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Office of

Consumer Affairs

Promoting

*the consumer
interest in the
Canadian
marketplace*

Canada

Promoting the Consumer Interest: The Office of Consumer Affairs

The Office of Consumer Affairs works to promote a fair and efficient marketplace for Canadian consumers, and to protect the consumer interest. The Office:

- helps consumers obtain credible marketplace information;
- provides analysis of key policy issues from the consumer perspective; and
- works with governments, business and consumer groups to improve Canada's system of consumer protection.

The Consumer Marketplace: It Can Be Bewildering

Canada's marketplace is changing rapidly, and it's getting harder for consumers to keep up:

- the number of products and services available is exploding;
- globalization is changing the rules of the game;
- many markets have been deregulated; and
- new technologies are having a profound impact on what goods and services are available, and on how they are marketed and sold.

Informing Canadians

Consumers can get information from the Office of Consumer Affairs in a variety of ways:

- **Consumer Connection** is the Office's award-winning Web site. It provides rapid access to consumer information, powerful tools to cut research time, and many useful links to consumer and other organizations. If you want to find out about everything from products and services to the fees charged by different financial institutions, and avenues for consumer complaints and redress, this is the place to go.
- The *Consumer Quarterly* publishes information on key consumer issues, in hard copy and on-line via Consumer Connection. Recent issues have covered topics such as mutual funds, electronic commerce and the protection of personal information.
- The *Canadian Consumer Handbook* provides information and advice to consumers on a broad range of products and services, and includes a directory of contacts within government, industry and non-governmental organizations. It's available on Consumer Connection.

Providing Research, Advice and Policy Analysis

The Office of Consumer Affairs analyses the impact on consumers of marketplace changes caused by factors such as globalization, new technologies and regulatory reform. It generates facts and figures that illustrate where consumers are gaining or losing in the marketplace, and helps shape policies in key areas such as electronic commerce and biotechnology.

Building Partnerships in the Consumer Interest

The Office of Consumer Affairs administers a funding program to assist consumer groups in conducting and publishing research on important consumer policy issues, and thus improve their ability to influence the policy-making process. As a member of the Consumer Measures Committee, the Office works in partnership with provincial and territorial governments to improve marketplace conditions for Canadian consumers through the modernization and harmonization of laws, regulations and practices, and through public awareness initiatives. The Office of Consumer Affairs also works in cooperation with consumer groups, governments and business organizations to develop innovative, voluntary consumer protection measures.

Get in Touch

For more information on the Office of Consumer Affairs, contact:

Consumer Connection at
<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/oca>

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Peel and stick on your computer.

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