

## **CARU REVIEWS ‘SPIDERRIDERS’ WEBSITE** *Site Operator Agrees to Implement New Privacy-Protection Features*

New York, NY – August 22, 2007 – The Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc., has recommended that **Cookie Jar Entertainment, Inc.**, operator of the Website [www.spiderriders.com](http://www.spiderriders.com), put in place privacy-protection mechanisms to bring the site into compliance with CARU’s *Self-Regulatory Program for Children’s Advertising (Guidelines)* and the federal Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). The company has agreed to do so.

The Website, which features program schedules and information about the characters of the popular Canadian show “Spider Riders,” came to the attention of CARU through CARU’s ongoing monitoring program.

The Website had invited visitors to register for a newsletter by submitting personally identifiable information (PII), including their email addresses. The age screening in place was not neutral because there was tip off language stating that one must be 16 years old to register. Moreover, although a parent’s e-mail address and birthdate were collected, parents were neither notified of the registration nor given an opportunity to remove their children’s email address from the Website.

In response to CARU’s initial inquiry, Cookie Jar stated that it believed that the Website was previously compliant with COPPA and CARU’s *Guidelines*. However, the company noted that because it seeks to abide by CARU’s mission and concern for children, it decided to implement additional privacy protection measures.

The company stated that children who wish to sign up to “receive future correspondence.” (the newsletter option) will be asked for his or her e-mail address, birth date and country (as the communications vary by country). If a user indicates an age younger than 13, a message will pop up indicating that the e-mail address of a parent or guardian is needed to complete the registration. The registration process and age screening will be done in a neutral manner so as to prevent any possible “tip off” regarding the age threshold.

After the parent’s e-mail information has been entered, an e-mail will be sent indicating the nature and intended uses of the information collected. The e-mail will also provide the opportunity for a parent to request that the Website discard the information, as well as a link to the Website’s privacy policy.

The company, in its advertiser’s statement, stated that it “is pleased that CARU has accepted our recommendations regarding an update to the registration procedures on [spiderriders.com](http://spiderriders.com).”

“Cookie Jar Entertainment is fully committed to protecting the online privacy interests of its users, and children in particular, through compliance with COPPA and other applicable regulations. We support CARU’s goals and appreciate the opportunity to have participated in the self-regulatory process,” the company said.

**CARU’s inquiry was conducted under *NAD/CARU/NARB Procedures for the Voluntary Self-Regulation of National Advertising*. Details of the initial inquiry, CARU’s decision, and the**

**advertiser's response will be included in the next *NAD/CARU Case Report*.**

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**About advertising self-regulation:** The National Advertising Review Council (NARC) was formed in 1971 by the Association of National Advertisers, Inc. (ANA), the American Association of Advertising Agencies, Inc. (AAAA), the American Advertising Federation, Inc. (AAF), and the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB). Its purpose is to foster truth and accuracy in national advertising through voluntary self-regulation. NARC is the body that establishes the policies and procedures for the CBBB's National Advertising Division (NAD) and Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU), as well as for the National Advertising Review Board (NARB) and the Electronic Retailing Self-Regulation Program (ERSP).

NAD and CARU are the investigative arms of the advertising industry's voluntary self-regulation program. Their casework results from competitive challenges from other advertisers, and also from self-monitoring traditional and new media. The National Advertising Review Board (NARB), the appeals body, is a peer group from which ad-hoc panels are selected to adjudicate those cases that are not resolved at the NAD/CARU level. This unique, self-regulatory system is funded entirely by the business community; CARU is financed by the children's advertising industry, while NAD/NARC/NARB's sole source of funding is derived from membership fees paid to the CBBB. ERSP's funding is derived from membership in the Electronic Retailing Association. For more information about advertising self regulation, please visit [www.narcpartners.org](http://www.narcpartners.org).