

Responsible Marketing & Communications Policy

Triple Bottom Line Accounting

Effective Date: April 2026

Review Date: YE 2027

1. Purpose & Commitment

At Triple Bottom Line Accounting, we are committed to marketing and communicating with honesty, integrity, and transparency. This policy ensures that all our marketing and communications accurately reflect our services, values, and social and environmental impact, whilst respecting our professional obligations and stakeholder interests.

As a B Corp certified business, we recognise that our communications influence not only our clients but also society and the environment more broadly. All our communications comply with the AIA Code of Ethics and professional standards.

2. Our Guiding Principles

In line with our core values of being “Caring, Professional, Progressive and Accountable” we commit to communications that are:

- **Truthful** – Accurate and not misleading
 - **Substantiated** – Based on verifiable facts and evidence
 - **Transparent** – Clear about limitations and context
 - **Respectful** – Protecting client confidentiality and dignity
 - **Responsible** – Considering wider societal and environmental impacts
 - **Professional** – Compliant with AIA Code of Ethics and professional standards
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3. Scope

This policy applies to all marketing and communications materials including:

- Website content and social media
 - Brochures, presentations, and proposals
 - Email marketing and newsletters
 - Advertising and promotional materials
 - Case studies and testimonials
 - Public statements about our impact and values
 - Job advertisements and recruitment materials
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4. Service Claims

What We DO:

- ✓ Accurately describe our qualifications, expertise, and experience
- ✓ Explain our services clearly using plain language
- ✓ Provide realistic timeframes and expectations
- ✓ Be transparent about our fees and pricing structure
- ✓ Specify any limitations or conditions

What We DON'T DO:

- ✗ Guarantee specific outcomes (e.g., tax savings, growth results)
 - ✗ Claim expertise in areas where we lack qualification
 - ✗ Use technical jargon to obscure meaning
 - ✗ Make comparisons that disparage competitors
 - ✗ Create unrealistic client expectations
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5. Environmental & Social Impact Claims

When communicating about our sustainability efforts, B Corp status, or social impact:

We Will:

- ✓ Only make claims we can substantiate with evidence
- ✓ Be specific about what we've achieved and what we're working towards
- ✓ Acknowledge both progress and areas for improvement
- ✓ Use accurate data and cite sources
- ✓ Explain our methodology (e.g., how we measure carbon footprint)
- ✓ Be honest about challenges and limitations

We Will NOT:

- ✗ Exaggerate our environmental performance
- ✗ Use vague terms like "eco-friendly" or "green" without explanation
- ✗ Make claims about our B Corp status before certification
- ✗ Suggest we're "perfect" or have eliminated all negative impacts
- ✗ Cherry-pick data to present a misleading picture

Example of responsible communication:

"Every year we offset our greenhouse gas emissions. Our position on carbon offsetting is clear:

We do not claim to be a "carbon neutral business" as a result of offsetting.

We do claim to be making a small but positive environmental impact through these targeted investments in natural carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancement.”

6. Client Confidentiality & Testimonials

Testimonials and Case Studies:

- We always obtain written permission before using client testimonials
- We anonymise case studies unless express consent is given
- We never disclose confidential client information
- We ensure testimonials reflect genuine client experiences
- We do not edit testimonials to misrepresent the client's view

Photography and Media:

- We obtain consent before photographing clients or using their names
 - We respect client requests for anonymity
 - We are sensitive to the context in which images are used
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7. Digital Communications

Website:

- Keep all information current and accurate
- Clearly identify outdated content or mark as archived
- Ensure accessibility standards are met where possible
- Include contact information and complaints procedure

Social Media:

- Respond to comments and messages professionally
- Correct errors promptly when identified
- Don't delete negative feedback unless abusive or spam
- Respect copyright and properly attribute sources
- Consider the wider social impact of content we share

Email Marketing:

- Obtain consent before adding contacts to mailing lists
 - Provide clear unsubscribe options
 - Respect preferences for communication frequency
 - Don't use misleading subject lines
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8. Staff & Recruitment Communications

When advertising positions or communicating about our workplace:

- Accurately describe roles, responsibilities, and requirements
 - Be transparent about compensation and benefits
 - Represent our workplace culture honestly
 - Include our commitment to diversity and inclusion
 - Specify flexible working arrangements clearly
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9. Implementation & Review Process

Responsibility:

- **Policy Owners:** Fran Ellington/ Tatiana Blana
- **Review:** All partners review significant marketing materials before publication
- **Training:** All staff briefed on policy annually

Review Process:

Before Publication, We Check:

1. Is this claim accurate and substantiated?
2. Do we have evidence to support this?
3. Could this be misunderstood or misleading?
4. Does this respect client confidentiality?
5. Is this compliant with AIA professional standards?
6. Does this accurately reflect our impact/sustainability efforts?
7. Have we considered the broader societal impact?

Quarterly Review:

- Review website content for accuracy
 - Check all active marketing materials remain current
 - Identify and correct any issues
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10. Handling Errors & Complaints

If we identify an inaccuracy or receive a complaint about our marketing:

1. **Immediate Action:** Remove or pause the material if seriously misleading
2. **Investigate:** Determine what was incorrect and why
3. **Correct:** Issue correction publicly if appropriate
4. **Learn:** Document the issue and review process to prevent recurrence

5. **Report:** Log in our complaints tracker and report quarterly
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11. Professional Body Compliance

All marketing and communications comply with:

- **AIA (Association of International Accountants) Code of Ethics**
- **AIA Professional Standards and Practice Regulations**
- Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) guidelines
- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR
- Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008

The AIA Code of Ethics requires members to act with integrity, objectivity, and professional competence, which extends to all our communications and marketing activities.

12. Red Flags – When to Seek Advice

Consult with partners before publishing content that:

- Makes claims about specific client results or outcomes
 - Discusses controversial or sensitive topics
 - Makes new claims about our environmental or social impact
 - Could be considered comparative advertising
 - Relates to regulatory or legislative changes
 - Involves client identities or information
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13. Policy Review & Updates

This policy is reviewed annually or when:

- We achieve B Corp certification (update claims accordingly)
- Professional body guidance changes
- New regulations come into effect
- We identify issues through complaints or errors

Policy Owner: Fran Ellington

Last Reviewed: April 2026

Next Review: YE 2027

Approved by: Tatiana Blana

Quick Reference: Examples

 **GOOD Examples:**

"We're a small accountancy practice based in Norwich, specialising in owner-managed businesses, purpose driven organisations including social enterprises and charities. We're working towards B Corp re-certification and have published our stakeholder impact reports annually since certification in 2023.

"One client said: "" – with permission from [Client Name/Company]."

 **POOR Examples:**

"We're the greenest accountants in Norwich" – Unsubstantiated, vague claim

"We guarantee tax savings of at least £10,000" – Inappropriate guarantee

"As experts in all aspects of business" – Overly broad, unrealistic

"Eco-friendly, sustainable, carbon-neutral practice" – Vague greenwashing without specifics

This policy reflects our commitment to transparent and responsible business practices as part of our journey towards B Corp certification and our professional obligations to clients and society.