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WOMMA and CCC Form Alliance to Launch New Internet Promotion and Social Media Program for Regulatory Compliance

Proprietary Train + Test method helps to prevent violations and protect companies

New York, NY (September 20, 2010) – The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) and the Center for Communication Compliance (CCC) have formed a strategic alliance to co-market a new online regulatory compliance certificate program for new media marketing and communications.

Entitled *Regulatory Compliance 101: Internet Promotion & Social Media*, this first-of-its-kind online program is based on a **train + test** methodology designed to help reduce violative materials and decrease legal vulnerability.

“The alliance will help our industry keep moving forward with the execution of word of mouth marketing programs and social media tactics in a responsible way,” says Tarah Remington Brown, WOMMA Director of Member Relations.

The federal government has made it clear: off-label promotion of prescription pharmaceuticals and medical devices is subject not just to warning letters, but also to criminal prosecution and significant fines for both the company and individual employees. This includes marketing managers, sales directors, and others affiliated with product communications. The government can also bar a company from selling products through government-sponsored programs (e.g., Medicare/Medicaid).

Regulatory Compliance 101: Internet Promotion & Social Media is designed to minimize these risks by offering:

- Content with the latest regulatory facts and analysis, and their practical application to commonly used tactics – all in one centralized location
- Guaranteed ongoing updates available online, 24/7 to include any changes in the regulatory environment
- Correlating test to confirm participants have mastered the compliance information

“The current regulatory environment makes the development of online social media programs for pharmaceuticals and medical devices extremely challenging,” says Ilyssa Levins, President, CCC. “By launching a program to confirm mastery over fundamental regulatory information, the alliance strives to prevent violations and help protect companies by supporting a culture of compliance.”

The use of Internet marketing and social media today has left many companies feeling vulnerable and wary of moving forward with new media communications. As industry awaits guidance from FDA, the number of Untitled/Warning letters for online activities continue to increase.

“With up-to-date training and mastery testing, industry and promotional agencies that serve healthcare clients can continue to market effectively and help avoid enforcement by the FDA and the OIG in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS),” says Wayne Pines, former FDA official and Chair of the CCC Advisory Board.

CCC and WOMMA have identified a group of experts with direct expertise in social media who will instruct the course and guarantee the timeliness of all content. These include former FDA officials, Juris Doctors (JDs) and FTC veterans.

Test + Train Structure

The two-hour course is directed to any professional in the pharmaceutical, biotech, or medical device industry who works with, designs, executes, reviews, or oversees Internet promotion and social media programs. The correlated Regulatory Compliance Test (RCT) confirms participants' mastery over the information presented in the training. Websites, banner ads, search engine ads and optimization, “sharing features,” Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, chat rooms, direct mobile communications (texting, etc.), and SideWiki are addressed, as well as FDA and DDMAC warning letters and answers to specific questions posed by the industry and their agencies.

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About WOMMA

WOMMA, <http://womma.org>, is the leading trade association in the marketing and advertising industries that focuses on word of mouth, consumer-generated and social media platforms -- or marketing techniques that include buzz, viral, community, and influencer marketing as well as brand blogging. The organization is committed to developing and maintaining appropriate ethical standards for marketers and advertisers engaging in such marketing practices, identifying meaningful measurement standards for such marketing practices, and defining “best practices” for the industry. Founded in 2005, WOMMA currently has approximately 300 members. They include marketers and brands that use word of mouth marketing to reinforce their core customers and to reach out to new consumers, agencies that deliver word-of-mouth services and technologies, researchers that track the word of mouth experience and offline and online practitioners.

About CCC

Center for Communication Compliance (CCC) is the world's only all-in-one source for training, mastery testing and consulting in regulatory compliance. The company offers specialized expert-validated Regulatory Compliance Tests (RCTs) and a library of over 400 test questions and answers on diverse promotional compliance topics. CCC's correlated training and testing coursework, available in 45 countries, is modeled after the Stanley Kaplan Prep program for the SAT. The company has an Advisory Board of pre-eminent international experts. With 50+ educational program offerings and the ability to develop and deliver original content and customized regulatory solutions, CCC's curricula are practical, timely and compelling. The company offers the ideal combination of regulatory, legal and marketing/communications expertise.