2016 Annual Report
Better Business Bureau® Serving Central Ohio
A Letter from the President

When your vision as an organization is an ethical marketplace where buyers and sellers can trust each other, the need to stay focused on the important aspects of Trust is critical. In this day and age, so much can be seen as untrustworthy. Now more than ever, developing and growing our brand of individuals, businesses, social enterprises, entrepreneurs and nonprofit leaders, as well as partnerships with community organizations, government agencies and law enforcement is essential to advancing Trust in our marketplace. We measure some of that success by the company we keep and the commitment we share. Our community of Accredited Businesses continued to grow again this year, which enabled us to increase our operations force to help review businesses based on Standards of Trust. You will see common themes in our annual report; developing better data to reinforce and refine relevance, growing our brand of passionate Trust Builders to include Socially Impactful Enterprises, and developing partnerships with strategic organizations, strengthening both organizations’ missions in the process.

If you think you can add to the success of developing an ethical marketplace, please reach out and schedule a meeting today. We look forward to the discussion.

Kip Morse
President/CEO, BBB Serving Central Ohio

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Our Vision

An ethical marketplace where buyers and sellers can trust each other.

Setting and upholding standards for marketplace trust...

**Build Trust**
Establish and maintain a positive track record in the marketplace.

**Advertise Honestly**
Adhere to established standards of advertising and selling.

**Tell the Truth**
Honestly represent products and services, including clear and adequate disclosure of all material items.

**Be Transparent**
Openly identify the nature, location, and ownership of the business, and clearly disclose all policies, guarantees and procedures that bear on a customer’s decision to buy.

**Honor Promises**
Abide by all written agreements and verbal representations.

**Be Responsive**
Address marketplace disputes quickly, professionally, and in good faith.

**Safeguard Privacy**
Protect any data collected against mishandling and fraud, collect personal information only as needed, and respect the preferences of consumers regarding the use of their information.

**Embody Integrity**
Approach all business dealings, marketplace transactions and commitments with integrity.
Reportable Complaints

- **180,602** Complaint Detail Page Reads
- **86.89%** Resolution Rate
- **7,740** Reportable Complaints
- **0.04** Avg. Days to Open
- **21.95** Avg. Days to Close

Complaints and Customer Reviews

**OPERATIONS STATISTICS**

Graph showing trends in complaints, customer reviews, phone calls, live chats, and tickets from January 2013 to March 2016.
Giving Consumers and Businesses a Voice

3,338 Positive
5,397 Neutral
116 Neutral
1,943 Negative

5,397 Customer Reviews Submitted & Approved
145,726 Customer Reviews Total Pages Read

Top 10 Customer Review Page Reads:
1. Books - Textbooks New & Used
2. Roofing Contractors
3. Auto Dealers - New Cars
4. Heating & Air Conditioning
5. Credit Cards & Plans
6. Insurance Companies
7. Auto Dealers - Used Cars
8. Collection Agencies
9. Construction & Remodeling Services
10. Plumbers

Top 10 Inquiries:
1. Construction & Remodeling Services
2. Credit Cards & Plans
3. Collection Agencies
4. Roofing Contractors
5. Auto Dealers - Used Cars
6. Heating & Air Conditioning
7. Plumbers
8. Home Builders
9. Insurance Services
10. Insurance Companies

Top 10 Complaints:
1. Credit Cards & Plans
2. Furniture - Retail
3. Insurance Services
4. Auto Dealers - New Cars
5. Television - Cable, CATV & Satellite
6. Collection Agencies
7. Clothing - Retail
8. Auto Dealers - Used Cars
9. Auto Repair - Windshield, Glass Shops
10. Mortgage Brokers
Data Quality

Your BBB strives to expand our relevancy as a leader in marketplace trust through data quality across 48,917 existing records and growing.

We do so by holding ourselves and our Accredited Businesses accountable, and reaching out to our customers and partners throughout Central Ohio.

In 2016:
• Met or surpassed all measures to remain a BBB in good standing in October.
• **Denied 58 Applications** and **revoked 18 Accreditations** when businesses failed to represent sound advertising, selling and customer service practices that enhance customer trust and confidence in business.
• Worked with the Ohio Attorney General’s Office in helping businesses resolve and **answer 389 consumer complaints**.
• **Rated 52% of the establishments** in 21-County service area.
• Connected with Accredited Businesses **employing 235,812 people**.
• Helped **2,445 Businesses** update their BBB Profiles.
• Linked Social Media in **7,198 Business Profiles**.

In 2017 we plan to:
• Make it easier for businesses, charities and consumers to update their public and non-public information with BBB.
• Optimize business and charity service areas and types of business, products and programs with internet search engines.
• Connect with more customers and partners in the outlying communities in our 21-County service area.
Social Impact Initiatives

BBB is, at its core a social enterprise, dedicated to building marketplace trust and helping startups and established businesses of all sizes choose to be ethical and socially responsible. As an integral part of the Central Ohio community, BBB increased our involvement with the startup/entrepreneur and social enterprise communities in 2016 by sponsoring CivicHacks’ Startup Storytellers, the SEA Change Festival, and having a presence at other community events. BBB also established a Startup and Entrepreneur Engagement Committee to identify ways BBB can market being the leader in advancing marketplace trust for both for-profit and nonprofit entities while connecting with a millennial audience. The development of a new social enterprise microsite and a recently distributed business survey will help us learn what we can do to be a more effective resource to small businesses.
Charity Review

Providing the public with impartial and trustworthy information about charities has for many years been a service of Your BBB. Charities are assessed using the 20 BBB Standards for Charity Accountability. Since 2014, Your BBB has focused on enhancing the visibility and impact of charity reviews throughout central Ohio.

In 2016:
- Charities meeting all 20 Standards increased by 37%
- Accredited Charities becoming Charity Seal holders increased by 27%

☑️ 56 Meet Standards
☐ 92 Reviews in Progress
❌ 399 Did Not Disclose
Collaborations

CivicHacks
When asked what he took away from the 2015 Torch Awards for Ethics Luncheon, CivicHacks founder David All answered: Character, Culture and Community. In the spring of 2016, BBB and CivicHacks partnered for an award program honoring millennial entrepreneurs who exhibited the same three pillars. The inaugural Spark Awards recipients were announced at CivicHacks’s event, Startup Storytellers, and the award program later gained national BBB recognition. BBB and CivicHacks’s ongoing collaboration has helped increase BBB’s visibility as a resource to the young startup community and allowed us to work with David All and other individuals to better shape and connect with an ever-changing marketplace.

Mediation Clinic, Moritz College of Law, The Ohio State University
For the second year BBB has continued our successful partnership with the Mediation Clinic at OSU’s Moritz College of Law. Law students in the program help BBB by mediating cases under the supervision of a faculty member of the law school.

Christo Rey Columbus High School
In September 2016 BBB partnered with Cristo Rey Columbus High School to place 2 Freshman Work Study Students one day a week throughout the school year. The students have been a great help by working on data quality projects and other assigned tasks.

Ethics Enrichment
BBB’s Center for Character Ethics was again a partner in two of the Governor’s Community Connectors Mentoring programs. The projects provided character enrichment training based on UncommonSense principles to adult mentors and student mentees in four Columbus area middle and high schools.

As part of the Center for Character Ethics mission to “Inspire Future Leaders”, a strengthened effort in collaboration with Central Ohio universities to conduct studies, research, provide frameworks and other components on Character Ethics has resulted in relationships with Ohio State University, Ohio Wesleyan University, Ohio Christian University, and Capital University.

Consumer Fraud Advisory Group
Your BBB is the hub for a growing Consumer Fraud Advisory Group launched in February 2015, supporting investigation efforts across 10 federal, state and regional law enforcement and regulatory agencies and the Ohio Association of 8 BBBs. The group meets quarterly in Columbus with participants joining in person and online, and is looking forward to expanding joint public awareness and outreach in 2017.
My BBB Story

My BBB Story is a collaboration between Accredited Businesses and BBB. BBB strives to help our Accredited Businesses market themselves and promote the outstanding work that they do within their industry and community, while also showcasing their commitment to upholding BBB’s Standards of Trust. Through these professional, straightforward videos, BBB has a goal to grant added exposure to our Accredited Businesses by highlighting them on several prominent areas of BBB of Central Ohio’s website, which garner over 1.8 million visitors annually.

Billboard Co-ops

BBB teamed up with a local digital billboard company to offer our Accredited Businesses the opportunity to join BBB by partnering on a rotation of multiple billboard locations across Central Ohio. This is a great opportunity for Accredited Businesses to heighten visibility and boost exposure while showcasing their BBB Accreditation.

New Website Initiatives

BBB launched our Business Blog, Uncommon Sense, as a resource for business news and information.

After multiple collaborations with startups and social impact organizations in the community, BBB decided to display our relevance and expertise as a social enterprise with a microsite geared toward younger businesses and consumers.

BBB created a travel microsite with tips, resources and valuable information for everything from weekend camping trips to traveling abroad.

BBB’s newest auto microsite is a prime resource for any consumer considering buying or selling a vehicle.

Outreach

As part of our continued efforts to increase our brand visibility in the 21 counties we serve, we have created a local advertising and marketing program to generate awareness of the resources provided by BBB representatives to Accredited Business, charities, chambers, associations and other local entities.