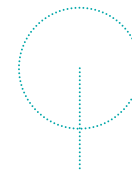


Press Cutting:

**The Software Bureau
Professional Fundraising
July 2008**





direct mail

Poor performance prompts call for 'suppression best practice' scheme

A 'suppression best practice' accreditation system for the third sector had been proposed following research from earlier this year which found the charity sector to be falling significantly behind the rest of industry in relation to suppression.



In February, the Read Group reported that between 2006 and 2007, 60 per cent of corporate direct mail was being checked against the Bereavement Register and 55 per cent against the 'gone away' file. As a whole, direct mail marketers improved their suppression usage by 42 per cent, which in turn was estimated to have saved £77m.

In contrast, 89 per cent of charities did not check their direct mail databases against the 'gone away' file; equivalent to £11.5m in waste and 380 million mailouts sent unnecessarily.

Just 9 per cent of charities scanned their lists against the Bereavement Register, according to the study.

In response, The Software Bureau is proposing that all organisations that process mailing data files should pass an accreditation process and that the organisations responsible for initiating the campaign, i.e. the mailer, would need to demonstrate that they only use accredited bureaux.

"This standard of suppression will be a kitemark for best practice within the industry," said Mark Dobson, its client services manager.

He is backed by Amnesty International and Help the Aged. "This is the perfect way to separate the wheat from the chaff," said Nick Mason, database marketing manager at Amnesty International. "The organisations that are mailing responsibly and going to adequate lengths to keep their data clean will welcome the standard and it will expose those who aren't taking suppression seriously."

Stephen Newberry, database marketing services manager at Help the Aged, agreed: "This initiative will reward organisations that recruit and retain donors in the most cost-effective way possible and more importantly will also help our donors feel reassured that money isn't being wasted."

To learn more about the proposal visit www.professionalfundraising.co.uk

BECKY SLACK & CELINA RIBEIRO

