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February 24, 2006

General Electric  
3135 Easton Tpke  
Fairfield, CT 06432-1008  
ATTN: Profiling Department

Dear GE,

My brother recently bought a new stove that was a GE Profile model. I have previously heard of experts who do criminal profiling where they take an unsolved crime scene and then determine what kind of person committed the crime based on different profile types. Have you ever heard of this? I wondered if that is what you are attempting to do with your new line of appliance profiles.

I know that every consumer is unique, but you can probably generate some generalities of how and when people cook, do laundry, wash dishes, etc. And I would guess that the needs of a single mother differ from those of a single bachelor, which also differ from those of the fairy tale family with 2.2 kids, a dog, and a white picket fence in the suburbs. With every major appliance out there, I imagine there are different profiles of people who use them in different patterns. This creates endless combinations of features for your GE Profiles.

Take this as a 'fer instance'. My brother has a 14 year old daughter. She is really impressed with their new flat surface GE Profile stove and the 'hot surface' indicator lights. But in just two short weeks, she burned her hand on the front oven door three times. Now, in saying she "burned her hand" I don't mean that she had a lasting burn that needed medical treatment, but she yelled out "OW!" when she touched the hot door, not realizing that it would be hot. To me this clearly shows the need to have a hot door surface indicator light for most 14 year old girl users. See! This is appliance profiling!

I also think that my brother's daughter needs to go back to pre-school -- the age when most of us had to be told maybe 50 times by our mommies to not touch the hot stove, but had to experience the burn of a hot stove only once to remember it and never touch it again!

But all of this profiling doesn't come without its own concerning issues. Even when you deal with demographic generalities, there are still individual privacy issues at play. So I have to ask you, in the process of profiling your consumers, what kind of research do you conduct and how private is our personal information kept? I wonder about these things sometimes because I don't want to lose my individual privacies.

I once wrote a simple letter to an awning company in Massachusetts. I never visited their store nor made any purchases from them. Just between you and me, I was never really satisfied that they could satisfactorily meet my large scale needs. But in fairness to them, I never won the lottery jackpot necessary to put me into a position to use their product. But now, after one simple written inquiry, I seem to be on a junk mail list from them since I now get unsolicited advertisements from them in my mail on a regular basis.

So, my friends, when profiling infringes upon individual rights I think it borders on being unconstitutional. Not that I would ever consider contacting the ACLU. I think that they are just a group of hypocrites who step on as many personal rights as they claim to uphold. When it comes to the ACLU, I like to say they haven't got A CLUe. (Get it?) In the grand scheme, I would rather be on the mailing list of some New England awning company than on the mailing list of the ACLU.

Has the ACLU contacted you yet regarding their concerns over your GE Profiling? If and when they do, I think you should tell them to go GE(t) A CLU(e) and see how long it takes them to figure that one out with all their fancy lawyers on the payroll!

Please keep up the good work and also work on a "hot oven door" indicator for the 14 year old girl profile.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rusty Lucas".

Rusty Lucas

p.s. I wonder if you have any extra GE baseball caps laying around taking up storage at the company warehouse. If so, I would be willing to take one off of your hands. If you have more than one, I know some field workers who would benefit from your donation of baseball caps. Please send me a free GE baseball cap. If you want to send more than one to help the field workers, please contact me to make delivery arrangements. I am sure that GE Profile baseball caps would fit the field workers' profile.