The Marketing Practices Consolidation Act


Part 1

Purpose and scope of the Act

Good marketing practice

Section 1. Traders subject to this Act shall exercise good marketing practice with reference to consumers, other traders and public interests.

(2) Marketing in respect of consumers’ economic interests may not be designed to significantly distort their economic behaviour.

Scope

Section 2. This Act applies to private business activity and to public activity to the extent that products and services are offered in the market.

(2) Sections 1 and 3, section 12a and section 13(3) and (6) No. 1 do not apply to businesses subject to the Financial Business Act to the extent that the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs has issued regulations in the areas concerned.

(3) Section 13(2) and (4) and sections 15 and 16 do not apply to businesses subject to the Financial Business Act.

Part 2

General rules of market conduct

Misleading and undue marketing

Section 3. Traders may not use misleading or undue indications or omit material information if this is designed to significantly distort consumers’ or other traders’ economic behaviour on the market.

(2) Marketing whose content, form or method used is misleading, aggressive or subjects the consumers or traders to undue influence, and which lends itself to significantly distorting their economic behaviour, is not permitted.

(3) Where factual statements are made, these must be capable of being substantiated by documentation.

(4) The Minister for Economic and Business Affairs lays down more detailed regulations for specific forms of marketing which, pursuant to EU regulation, are considered in any circumstances to be unfair in respect of business to consumer matters.

Advertising identification

Section 4. An advertisement shall be framed in such a way that it will be clearly understood to be an advertisement irrespective of its form and irrespective of the medium in which it is couched.
**Comparative advertising**

**Section 5.** Comparative advertising means any advertising which explicitly or by implication identifies a competitor or products or services offered by a competitor. (2) Comparative advertising (cf. subsection (1)) is permitted under this Act when the following conditions are met:

1) It is not misleading,
2) It compares products or services meeting the same needs or intended for the same purpose,
3) It objectively compares one or more material, relevant, verifiable and representative features of these products and services, which may include price,
4) It does not create confusion among traders, between the advertiser and a competitor or between the advertiser’s trade marks, trade names, other distinguishing marks, products or services and those of a competitor,
5) It does not discredit or denigrate the trade marks, trade names, other distinguishing marks, products, services, activities, or circumstances of a competitor,
6) For products with designation of origin, it relates in each case to products with the same designation,
7) It does not take unfair advantage of the reputation of a trade mark, trade name or other distinguishing marks of a competitor or of the designation of origin of competing products and
8) It does not present products or services as imitations or replicas of products or services bearing a protected trade mark or trade name.

**Unsolicited communication with specific customers**

**Section 6.** A trader must not approach anyone by means of electronic mail, an automated calling system or facsimile machine with a view to the sale of products, real property, other property, labour and services unless the party concerned has requested him to do so. (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), a trader that has received a customer’s electronic contact details in connection with the sale of products or services may market his own similar products or services to that customer by electronic mail, provided that the customer has the option, free of charge and in an easy manner, of declining this both when giving his contact details to the trader and in the event of subsequent communications. (3) A trader must not approach a specific natural person using other means of remote communication with a view to sales as referred to in subsection (1) if the person concerned has declined such communications from the trader, if it may be seen from a list prepared each quarter by the Central Office of Personal Registration (CPR) that the person concerned has declined communications for such marketing purposes, or if the trader, by consulting the CPR, has become aware that the person concerned has declined such communications. Telephone communications are also subject to the regulations governing unsolicited communications in the Act on Certain Consumer Agreements. (4) Subsection (3) does not apply if the person in question has previously requested the communication from the trader. (5) The first time a trader makes a communication as referred to in subsection (3) with a specific natural person who is not on the CPR list, the trader shall inform him clearly and comprehensibly of his right to decline communications from the trader as referred to in subsection (3). At the same time, the person concerned shall be offered an easy manner of declining such communications. (6) No payment may be requested for receiving or noting information to the effect that a request under subsection (1) is being revoked or that communications as referred to in subsection (3) are being declined. (7) The Minister for Economic and Business Affairs may lay down more detailed regulations governing the trader’s duty to provide information under subsection (5) and duty to offer an opportunity to decline communications as referred to in subsection (3).

**Guidance**

**Section 7.** When an offer is made, on entry into an agreement or (depending on the circumstances) at the time of delivery, appropriate guidance shall be given in accordance with the nature of the product or service, where this is of importance for the assessment of the character or properties of the product or service, including in particular its functional properties, durability, hazardous nature and maintainability.

**Section 7a.** The Minister for Economic and Business Affairs lays down more detailed regulations in order to fulfil the provisions of the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on services in the internal market concerning the service providers’ obligation to provide information to the service recipient.
Part 3

Consumer protection

Marketing directed at children and young people

Section 8. Marketing directed at children and young people shall be framed with specific reference to their natural credulity and lack of experience and critical sense, as a result of which they are readily influenced and easy to impress.

(2) Marketing directed at children and young people must not directly or indirectly incite them to violence, use of intoxicants (including alcohol) or other dangerous or inconsiderate behaviour, nor make unwarrantable use of violence, fear or superstition in order to influence them.

Sales promotions

Section 9. A sales promotion campaign shall be presented in such a way that the terms of offer are clear and easily accessible to the consumer, and the value of any additional services is clearly indicated.

(2) If a trader offers products or services at a particular price and has reasonable grounds for supposing that he will not be in a position to satisfy demand in a quantity that is reasonable in relation to the offer and the scope of its marketing, the trader shall include a clear proviso to this effect in such marketing.

Trading stamps

Section 10. No discount or other benefit may be granted by the use of stamps, vouchers etc. that are provided by a trader prior to purchase of a product or in the performance of services. The first sentence does not apply to service providers established in another EU/EEA country and which are temporarily providing services in Denmark, provided that the redemption of the voucher takes place outside Denmark.

(2) However, when selling a product or in the performance of services, traders may grant discounts or other benefits in the form of stamps, vouchers etc. for subsequent redemption, provided each individual stamp clearly bears the name of the issuer or company and states the value in Danish currency. When stamps to an amount laid down by the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs are due for redemption, the trading stamp issuer shall redeem the stamp in Denmark at its face value.

Draws and prize competitions

Section 11. No attempt may be made to promote the sale of products or services by means of possible winnings through participation in a draw, prize competition or other form of arrangement whose outcome depends wholly or partly on chance, if participation depends on a purchase.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply if the amount of the individual prize and the overall winnings value is within limits laid down by the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs. Such amount limits may be determined by product and recipient types.

(3) The publisher of a periodical may arrange draws for the distribution of winnings in connection with the solving of prize competitions.

(4) Subsection (1) does not apply to service providers established in another EU/EEA country and which are temporarily providing services in Denmark, provided that the draw and prize redemption associated with the competition takes place outside Denmark.

Guarantee

Section 12. A statement granting a guarantee or similar arrangement to consumers may be made only if such a statement places the recipient in a substantially better legal position than that he enjoys in law.

(2) If a guarantee is provided, the trader shall set out in plain intelligible language the contents of the guarantee and the particulars necessary for making claims under the guarantee. The trader shall also indicate clearly and unambiguously that the consumer’s essential rights under the law are not affected by the guarantee. On request by the consumer, the guarantee shall be made available in writing. Written guarantees shall be in Danish.

Invitation to purchase

Section 12a. In the case of an invitation to purchase directed at the consumer, the trader shall provide the following information, if not already apparent from the context:

1) the main characteristics of the product or the service,
2) the address and the identity of the trader,
3) the arrangements for payment, delivery and performance of the contract, to the extent these arrangements depart from normal industry practice,
4) the trader’s method of handling complaints, to the extent it departs from normal industry practice,
5) the right of withdrawal, cancellation or return, if the consumer has such a right, and also
6) the price inclusive of taxes.
(2) Where the nature of the product or the service means that the price cannot reasonably be calculated in advance, the manner in which the price is calculated shall be provided. Where appropriate, all additional freight, delivery or postal charges shall be provided or, where these charges cannot reasonably be calculated in advance, it shall be made clear that such additional charges may be payable.
(3) For the purposes of this Executive Order "invitation to purchase" means a commercial communication which indicates characteristics of the product and the price in a way appropriate to the means of the commercial communication used and thereby enables the consumer to make a purchase.

Price information

Section 13. When products are offered for sale to consumers (this does not include the sale of products by auction), clear information shall be provided by labelling, signing or otherwise as to the overall price of the product, including fees, costs, VAT and all other expenses. Taxes or costs which the trader is not obliged to collect directly from the consumers are not covered by this section.
(1) The cash price,
(2) the procedure for providing price information and the restriction in the quantity of information provided,
(3) that information indicating the net quantity must appear on pre-packaged retail products.
(4) When a service is performed as per account rendered, the consumer shall if he so requests be sent an itemised bill from which he can check the price of the products and services included.
(5) By a fee is understood a payment for a specific service, function or benefit which is linked to the purchase of a product or service and which is not of the nature of a payment for an independent service.
(6) Following negotiation with the minister concerned and representatives of consumers and relevant trade and industry organisations, the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs may lay down regulations specifying
1) special rules concerning and derogations from subsections (1-4), including rules dealing with information in connection with the granting of credit,
2) the procedure for providing price information and the restriction in the quantity of information provided,
3) that the unit price of the product and the use of units in the individual product groups must be indicated in the same manner as in subsection (1), and
4) that information indicating the net quantity must appear on pre-packaged retail products.

Purchase on credit

Section 14. If the products are offered for sale to consumers with information concerning the costs of purchasing them on credit, information shall be furnished in the same way as that indicated in section 13(1) regarding
1) the cash price,
2) the credit costs summarised under a single amount and
3) the annual credit percentage costs. The annual credit percentage costs shall be indicated in at least as prominent a manner as the other credit information.
(2) Part 2 of the Credit Agreements Act is applied to the calculation of the credit costs referred to in subsection (1) No. 2 and the annual percentage costs referred to in subsection (1) No. 3.
(3) Information as in subsection (1) may be provided in the form of a representative example, if this is the only appropriate procedure.
(4) Subsections (1-3) are correspondingly applied where products are offered to consumers by electronic means and may be ordered.

Fees

Section 15. If the amount or the levying of a fee, cf. section 13(5), that is not regulated by legislation in an ongoing contractual relationship may be altered to the detriment of the consumer, the conditions for this must be clearly emphasised in the contract.
A reasonable period of notice of change in fees or the levying of new fees in an ongoing contractual relationship must always be given before such fees become binding on the consumer. If the change in fee is substantial, or a new fee is to be levied, the consumer shall receive individual notice of this before the change takes effect. If the consumer is entitled to terminate the agreement, this must be clear from the notice, as must the conditions under which the consumer may terminate the agreement.

Organised discount

Section 16. Traders who provide an organised discount in the form of a discount or other special benefit to members of associations or organisations or to specific groups of persons in respect of products or services dealt with by section 13(2) shall indicate, by clear signing at all entrances to their business premises, which groups are to receive the organised discount and the amount thereof.

(2) If so requested, the trader shall provide a list of the products and services included in the organised discount and the amount of the discount.

(3) In the case of distance selling, the information referred to in subsection (1) shall be provided in conjunction with price information, while the information referred to in subsection (2) shall be provided on request.

(4) The provisions in subsections (1-3) do not apply to organised discounts given subject to an employment relationship with the discount grantor.

(5) Following negotiations with the minister concerned and representatives of consumers and relevant trade and industry organisations, the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs may lay down regulations governing the design and content of the signing and may specify that a service provider not covered by section 13(2) must indicate that he provides an organised discount.

Marking and packaging

Section 17. Following negotiation with representatives of consumers and relevant trade and industry organisations, the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs may lay down provisions to the effect that certain products offered for sale to consumers may be sold or offered for sale only if accompanied by a statement that the product is Danish or foreign, or of its place of manufacture or origin. The Minister may determine in greater detail how the statements in question shall be delivered, and what is to be understood in each case by the product's place of manufacture or origin.

(2) Following negotiation with representatives of consumers and relevant trade and industry organisations, the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs may lay down provisions to the effect

1) that certain trade names or symbols are reserved to or shall be used for products that fulfil certain more detailed stipulations, and
2) that certain products may be sold or offered for sale only if such products or their packaging are furnished, in a way prescribed in greater detail by the Minister, with information regarding the products' content and composition, shelf life, treatment and other characteristics.

Part 4

Regulations applying to traders

Business emblems

Section 18. Traders must not use business emblems and similar devices that do not belong to them, nor use their own business emblems in a manner likely to cause confusion with others.

Trade secrets and technical drawings

Section 19. An individual who is under contract of service to or in cooperation with a business or is carrying out an assignment on its behalf must not obtain or try to obtain knowledge or disposal of the trade secrets of the business in an improper manner.

(2) If the individual concerned has obtained knowledge or disposal of the trade secrets of the business in a lawful manner, he must not (unless authorised) pass on or make use of such secrets. This prohibition is valid for three years after the end of the contract of service, cooperation or assignment.

(3) The rules in subsections (1) and (2) apply in the same way to other persons who have lawful access to the business.

(4) A person who in the course of work or for another commercial purpose has been entrusted with technical drawings, specifications, formulae, models or the like may not make use of such material or put others in a position to do so without authorisation.

(5) Traders may not make use of a trade secret if knowledge or disposal of it has been obtained in conflict with the provisions referred to above.
Part 5

Legal remedies and venue

Legal remedies

Section 20. Actions in conflict with this Act may be prohibited by judgments. Concurrently with this or subsequently, such injunctions may be imposed by judgments as may be considered necessary to ensure
1) compliance with the prohibition, including through provision that agreements entered into in conflict with a prohibition are invalid, and
2) restitution of the state of affairs existing before the unlawful action, including destruction or recall of products and issue of information or correction of statements.
(2) Actions in conflict with this Act incur liability to pay damages under the general rules of Danish law.
(3) Any person who infringes or unwarrantably takes advantage of another’s rights in conflict with this Act shall pay reasonable damages for this.
(4) If infringement or exploitation of rights in conflict with this Act has taken place neither intentionally nor through negligence, the offender shall pay damages in accordance with subsection (3) to the extent deemed reasonable.

The Maritime and Commercial Court

Section 21. (Repealed)

Part 6

The activities of the Consumer Ombudsman

The Consumer Ombudsman

Section 22. It is the responsibility of the Consumer Ombudsman to monitor compliance with this Act and the executive orders issued pursuant to this Act, especially in the interests of consumers.
(2) The Consumer Ombudsman may require the disclosure of all details considered necessary for his activities, including a decision as to whether a matter falls within the purview of the Act. Such disclosure may be required within a short time limit where comparative advertising is concerned or when considered necessary under the circumstances.
(3) The Consumer Ombudsman will be appointed by the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs for a period of six years, and may be discharged without application only if such discharge is for health reasons, or if the individual concerned is unfit to remain in the post as a result of criminality, misconduct in service or fraud. Employment ceases automatically at the end of the month in which the individual concerned reaches the age of 70. No extension or reappointment is permitted. The Consumer Ombudsman shall fulfil the general conditions for appointment as a judge.
(4) No appeal may be lodged against the Consumer Ombudsman’s rulings under this Act before any other administrative authority.
(5) The Minister for Economic and Business Affairs lays down more detailed regulations governing the activities of the Consumer Ombudsman.

On-site inspections

Section 22a. The Consumer Ombudsman may carry out inspections for the purpose of processing complaints forwarded from enforcement authorities in other EU countries pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 on consumer protection cooperation, and which concern infringements of directives for which the Consumer Ombudsman has been appointed the competent authority.
(2) The Consumer Ombudsman’s inspections may only take place after a court order has been obtained.
(3) Access for inspections involves the Consumer Ombudsman obtaining access to a company’s premises and means of transport in order to familiarise himself with and make copies of all information, including marketing materials, accounts and other business records, regardless of the information medium. The Consumer Ombudsman may request oral explanations of the facts in connection with the inspection.
(4) Where a company’s information is stored at or processed by an external data processor, the Consumer Ombudsman may obtain access to the external data processor’s premises in order to familiarise himself with and make copies of the information, cf. subsection (3). This access assumes that it is not possible for the Consumer Ombudsman to obtain access to the information concerned directly from the company which is the subject of the inspection.
(5) If the company’s circumstances mean it is not possible for the Consumer Ombudsman to obtain access to or make copies of the information on the same day as the inspection is carried out, cf. subsections (3) and (4), the Consumer Ombudsman may seal the relevant business premises and information for up to 72 hours.
(6) Under the same conditions as in subsection (5), the Consumer Ombudsman may take information in order to copy it. The information taken by the Consumer Ombudsman shall, together with a set of copies of the information which the Consumer Ombudsman has taken for the purpose of a more detailed review, be returned to the company no later than three working days after the inspection.

(7) The police provide assistance in the exercise of powers under subsections (3-6). The Minister for Economic and Business Affairs may, after negotiation with the Minister of Justice, lay down more detailed rules for this assistance.

(8) Parts 2 and 3 of the Act on legal rights in the event of the administration’s use of forced entry and disclosure obligations shall apply to inspections under this provision.

The negotiation principle

Section 23. The Consumer Ombudsman shall seek by negotiation to influence traders to act in accordance with the principles of good marketing practice and to observe this Act in other respects.

(2) If a trader disregards an undertaking given to the Consumer Ombudsman after negotiation under subsection (1), the Consumer Ombudsman may impose such injunctions on the trader as may be considered necessary to ensure compliance with the undertaking.

Guidelines

Section 24. Following negotiation with the consumers and the relevant trade and industry organisations, the Consumer Ombudsman will seek to influence the conduct of traders by the preparation and issue of guidelines for marketing in specified areas that must be considered essential, especially in the interests of the consumer.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Consumer Ombudsman may not issue guidelines that are directed solely at businesses falling within the purview of the Financial Business Act.

Advance indication

Section 25. On request, the Consumer Ombudsman will give a statement regarding his view of the lawfulness of contemplated marketing arrangements, unless an opinion would be subject to unusual doubt or other special circumstances exist. An advance indication does not amount to an actual opinion of the lawfulness of the arrangement concerned.

(2) Once the Consumer Ombudsman has delivered an advance indication to a trader to the effect that he thinks a prospective arrangement would be lawful, the Consumer Ombudsman cannot interfere on his own initiative with an arrangement covered by the advance indication and implemented within a reasonable time of its delivery.

(3) The Minister for Economic and Business Affairs may lay down more detailed rules concerning advance indication fees.

Part 7

Transferred powers

Section 26. The Minister for Economic and Business Affairs may transfer his powers under this Act to an authority under the Ministry. This does not apply to powers under section 22(5). If the Minister for Economic and Business Affairs transfers his powers to an authority under the Ministry, he may lay down rules governing right of appeal, including the stipulation that appeals cannot be brought before another administrative authority.

Part 8

Legal proceedings, prohibitions, injunctions and damages

Legal proceedings etc.

Section 27. Anyone with a legal interest therein may bring a case concerning prohibitions, injunctions, damages and remuneration under section 20. The Consumer Ombudsman may bring a case concerning prohibitions and injunctions under section 20(1).

(2) The Consumer Ombudsman may issue an injunction if an action is clearly in conflict with this Act and cannot be changed by negotiation.

(3) A party upon whom an injunction is imposed may require that it be considered by the courts. A request to this effect shall be submitted to the Consumer Ombudsman in writing within four weeks of notification of the party concerned of the injunction. The Consumer Ombudsman shall bring the case to court under the rules governing civil administration of justice within one week of receiving the request.

(4) A request under subsection 3 has no delaying effect, but the court may find that the party concerned may continue with the action covered by the injunction while the case is going on.
(5) If a judgment by which an injunction is not found lawful is appealed, the court that pronounced the judgment or the court to which the case has been brought may decide that the party concerned may not practise the action covered by the injunction during the appeal case.

(6) If a charge is preferred for infringement of this Act, the prosecution of the charge will be assigned to the Consumer Ombudsman if he so requests.

**Actions for damages**

**Section 28.** If a majority of consumers have a uniform claim for damages as a result of infringement of the provisions of this Act, the Consumer Ombudsman may treat this as a single claim.

(2) The Consumer Ombudsman may be appointed as group representative in a collective action, cf. Part 23a of the Administration of Justice Act.

**Provisional prohibitions**

**Section 29.** Where there is an obvious danger that the purpose of a prohibition as referred to in section 20(1) will be lost if the court's decision must be awaited, the Consumer Ombudsman may impose a provisional prohibition. A case to affirm the prohibition shall be brought not later than the next working day. The rules in sections 642 No. 2, 643, 645(1-3) and 651 of the Administration of Justice Act apply correspondingly, and the rules in sections 636, 638 and 648(2) apply subject to the necessary exemptions.

(2) If a case for affirmation of a prohibition under subsection (1) cannot be decided by judgment within five working days of the case being brought, the court may find, during preparation of the case and before the expiry of the above time limit, that the prohibition shall continue in force. Before such a ruling is issued, the court will, if possible, give the parties the opportunity to express their views. If the prohibition is not affirmed before the expiry of the time limit it will lapse.

**Penalty and indictment**

**Section 30.** Non-observance of a prohibition or injunction imposed by the court or an injunction imposed by the Consumer Ombudsman under section 23(2) or under section 27(2) shall be liable to a fine or imprisonment of up to four months. However, non-observance of an order to repay a payment received does not carry a penalty.

(2) A party who omits to mention information required under section 22(2), or under section 22a(3) second sentence, or under circumstances covered by this Act gives the Consumer Ombudsman incorrect or misleading information, shall be liable to a fine unless a more severe penalty is prescribed under other legislation.

(3) Infringement of the provisions of section 3(1-2), sections 4-6, section 8(2), sections 9-11, section 12a(1-2), section 13(1-4), section 14, section 15(3) and section 16(1-4) and deliberate infringement of section 18 shall be liable to a fine unless a more severe penalty is prescribed under other legislation. Infringements of section 3(2) that consist of damaging references to another trader or matters that apply in particular to the party in question, and infringement of section 5 are subject to private prosecution.

(4) Infringement of section 19 shall be liable to a fine or imprisonment of up to eighteen months, unless a more severe penalty is prescribed under section 299 a of the Danish Penal Code. Prosecution will take place only at the request of the injured party.

(5) Regulations issued pursuant to this Act may prescribe penalties in the form of fines for infringement of such regulations.

(6) Companies etc. (legal persons) may be subject to criminal liability under the rules of Part 5 of the Danish Penal Code.

**Section 31.** (Omitted).

Part 9

**Entry into force etc.**

**Entry into force**

**Section 32.** This Act enters into force on 1 July 2006, with the exception of section 9, which enters into force on 1 January 2007.


(4) Regulations issued or maintained pursuant to the Marketing Practices Act (cf. Consolidated Act No. 699 of 17 July 2000) and the Price Marking and Display Act etc. (cf. Consolidated Act No. 209 of 28 March 2000) shall remain in force until they are
repealed or superseded by provisions issued pursuant to this Act. Infringements of these regulations are punishable by fine in accordance with the previous rules.

The Faroe Islands and Greenland

Section 33. This Act does not apply to the Faroe Islands and Greenland.

Act no. 538 of 8 June 2006 contains the following coming into force provision:

Section 105

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2007, cf. however subsections (2-22) and section 106.

Act no. 1547 of 20 December 2006 contains the following coming into force provision:

Section 2

This Act enters into force on 1 December 2007. However, section 1, Nos. 9 and 10, enters into force on 29 December 2006.

Act no. 181 of 28 February 2007 contains the following coming into force provision:

Section 8

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2008.

Act no. 364 of 13 May 2009 contains the following coming into force provision:

Section 9

Sections 1-7 and section 8, Nos. 5-13 of the Act enter into force on 28 December 2009.

The Danish Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs, 31 August 2009

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Official notes