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Mobility   **Sales and Marketing**

Group urges marketers to adopt best practices to avoid spam texts

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Published: August 1st, 2014

An international marketing industry group has released a new report laying down best practices for marketers who send business-related texts to their customers.

On Thursday, the Messaging, Malware and Mobile Anti-Abused Working Group (M3AAWG) issued a set of industry guidelines geared towards protecting consumers. They take aim at three areas – service design practices, defensive strategies, and techniques for detecting abuse. They also try to make abuse less profitable.

"As texting becomes less expensive and more accessible with Internet technologies like text-enabled landline accounts, we're increasingly seeing criminals turning text spam into an illicit money-making machine at the expense of consumers," said Alex Bobotek, M3AAWG vice-chairman, in a statement.

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Anti-spam law hits SMS marketing business

At least one SMS marketing business is seeing a decrease in usage since Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) came into effect July 1. The anti-spam law that requires

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Spammers sending more texts ahead of CASL, researchers find

If you're a resident of Montreal, Que., chances are you're one of the most targeted people to receive text messaged spam on your phone – and you may have gotten more than

Published on: June 20th, 2014 Candice So @candice_so

"Mobile abuse is rising significantly. These new best practices incorporate a decade of experience in fighting email and mobile abuse in M3AAWG and outline techniques specific to mobile messaging that can help protect service providers' networks from being exploited."

Some of the best practices mentioned in the report include preventing marketers from creating accounts automatically. When they do create accounts, they need to ensure the accounts use secure authentication through usernames and passwords.

The M3AAWG also suggested limiting the number of messages new accounts can send at once, ensuring abusers on the black market aren't buying up multiple new accounts and then spamming people with them.

It would also help to monitor and limit spam endorsements, like when an app sends invites or suggested downloads to consumers' contact lists, without their specific permission.

For users who do get served with spam, it would be handy for companies to provide them with a to "this is spam" button on their reporting system. Plus, marketers should stay up-to-date with news of

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industry abuses through forums, keeping an eye out for the newest ways spammers are attacking consumers with text messages.

We've written a lot about Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) here at *ITBusiness.ca.* While the M3AAWG's guidelines don't directly reference CASL, there's some overlap here – CASL affects any commercial electronic messages, including text messages. So it may make sense for marketers serving Canadian customers to pay attention.

Head on over here for the full list of best practices from the M3AAWG.

About Candice So
Candice is a graduate of Carleton University and has worked in several newsrooms as a freelance reporter and intern, including the Edmonton Journal, the Ottawa Citizen, the Globe and Mail, and the Windsor Star. Candice is a dog lover and a coffee drinker.

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