of the Commission's official social media accounts provides a "privacy notice" (as required by

OMB Memorandum M-10-23), to notify users that, while the content is FTC-approved, the official source of FTC information is www.FTC.gov rather than the social media account. The FTC also provides a link to its Privacy Policy.

For more information about the Commission's official social media accounts, please see the following PIAs:

1) Facebook PIA
2) Twitter PIA
3) YouTube PIA
4) reddit PIA
5) Skype PIA

2.2 – What are the sources of PII?

All PII collected by www.FTC.gov (see Section 2.1) is obtained directly from visitors to the site.

The FTC's Public Web Hosting GSS and GSA's Digital Analytics Program automatically collect information from those who visit the website as described in Section 2.1.

The following FTC tools and websites are covered by separate PIAs that describe, among other things, any PII that is collected:

- Admongo.gov – Teaching children about advertising
- BMC Group's Claim Tracker Redress – Providing consumer refunds
- Bulk Order – Ordering FTC materials
- CommentWorks – Filing public comments
- Complaint Assistant – Filing consumer complaints
- Consumer Sentinel Network – Accessing consumer complaints (authorized users only)
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys – Surveying website visitors about their online experience
- Do Not Call Registry – Registering consumer telephone numbers, filing consumer complaints, and accessing registry by telemarketers
- E-Consumer Complaint Assistant – Filing consumer complaints about cross-border conduct
- E-Filing – Submitting electronic public filings in administrative litigation
- EpiqClass Action ClaimsMatrix and Online Claim Submission Website – Providing consumer refunds
- FOIA – Requesting access to FTC records under the Freedom of Information Act
- GovDelivery – Subscribing to FTC email distribution lists on specific topics
- HSR.gov – Submitting electronic Hart-Scott-Rodino Act filings
- Rust Consulting Online Claims Redress – Providing consumer refunds
- Division of Consumer and Business Education PIA – Providing FTC consumer and business information and resources via websites, including:
    - AlertaenLinea.gov (Spanish)
    - Business.ftc.gov
    - Consumer.gov

- Consumer.ftc.gov (English)
- Consumidor.ftc.gov (Spanish)
- OnGuardOnline.gov (English)

2.3 – Do the FTC's activities trigger the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) and, if so, how will the agency comply with the statute?

No. The FTC's general use of www.FTC.gov, as described in Section 1.1 above, does not trigger the PRA. The FTC's use of session and persistent cookies to collect website and traffic data occurs online, is completely automated, and imposes no paperwork burden that would require prior OMB clearance under the PRA. To the extent that a specific FTC activity associated with FTC tools or resources located on or accessed from www.FTC.gov raises PRA-related issues, those issues are addressed in the PIA relating to that specific tool or resource.

SECTION 3.0 THE FTC'S INTENDED OR EXPECTED USE OF PII

3.1 – Generally, how will the agency use the PII described in Section 2.0?

In accordance with FISMA authority, as described in Section 1.2 above, the FTC participates in GSA's Digital Analytics Program, which minimizes the need for the FTC to separately access and review web log files collected to analyze traffic to the site and helps create a better user experience for individual users of the site, except as required for cyber security-related purposes.

PII is collected by the site through various online forms (e.g., complaints submitted voluntarily by consumers) and through comments provided to the FTC for a variety of reasons ranging from requesting large volumes of FTC educational materials to registering for the Do Not Call Registry. See the individual PIAs cited above for more information.

3.2 – Provide specific examples of the types of uses to which the PII may be subject.

The FTC makes very limited use of persistent ("multi-session") and session cookies to provide analysis of site use and to maintain access quality for users, including in connection with user visits to FTC websites, user viewing of FTC videos, and user's voluntary responses to short surveys about their use of FTC online resources. Use of these cookies is discussed in the relevant PIAs, including those for Video Hosting and Google Analytics. To learn more about cookies in general and how they are collected and used by the FTC, see http://www.ftc.gov/site-information/privacy-policy/internet-cookies.

In addition to the analytic data it collects, www.FTC.gov may also collect information from visitors for the following purposes as discussed in Section 1.1:
- **Event Registration:** In support of its general law enforcement, rulemaking, and community education and outreach programs, the FTC conducts workshops, seminars, and events. The FTC webpages for these events sometimes include an FTC e-mail address for individuals who wish to register voluntarily in advance of the event. Individuals are asked to provide only basic information, such as name, e-mail, and

telephone number, and the form that collects this information includes a Privacy Act Statement. This PII is used only by the event organizers for the purposes of event logistics, such as space management and nametag preparation, and the data are collected and maintained in the Data Center GSS PIA. See Data Center GSS PIA.

- **Community Engagement Projects:** Individuals who choose to participate in a community engagement project in support of FTC education and outreach programs may be asked to provide basic information, such as name and e-mail address, along with their stories, comments, or other feedback. This PII is used by the organizers to identify and process submissions and, if necessary, to follow up with submitters.

- **RN Database:** The FTC's RN pages contain online forms allowing a company to apply for an RN, which must be printed on the garment label to identify the company, or to update the company's information in the database. There is also a database search function allowing any user to enter a company name or other data (ZIP, State, Product Line, etc.) to determine the assigned RN(s) (or vice versa). All data collected, maintained, and made publicly available in this database pertain solely to registered companies. The online application form requires the filing company to name the company official who is certifying the application on the company's behalf, but that identifying information is not available to the public through the RN search engine. No other information about any individual in his or her business or personal capacity is collected, stored, retrieved, or retrievable from the database.

SECTION 4.0 – SHARING OR DISCLOSING OF PII

4.1 – With what entities or persons inside or outside the agency will the PII be shared, and for what purposes will the PII be disclosed?

The FTC.gov website is hosted on the Public Web Hosting GSS, a contractor-provided, Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP)-authorized, cloud-based platform external to the FTC. Only authorized FTC staff members and vendors working on the site or providing the web hosting services will have access to web analytics or log data.

A limited number of authorized FTC staff members who provide and/or review internal reports on visits to www.FTC.gov and other FTC domains, which includes staff from Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), Office of Public Affairs (OPA), Bureau of Consumer Protection (BCP), and Office of the General Counsel (OGC), will have access to the public data collected from website visitors.

With respect to the PII collected by the site through various online forms and comment collection tools posted or linked on the site, the entities who have access to that information are discussed in the individual PIAs cited above.

As discussed above, some of the websites or tools on or accessible from www.FTC.gov are hosted and managed externally by third-party contractors. All PII collected through these pages

is subject to the FTC's [Privacy Policy](). For more information about which entities have access to specific PII collected through these pages, refer to the individual PIAs, cited above.

4.2 – What safeguards are in place to prevent expansion of use beyond those authorized under law and described in this PIA?

The FTC.gov website and related resources is public and accessible via the Internet. Documented procedures limit access to nonpublic portions (e.g., log, site administration, forms data, etc.) to authorized FTC staff and contractors only, who will be assigned one of several possible roles. The role determines what information and functionality the person is allowed to access and what tasks the person can perform. Roles at the FTC include Administrator, Site Builder, and Content Editor. Those roles and permissions are authorized by the FTC Web Team, as detailed in the FTC.gov Governance Guide and other documents, and all such authorized users receive role-based training and sign appropriate Rules of Behavior.

SECTION 5.0 - MAINTENANCE AND RETENTION OF PII

5.1 – How will the FTC maintain the PII, and for how long?

The FTC will maintain and dispose of PII and other information collected by FTC.gov, online forms, and comment collection tools in accordance with FTC regulations, policies, and procedures and with [FTC records retention schedule N1-122-09-1]() approved by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

5.2 – Was the retention period established to minimize privacy risk?

Yes. All data will be securely disposed of in accordance with OMB, NARA, and NIST regulations and guidelines and with FTC policies and procedures.

SECTION 6.0 – HOW THE AGENCY WILL SECURE PII

6.1 – Will the FTC's privacy and security officials coordinate to develop methods of securing PII?

Yes. The Chief Information Security Officer and the Chief Privacy Officer will continue to work together on issues relating to privacy and data security for FTC.gov, online forms, and comment collection tools and to secure PII and other information that is collected by the FTC.

6.2 -- Are all IT security requirements and procedures required by federal law being followed to ensure that information is appropriately secured?

The FTC follows all applicable Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) requirements to ensure that the FTC.gov website is appropriately secured. The FTC.gov website is hosted by the Public Web Hosting GSS, which is categorized and authorized to handle

moderate risk information as defined using Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 199, Standards for Security Categorization of Federal Information and Information Systems.

In addition, as mandated by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-08-23, Securing the Federal Government's Domain Name System (DNS) Infrastructure, the FTC has deployed Domain Name System Security (DNSSEC). This provides cryptographic protections to DNS communication exchanges, removes threats of DNS-based attacks, and improves the integrity and authenticity of information processed over the Internet.

6.3 -- Has a Certification & Accreditation (security control assessment and authorization) been completed for the system or systems supporting the program?

Yes. The FTC.gov website is maintained as part of the Public Web Hosting General Support System (GSS), which is certified and accredited.

6.4 -- Has a risk assessment been conducted on the system?

Yes.

6.5 -- Does the project employ technology that may raise privacy concerns? If so, please discuss its implementation.

Yes, and the FTC has addressed risks and vulnerabilities as described elsewhere in this document. *See*, e.g., Sections 4.2, 7.0.

In addition, as discussed in Sections 1.0 and 2.0, online forms and comment collection tools that are located on or accessible by link from www.FTC.gov, address relevant privacy concerns in their specific PIAs. Refer to Section 1.0 and 2.0 for more information.

6.6 -- Describe what privacy training is provided to users either generally or specifically relevant to the program or system.

All FTC employees and designated contractor personnel with network access are required to complete computer security training and privacy awareness training annually. Interactive online training covers topics such as how to properly handle PII and other data, online threats, social engineering, and the physical security of documents.

Individuals with significant security responsibilities are required to undergo additional, specialized training, tailored to their respective responsibilities.

6.7 -- What auditing measures and technical safeguards are in place to prevent the misuse of data?

Auditing measures and technical safeguards appropriate for data with a FIPS 199 Moderate security categorization are in place.

6.8 -- To whom should questions regarding the security of the system be addressed?

Any questions regarding the security of the system should be directed to the FTC's Chief Information Security Officer.

SECTION 7.0 – IDENTIFICATION AND MITIGATION OF OTHER PRIVACY RISKS

7.1 – What other privacy risks exist, and how will the agency mitigate those risks?

The primary privacy risks are unauthorized collection of PII, unauthorized access to PII that has been collected, and unauthorized sharing or dissemination of PII that has been collected. The FTC follows all applicable Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) requirements to ensure that the FTC.gov website and related resources are appropriately secured. The FTC.gov website and related resources are hosted by the Public Web Hosting GSS, which is categorized and authorized to handle moderate risk information as defined using Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 199, Standards for Security Categorization of Federal Information and Information Systems. Appropriate encryption (e.g., https) is used for all FTC forms and collection tools posted on or linked on the website.

In addition, users may adjust their Web browser settings to reject some or all of these cookies to avoid FTC.gov's tracking technology, although doing so may prevent some content from working properly. Furthermore, pursuant to OMB Memorandum M-10-23, the FTC periodically reviews FTC.gov's Privacy Policy and practices to make sure that the descriptions remain appropriate in light of any changes in the FTC's use of FTC.gov. At the time of this PIA, the last official update to FTC.gov's Privacy Policy was March 2014, and the FTC reviewed it again in August 2014, prior to publishing this PIA.

The Federal Trade Commission enforces the COPPA Rule. The FTC.gov website and related resources do not intend to collect any information from children under 13 years of age. Google Analytics does collect anonymous data from all website visitors. See Section 2.1.

SECTION 8.0 – CREATION OR MODIFICATION OF A SYSTEM OF RECORDS

8.1 – Will the FTC's activities create or modify a "system of records" under the Privacy Act of 1974?

Data collected directly from individuals through various FTC websites may be maintained and/or incorporated into one or more agency records systems retrieved by personal identifier and, thus, subject to the Privacy Act.

8.2 -- Will the data in the system be retrieved by a personal identifier?

Web log data is collected and maintained in raw form, is used only to analyze aggregate traffic patterns as opposed to individual activity, and is not maintained or routinely retrieved by personal identifier.

8.3 -- Is the system covered by an existing Privacy Act System of Records notice (SORN)?

As noted above, data collected directly from individuals through the site may be maintained and/or incorporated into one or more agency records systems retrieved by personal identifier and, thus, subject to the Privacy Act.

For example, rulemaking and workshop comments collected through online CommentWorks® forms linked to the website are eventually posted publicly on www.FTC.gov, subject to retrieval by commenter name. The FTC's SORN for public records covers these comments (FTC I-6).

Complaint data collected through the Complaint Assistant form are covered by the FTC's Consumer Information System SORN (FTC IV-1). This data may then be incorporated into other FTC records systems, as appropriate, such as its nonpublic legal program records (FTC I-1).

FOIA Requests form data are covered by FTC IV-1 (and Privacy Act request data, if any, by FTC IV-2).

Event Registration Data are covered by FTC VI-1 (Mailing and Contact Lists).

All of the FTC's SORNs are listed and can be downloaded from our public SORN page: http://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-reading-rooms/privacy-act-systems.

[Remainder of page intentionally left blank]

Approval and Signature Page

Prepared for the Business Owners of the System by:

_____   Date: _____
Barri Hutchins, Webmaster
Office of Chief Information Officer

Review:

_____   Date: _____
Sarah Mackey
Chair, Social Media Task Force
Office of the General Counsel

_____   Date: _____
Richard Custer
Web Content Manager

_____   Date: _____
Cheryl Warner
Social Media Strategist

_____   Date: _____
Alexander C. Tang, Attorney
Office of the General Counsel

_____   Date: _____
Peter B. Miller
Chief Privacy Officer

_____   Date: _____
Jeffrey Nakrin
Director, Records and Filings Office

_____   Date: _____
Jeffrey Smith
Chief Information Security Officer

Approved:

_____   Date: _____
Bajinder Paul
Chief Information Officer