

October 1, 2020

Joseph J. Simons  
Chairman  
Federal Trade Commission  
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20580

William Barr  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Chairman Simons and Attorney General Barr:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, including professional associations, national and regional trade associations, and trade show organizers that represent thousands of small and medium-sized businesses, we write to request your urgent attention to the proliferating fraudulent business practice of selling falsified or stolen association mailing lists, and event attendee and/or exhibitor lists. These practices have serious financial and reputational implications to our organizations.

Associations and trade conferences are an essential part of industry growth and improvement. Industries with strong trade show programs have better performance, driven by the strong exchange of ideas and relationship building that is essential to economic growth. Trade and professional associations and trade show organizers depend on the willingness of people to attend these events, and that willingness is built on trust. The deceptive practices of these businesses are undermining the relationship between members, attendees, and official industry sponsors.

Through trademark infringement, false association advertising and unfair competition, they market unofficial and often fake membership and attendee lists. These actions alarm association members, attendees and exhibitors who think their information is being used contrary to official statements from associations and show organizers. It also invariably disappoints prospective purchasers who think they are buying legitimate lists. Millions of dollars are exchanged for this false information that reflects badly on the trade organizers. The damage to brand reputations is impossible to measure, but real. It is crippling many industries from a better exchange of information that would lead to faster economic growth.

We respectfully request your review of this matter without delay. An investigation into this practice would be a great victory for trade and professional associations and other trade show organizers that find themselves the victims of the unauthorized use of their trademarks, infringement and illegitimate vendors attempting to sell fake lists and other services. Despite [recent legal victories](#), this deceitful activity has continued to occur unabated.

Thank you for considering our concerns, and please consider us a resource as you analyze this matter. We appreciate your time and attention.

Sincerely,

AICC, The Independent Packaging Association

American Bankers Association  
American Bus Association  
American Cleaning Institute  
American Coatings Association  
American Council of Engineering Companies  
American Hotel & Lodging Association  
American Land Title Association  
American Property Casualty Insurance Association  
American Society of Association Executives  
American Sportfishing Association  
AMT - The Association for Manufacturing Technology  
Asian American Hotel Owners Association  
ASIS International  
Associated Builders and Contractors  
Associated Equipment Distributors  
Association for Education Alliance, LLC  
Association for Hose and Accessories Distribution  
Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International  
Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM)  
Association of Wall & Ceiling Industry  
Association of Water Technologies (AWT)  
Auto Care Association  
Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International  
CCIM Institute  
Club Management Association of America  
Comexposium US, LLC  
Consumer Data Industry Association  
Consumer Technology Association  
Council for Responsible Nutrition  
Disability:IN  
Electronics Representatives Association  
Entertainment Software Association  
Equipment Service Association  
Fluid Power Distributors Association  
GAWDA  
Heating, Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Distributors International  
Household & Commercial Products Association (HCPA)  
Industrial Fabrics Association International  
Institute of Food Technologists  
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries  
Institute of Real Estate Management  
International Association of Plastics Distribution (IAPD)

International Council of Shopping Centers  
International Franchise Association  
International Housewares Association  
International Sealing Distribution Association  
International Sign Association  
Irrigation Association  
Manufactured Housing Institute  
Maryland State Pest Control Association  
Material Handling Equipment Distributors Association  
Meetings Means Business Coalition  
MFV Expositions, LLC  
Motorcycle Industry Council  
National Asian American Chamber of Commerce  
National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)  
National Association of Home Builders  
National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)  
National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC)  
National Association of Professional Employer Organizations  
National Association of REALTORS®  
National Association of Sign Supply Distributors  
National Association of Trailer Manufacturers  
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors  
National Association of Women Business Owners  
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA)  
National Beer Wholesalers Association  
National Community Pharmacists Association  
National Confectioners Association  
National Electrical Contractors Association  
National Fastener Distributors Association  
National Fisheries Institute  
National Insulation Association  
National Investor Relations Institute  
National LGBT Chamber of Commerce  
National Marine Distributors Association  
National Mining Association  
National Retail Federation  
National RV Dealers Association  
National Small Business Association  
North American Association of Floor Covering Distributors (NAFCD)  
North American Building Material Distribution Association (NBMDA)  
NSSF - The Firearm Industry Trade Association

Outdoor Power Equipment and Engine Service Association  
Pacific-West Fastener Association  
Pet Industry Distributors Association  
Petroleum Equipment Institute (PEI)  
Power Transmission Distributors Association  
Professional Beauty Association  
Promotional Products Association International  
Residential Real Estate Council  
Retail Industry Leaders Association  
Retail Packaging Association  
Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association  
Security Hardware Distributors Association  
Security Industry Association  
SHAPE America  
Society for Human Resource Management  
Society of Independent Show Organizers  
Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR)  
Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA)  
Technical Association of the Pulp & Paper Industry (TAPPI)  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
U.S. Tire Manufacturers Association  
U.S. Travel Association  
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
United Veterinary Services Association  
Washington Retail Association  
Wholesale Florist & Florist Supplier Association  
Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America  
Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association (ISSA)  
Yacht Brokers Association of America