

Alliance for consumer education event – 23 November 2006

Introduction

The second Alliance for consumer education event, hosted by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), took place on 23 November 2006 at the Barbican in central London. It was attended by over 100 delegates from business, consumer organisations, academia, government bodies and Local Authority Trading Standards Services.

The event provided a forum for exploring the role of the media in developing consumer education, with input from four media professionals. Workshop sessions focused on how to overcome consumer inertia, communicating consumer education developments, exploring the possibilities in consumer education and reaching adult audiences.

In addition to the Keynote speech - given by the John Fingleton, Chief Executive of the OFT - the day included a presentation focusing on the lifecycle of a consumer education initiative.

Some key themes which emerged from the day included:

- The importance of preparation when aiming to engage the media in consumer education. Messages should be targeted and, where possible, be about real people.
- The idea of building on the OFT's exercise to map UK consumer education initiatives has potential to be usefully developed. There was also enthusiasm from delegates to contribute to the work.
- Consumer education needs to be more proactive rather than reactive as prevention is better than cure.
- Rather than trying to overcome consumer inertia, try and use it to your advantage in shaping consumer education initiatives.
- Piggy-backing additional messages on existing workplace seminars could be a useful way to reach adult audiences.

This document provides a record of the event transcripts of the speeches and discussions which took place. Presentations and photos of the day are available to download from the OFT website.