

Samuel W Meyer responds to the FTC inquiry into the utility of information collection

Having been through the fiery trial of a targeted and malicious online smear campaign personally, I can't help to think that even a 100-year-old institution such as the FTC is not immune to the poison-penned diatribe of individuals who have unreasonable expectations. In my case, both my name "Samuel W Meyer" and my employer Bristol-Myers Squibb were dragged through the digital mud with outlandish allegations of horrible acts of moral turpitude.

If respondents are to be chosen randomly from the pool of FTC complainants who have submitted intervention requests through the FTC.gov website, then I think care should be taken to eliminate those respondents who demonstrate irrational thinking processes. Ergo, who submit unfounded complaints against clean-handed business operators, not because the businesses were unethical or in breach of any trade practice infractions, but just because the customer did not read their terms of service, and developed a false set of expectations, which could never be satisfied.

In a like manner, a high proportion of the people I described above, if selected randomly to give feedback about the FTC website, will likely report high levels of dissatisfaction, because the FTC did not perpetuate their fantasy about being wronged when they were not. The practical outcome will be a distorted and unfavorable view of the FTC.gov website performance.

I imagine it would be difficult to implement a survey selection process that might accommodate those respondents who demonstrate warning signs, but if not too cost prohibitive, it might be a worthy pursuit.

I hope my insight is helpful,

Samuel W Meyer of Princeton, New Jersey