

2010 Better



Business Bureau Torch

**Award for
Marketplace Excellence**

Application and Guidelines

Who can apply?

The Torch Awards for Marketplace Ethics is open to all for profit businesses located within the 50 county service area of the BBB Serving upstate NY. Applicants must have been in business for a minimum of three years. Businesses that have won the Torch Award within the past three (3) years are not eligible.

Companies must have a BBB rating of B or higher; however, BBB Accreditation is not a requirement to earn this award.

How to apply:

Please complete the three part entry form as follows:

- 1. Basic Company information section**
- 2. A two page summary**
- 3. Criteria response section**

- Entries must be submitted on 8.5" x 11" paper, with the total entry limited to a one (1) inch, three-ring binder.
- Tabs must separate the binder into four sections corresponding to judging criteria, and include materials (mission statement, policies, publications, news articles, advertising, customer testimonials, etc.) that speak to the firm's strengths regarding each of the criteria.
- Judges will not review video, DVD, CD or Web-based products.
- Applicants must submit **6 copies** of their application to be used to for judging purposes.

- Applications should be mailed or delivered to:

**The Torch Awards
Better Business Bureau
100 Bryant Woods South
Amherst, NY 14228**

- Nominees should retain a copy of their entry. All entries become the property of BBB and cannot be returned.

ENTRY DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 18th, 2009

Questions? Contact Chuck Whelan, BBB Special Projects Coordinator, 800-828-5000 x298

Part 1: Basic Company Information

Company Name: _____

Street Address : _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Web Address: _____

Email : _____

Date Company Began Operations: _____

Number of Employees : (check one)

- _____ category I (1 – 10 employees)
- _____ category II (11- 99 employees)
- _____ category III (100 – 999 employees)
- _____ category IV (1000 + employees)

Product or Service: _____

President or Owner: _____

Person Responsible for Application: _____

Telephone of Contact Person: _____

Email of Contact Person: _____

Part 2: A two page summary (maximum) that:

- Explains why the company merits consideration for the Marketplace Excellence award
- Highlights specific business and management practices relevant to the award
- Illustrates the company's commitment to standards that build trust in the marketplace
- Explains the company's position on integrity and standards of conduct in relationships with all stakeholders – including a formally adopted policy or mission statement

Part 3: Criteria Response

A company should demonstrate its superior commitment to exceptional standards that benefit its customers, employees, suppliers, shareholders and surrounding communities.

- The company must provide a narrative response and supporting documentation in four areas for consideration as follows:

1.) Management Practices

Provide examples about how your business lives out your vision and mission and supports the company's commitment to exceptional standards.

2.) Community/Investor/Stakeholder Relations

Provide examples of your policies, practices and activities, both internal and external, that demonstrate accountability and responsibility to your core audiences.

3.) Communications and Marketing Practices

Provide communications and other marketing actions that have helped to educate your core audiences to prevented negative outcomes, how you've built or restored trust and confidence in your company, its products and services. Examples of internal communications to benefit employees and contribute to overall company effectiveness and efficiency are welcomed.

4.) Industry Reputation

Provide external awards, media coverage, recognition and/or complimentary letters from your industry, trade group or community that reflect your company's industry and community reputation as a trustworthy business.

Owners of a company with no employees must explain how a personal commitment to exceptional standards is applied in business practices.

Special Note

Finalists may be asked to provide contact information for customers, vendors, and suppliers whom the judges may contact about the firm's entry.

Finalists may also be asked to allow judges to conduct a site visit. To determine that a firm is meeting financial obligations, judges may obtain a Dun and Bradstreet report.

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Judge's decisions are final. Winners will be contacted by the Better Business Bureau