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Greetings WCM Vendors & Partners:

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1. RETURN & EXCHANGE POLICIES

A recent survey by MarketingSherpa, Inc.\* suggests that a business's online return & exchange policy (or lack thereof) is the primary deterrent to heavy internet shoppers, after a general concern over sharing personal information. When you think like a consumer, this makes a lot sense! How likely are you to purchase a product that you can not physically touch, see, taste or smell from a business you do not know - without first examining its return & exchange policy? Furthermore, if a business simply does not allow for returns or exchanges of its products, potential customers will see that as a lack in quality and shop elsewhere rather than take the risk. A business that produces a fine, quality product should have no qualms about proudly guaranteeing customer satisfaction. By reading many of the WCM vendors' current policies, I can tell that many of you who have policies are concerned about customers potentially taking advantage of you. This is a legitimate concern. As a small business, you can not afford too many losses due to a customer's whimsy. However, consider what your return & exchange policy may be continually costing you in the loss of potential sales. The fact of the matter is that most consumers are afraid that they will be the ones who are taken advantage of by you, the business owner. A polite, generous and thorough return & exchange policy will calm consumer fears and open their pocket books to you!

Things to keep in mind when developing your Return & Exchange Policy:

- Be polite & upbeat! If your policy has a scolding and skeptical tone, you've definitely deterred that sneaky patron who would've surely exploited your otherwise good nature. But, you've also offended everyone else.

- Set a time frame. No one expects you to provide a full cash refund for that macramé owl hanging plant holder that you sold in 1978. But, you do need to allow sufficient time for the customer to receive, examine and re-ship the product, if necessary.

- Tell your customers what they need to know -- now! "Call for returns" is not as professional and impressive as specifically stating "100% Satisfaction Guaranteed within 30 Days!"

- Be generous. When writing your policy, consider offering the famous 100% Satisfaction Guarantee with a full refund - but only if you are willing and able to back it up!

- Finally, if you are ever in the position of accepting a customer return or exchange, consider the loss to be a bit of paid education. Learn from it and move on. This may involve clarifying a product description or updating product photos. Whatever the case, it will make you a better business person moving forward.

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## 2. IN SEARCH OF SUCCESS!

I have heard several exciting tales of WCM Vendors leaping forward to bigger and better things, due to the exposure they received on the Wisconsin Common Market! Has a gallery picked up your artwork? Have you been the focus of a written publication? Have your products been picked up wholesale by a distributor? If you have such a tale to tell - contact me at [kbriggs@wisconsincommonmarket.com](mailto:kbriggs@wisconsincommonmarket.com) ! I would love to hear it. I am sure there is something to be learned from each of your stories!

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## 3. TIME TO HIT THE LINKS

For those of you who have or are developing your own websites, remember to post a link to your WCM webpage - especially if your personal website does not have e-commerce capabilities! Link exchanges between related sites boosts your ratings within search engine results. Better yet, encourage your friends, family and associates to link to <http://www.WisconsinCommonMarket.com/> , too! To check the link popularity of your website, go to <http://www.linkpopularity.com/> .

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## 4. SUPER QUICK SHIPPING SURVEY

In an on-going effort to enhance and improve the WCM site, we are investigating more advanced methods for automatically calculating shipping fees. A major hurdle we are facing is being able to implement a tool that will adequately satisfy each and every one of you. The question is - would you like to see shipping fees automatically calculate based on the total cost OR the total weight of a purchase? Any other comments you may have would be greatly appreciated. Please direct your response to [kbriggs@wisconsincommonmarket.com](mailto:kbriggs@wisconsincommonmarket.com) .

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## 5. WHITE PAPERS

Previous e-newsletters may be found at <http://www.WisconsinCommonMarket.com/whitepapers.cfm> .

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As always, please let me know if you have any questions, concerns or comments!

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\* <http://www.wilsonweb.com/art/convert/cart-guarantee.htm>