



PSI PHONE BOOK INITIATIVE PROSPECTUS

STATUS OF THE ISSUE

What Is the Problem?

Telephone books are a handy resource for residents needing the phone number of a neighbor or a list of local service providers. For businesses, especially those that provide goods and services to consumers locally, phone directories offer an effective way to reach potential customers. Telephone books, however, represent significant tonnage in the waste stream (660,000 tons per year¹). In recent years, the number of phone books delivered to households and businesses has increased, with two or more competing companies now publishing and distributing books in similar or overlapping geographic areas. Most residents and businesses lack a way to “opt out” of receiving those they don’t want. In addition, phone book recycling presents challenges. Phone books are made with a low grade of paper, and are sometimes distributed with materials that become contaminants in the recycling process (e.g., magnets and plastics), which represents a problem for certain end-use applications. Local governments currently bear costs to recycle and/or dispose of phone books, and some areas experience limited or absent opportunities to recycle. Regardless of the relative availability of recycling options, source reduction is an environmentally efficient approach that cuts across all scenarios.

What are PSI’s Goals?

Primary goal: Reduce the tonnage of unwanted telephone books that are generated and distributed to households and businesses.

Secondary goal: Increase environmentally preferable practices related to phone book production and distribution.

What Has PSI Accomplished?

March 2007	Project Summary	The initial Project Summary was developed to serve as a “single text” that was updated as new information was obtained through research and interviews. It includes a project overview and timeline and a list of stakeholders.
June 2007	Action Plan	The Action Plan was created as a briefing document for at least two face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders. It includes an issue statement, dialogue goals, key issues, and potential solutions.
	1 st Dialogue Meeting	PSI facilitated the 1 st Dialogue Meeting, during which representatives from the phone book industry, federal, state, and local government officials and other concerned citizens met to begin discussing environmentally preferable practices regarding phone book production and distribution.
October 2007	2 nd Dialogue Meeting	The 2 nd Dialogue Meeting took place in Seattle, WA to further pursue solutions. Following the meeting, industry developed voluntary environmental guidelines in 3 key areas.
January 2009	Agreement Phase	Legislation has been introduced in half a dozen states. Publishers have begun offering opt-out programs. PSI is assisting stakeholders to negotiate a letter of agreement that will provide accountability and ensure effective opt out programs.

Product Stewardship

Product stewardship efforts aim to encourage manufacturers and retailers to take increasing responsibility to reduce the life-cycle impacts of a product and its packaging – energy and materials consumption, air and water emissions, the amount of toxics in the product, worker safety, and waste disposal – in product design and in the end-of-life management of the products they produce and sell.

PSI

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national non-profit membership-based organization that works with state and local government agencies, manufacturers, retailers, environmental groups, federal agencies, and other key stakeholders to reduce the health and environmental impacts of consumer products. There are 45 states that are PSI members, along with more than 70 local government members and over 40 Partners from business, environmental groups, and other organizations. PSI takes a unique product stewardship approach to solving waste management problems by encouraging product design changes and mediating stakeholder dialogues.

¹ “Municipal Solid Waste in the United States: 2005 Facts and Figures,” page 37, U.S EPA.

What Was Accomplished at the 1st Dialogue Meeting?

Members of the telephone directory industry met with federal, state, and local government officials and other concerned citizens in Raleigh, North Carolina, on June 28, 2007 in a meeting facilitated by Product Stewardship Institute. The purpose of the meeting was to begin a dialogue regarding environmentally preferable practices related to telephone directory production and distribution. Industry participants included representatives from the Yellow Pages Association (YPA), Association of Directory Publishers (ADP), directory publishers, and key industry suppliers. The participants agreed to investigate both the demand for an "opt out" program and the competitive, operational, and practical hurdles that such a program would entail.

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What Was Accomplished at/after the 2nd Dialogue Meeting?

At the 2nd meeting, stakeholders agreed to develop an agreement that would include the following key issues:

- Opt-out (subscribers can request NOT to get the phone book).
- Environmental production components (e.g., use of recycled content, soy inks, etc.).
- Recycling best practices.

Following the 2nd meeting, representatives from the two major industry trade associations issued Joint Environmental Guidelines that included a voluntary pledge by individual publishers. On behalf of government officials engaged in the national phone book dialogue, PSI issued a response letter on January 23, 2008, that expressed support for the Guidelines, but also stated the need for an agreement that verified the performance of these programs. In February 2008, YPA and ADP indicated their willingness to continue to participate in the national dialogue. The industry stated its strong preference for a national approach that avoids a patchwork of state and local laws. YPA and ADP pointed to their voluntary opt-out program and Joint Environmental Guidelines as proof to legislators that the industry is taking responsibility for its products. PSI sent a letter to ADP and YPA on July 21, 2008, which outlined the government groups' expectation that the industry would sign an agreement "that encompasses both a more focused Environmental Guidelines program and a set of mechanisms that guarantee the ongoing effectiveness of the program."

What Is the Phone Book Initiative's Current Status?

PSI is currently engaged with government officials, YPA, ADP, and other stakeholders to develop a joint communiqué that outlines the steps that industry is taking to provide opt out programs, and to include a process for address recycling and environmental production issues at a later time.

For more information on the PSI Phone Book Product Stewardship Initiative, go to: www.productstewardship.us/PhoneBookProject.

What Funding Is Still Needed?

Funding is being sought to enable PSI to continue to work cooperatively with directory publishers to ensure the implementation of their opt out programs, and to develop performance goals and other metrics for the industry Joint Environmental Guidelines. Funds also support PSI's role as a clearinghouse of information for managing issues associated with the composition, delivery, recovery, and reduction of phone books, using the PSI web site, a list serve, a contact database, e-mail lists, and communication channels of other organizations. The website will track phone book opt out legislation, and other legislation and policies related to environmental initiatives within the directory publishing industry.

To contribute funding to this project, please contact Scott Cassel at 617-236-4822, or scott@productstewardship.us.