

The Globe And Mail

Do-not-call list mostly effective, survey finds

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The vast majority of Canadians who have added their phone numbers to the national "do-not-call" registry have since heard from fewer telemarketers, a new survey shows.

About 80 per cent of Canadians have seen a significant or at least noticeable reduction in telemarketer calls since adding their names to the list, according to a survey released yesterday by the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association. Of the respondents, 10 per cent said they now receive no telemarketer calls.

However the survey also showed that 13 per cent of respondents said they receive more telemarketing calls than they did before. Part of the reason for that, according to MRIA executive director Brendan Wycks, is the surge in telemarketing firms that use random-number dialers. Many of those firms operate in the United States and thus likely have no knowledge of which Canadian numbers are supposed to be off-limits.

"The most likely reason for this surge in telemarketing activity is the deepening recession, which is causing U.S. telemarketers to look for new business by targeting Canadians," Mr. Wycks said in a statement accompanying the survey results.

"Unfortunately, many of these unscrupulous telemarketers don't care, or are oblivious to the fact that some of the people they are calling with their automated dialling systems are registered on Canada's national do-not-call list."

According to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, firms outside Canada are required to adhere to the list. In the cases of violations, the CRTC says it will pursue the Canadian firm linked to the telemarketer.

About six million Canadians have signed onto the registry since it was introduced last fall. A random sample of 2,035 adult Canadians aged 18 years or over participated. The survey is considered accurate to within 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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