

## **Scams awareness: Just Tick It campaign strategy**

### **Launch date: Friday 28 May 2010**

#### **Executive summary**

This paper outlines the OFT's approach for its scams awareness 'Just Tick It' campaign running during June 2010. It describes our objectives, key messages, campaign approach and specific media that will be used to deliver our messages.

#### **Background**

Our focus on online ticketing scams is prompted by two prime considerations:

- To enhance consumers' online confidence, recognising that warning messages are required as scammers are increasingly targeting consumers online.
- Consumer detriment, particularly as ticket sales for concerts and events are increasing.

Our proposed activities will reinforce delivery of aims in the OFT's Annual Plan 2010-11, which states that:

'Online markets are crucial to the competitiveness of the UK and EU economy. Full consumer benefits from the internet will only materialise if consumers trust online markets enough, and engage confidently with them. If trust in online markets is low, the economy will suffer, now and in the future since demand will grow at a slower rate and smaller players and new entrants – who are often the source of future innovation – might be disproportionately affected. The shape of consumers' current and future demand is critical to innovation and investment decisions in online markets.'

We are also reinforcing OFT's philosophy, that:

- Skilled consumers who know their rights and who are able to access redress mechanisms will be confident in their dealings with businesses in conventional and in newer market settings such as the internet. Consumers who can differentiate between legitimate businesses and rogue traders, and between legitimate business practices and scams, are also more likely to take well informed decisions and less likely to be caught out.
- Advice provided to consumers also benefits legitimate businesses. If consumers are able to identify the rogues and scams, legitimate businesses will be less likely to lose market share to those engaging in sharp practices. If consumers know their rights, businesses will handle fewer misinformed complaints.

The intended result is more empowered consumers making informed decisions, which results in businesses being more likely to innovate, reduce inefficiencies and compete in ways which make markets work well for consumers and the wider economy. To work towards that result, the OFT needs to deliver a mix of consumer rights and watch out messages to consumers – alerting people to scams is one of our key watch out areas.

## **Campaign overview**

The Just Tick It campaign is a key component of the OFT's scams awareness work.

In the run up to events such as pop/rock concerts and festivals, there are many opportunities for scammers to target consumers. For example, fake (fraudulent) ticketing websites claim to sell event tickets that are never delivered, leaving fans without tickets and their money. Scammers also target consumers using online auctions and traditional media channels, such as newspaper adverts.

To ensure their success, scammers also promote their fake websites by using social media channels. For example, they create user groups on

Facebook to signpost users to them and post positive feedback about their websites on blogging sites.

In September 2009, the OFT ran its first Just Tick It campaign (campaign evaluation report is available here: [www.offt.gov.uk/justtickit](http://www.offt.gov.uk/justtickit)). An online survey of 3,000 UK consumers was conducted for the campaign. The findings are:

- One in five people knows someone who has bought tickets to a music, sport or theatre event from a fake ticketing website.
- One in twelve ticket buyers admit to having been caught out by fake ticketing websites, with 80 per cent of those having fallen victim in the last year.
- Victims lost an average of £80 each.
- Men are twice as likely to be tricked by such scams as women.
- One in five (20 per cent) didn't report it.

The top three motivating factors for unwittingly using fake ticketing websites:

- Desperation to get hold of event tickets (44 per cent).
- Excitement of finding tickets they wanted online (40 per cent).
- The legitimate and professional appearance of the fake ticketing websites (32 per cent).

This campaign aims to build upon the success of last year's Just Tick It campaign.

### **Campaign aim**

- To raise awareness of online ticketing scams and to provide advice on how to avoid being scammed.
- Complement the existing work of other organisations working in the area of scams, for example, local authority Trading Standards Services (TSS).

## **Strategic objective**

- Raise awareness of online ticketing scams to help minimise consumer detriment by reducing the number of people falling victim to scams.

## **Target audience**

### **Primary**

- Event ticket buyers aged 16 to 25 years in all socio economic groups.
- Event ticket buyers aged 30 to 45 years in all socio economic groups.

### **Secondary**

- Current organisations/stakeholders working to raise awareness of scams issues and/or in scams enforcement work.
- Ticket agencies / regulators.
- Event organisers / venues.
- All UK consumers.

## **Communication objectives**

- Increase awareness of online ticketing scams.
- Help consumers identify fake ticketing websites.
- Reduce the number of consumers falling victim to fake ticketing websites.
- Increase awareness of getting advice and information about online ticketing scams from Consumer Direct.
- Increase awareness of scam reporting via the online 'Report a Scam' function on Consumer Direct's website.
- Increase the number of unique visitors to the Just Tick It fake website ([www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets)).
- Increase unique visitors to the online ticketing scams section of the Consumer Direct website.

## Key messages

- If only fake ticket sites were so easy to spot.
- Watch out for fake ticketing websites. There are lots of legitimate websites but scammers make it difficult to spot a fake.
- Don't let them con you. Ask yourself: How can this website guarantee tickets to an event that is already sold out, or that are not on sale yet?
- Never buy event tickets from a website you're unsure of. Ask others about it and search online for comments.
- Pass on the warnings. Tell your friends and family if you discover a fake ticketing website.
- You can 'tick off' a number of things to look out before purchasing your tickets online by visiting:  
[www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketscams](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketscams).
- Report fake ticketing websites or suspected ones to:  
[www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/reportascam](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/reportascam).

## Marketing activities

### PR

Scams is a popular media subject. We will develop a national PR campaign to raise awareness of the issues. It will also extend to local PR via organisations working towards the same goal within in their local communities.

A new creative idea will be developed to provide a campaign hook. We will also develop creative ideas that will deliver support from other major players such as the O2, theatres, music companies, festival organisers: Glastonbury / V Festival.

Possible inclusions:

- Updates to toolkit / factsheet for stakeholders and potential campaign supporters. Potential supporters include, for example, venues such as the O2, theatres, music companies, festival organisers: Glastonbury / V Festival.
- Consumer title tie-ins, for example, NME music magazine.
- Celebrity support.

- Links to:
  - Glastonbury festival - June 2010
  - Leona Lewis UK tour - June 2010
  - Bon Jovi World tour - June 2010
  - V festival - August 2010
  - Reading festival - August 2010
  - London 2012 Olympics (tickets on sale from 2011).

## Digital media

Last year's campaign successfully used elements of digital media, such as Search Engine Optimisation, pay per click Google ads, banner advertising (free media), widgets, email marketing, and social media engagement via Consumer Direct's Facebook and Twitter channels. Users were signposted to the Just Tick It fake website:

[www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets) and the general ticketing advice page on Consumer Direct's website: [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketscams](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketscams).

Working with a digital agency, we will develop a new integrated digital media plan by building upon the delivery channels used last year, and adding new ones to increase target audience penetration.

Possible new elements for consideration:

- Viral marketing
- Mobile marketing
- Social media - new Just Tick It Facebook and Twitter channels
- Social media - blogging stimulation.

Signposting for digital media:

- Just Tick It fake ticketing website interactive guide housed on Consumer Direct's website: [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets).
- General ticketing advice page on Consumer Direct's website: [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketscams](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketscams).
- Report a scam function housed on Consumer Direct's website: [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/reportascam](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/reportascam).

## Campaign brand and materials

We will use the existing brand identity for Just Tick It:



Interactive scam guide

- Just Tick It fake ticketing website interactive guide housed on Consumer Direct's website: [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets) - shows how a fake ticket site may look and provides advice on how to protect If from scammers, when clicked through.

## Evaluation

- Pre and post campaign tracking research to measure awareness levels and claimed behavioural changes.
- Digital media will also be evaluated as part of the integrated digital media plan.
- Media evaluation.

## Stakeholder engagement and campaign support

We are approaching all organisations involved in last year's campaign and mapping new organisations to approach such as, ticket agents, festival organisers, and venues, to stimulate engagement for raising awareness of the campaign.