

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION**

In the Matter of

TECHNOBRANDS, INC.,
a corporation, and

CHARLES J. ANTON,
individually and as an officer
of TechnoBrands, Inc.

DOCKET NO. C-4041

COMPLAINT

The Federal Trade Commission, having reason to believe that TechnoBrands, Inc. ("TBI"), and Charles J. Anton ("Anton"), individually and as an officer of TBI ("respondents"), have violated the provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act, and it appearing to the Commission that this proceeding is in the public interest, alleges:

1. Respondent TBI is a Virginia corporation with its principal place of business at 1998 Ruffin Mill Road, Colonial Heights, Virginia 23834. TBI was incorporated on May 5, 1987 under the name of Comtrad Industries, Inc. On May 24, 2000, the company changed its corporate name to TechnoBrands, Inc. TBI advertises and does business as The Lifestyle Resource, TechnoScout, Ennoventions, Tech Update, and International Collectors' Society.

2. Respondent Anton is an officer of TBI. Individually or in concert with others, he formulates, directs, or controls the policies, acts, or practices of TBI, including the acts or practices alleged in this complaint. His principal office or place of business is the same as that of TBI.

3. Respondents have advertised, offered for sale, sold, and distributed products to the public, including the Hollywood 48-Hour Miracle Diet (“Hollywood Diet”), a liquid diet; the Enforma System (“Enforma”), a diet product combination consisting primarily of chitosan and pyruvate; the BMI Magnetic Kit, a set of magnets with purported analgesic properties; the Nisim New Hair Biofactors System (“Nisim”), a purported hair-growth product; the Clarion Ionic Filter Ceiling Fan (“Clarion”), an air-cleaning device; and the Sila Ionic Air Purifier (“Sila”), another air-cleaning device. The Hollywood Diet and Enforma are “foods” and/or “drugs” within the meaning of Sections 12 and 15 of the Federal Trade Commission Act. Nisim is a “drug” within the meaning of Sections 12 and 15 of the Federal Trade Commission Act. The BMK is a “device” within the meaning of Sections 12 and 15 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

4. The acts and practices of respondents alleged in this complaint have been in or affecting commerce, as “commerce” is defined in Section 4 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

Hollywood Diet

5. Respondents have disseminated or have caused to be disseminated advertisements for the Hollywood Diet, including but not necessarily limited to the attached Exhibit 1. These advertisements contain the following statements:

Lose up to 10 lbs this weekend! . . .

by Pete Johnson

How often have you wasted precious time and money trying to lose weight? Let’s see . . . I’ve tried every quick-fix, fad diet known to man . . . even tried the ones where you buy the pre-packaged food. They all seem to take months to show any results . . . and by that time my motivation is gone! Even straight fasting didn’t work for me. Then I read about the Hollywood 48-Hour Miracle Diet and decided to try it – I had nothing to lose but weight – and I did! . . .

The Hollywood 48-Hour Miracle Diet is a special formulation of all-natural juices and botanical extracts so it looks like an ordinary bottle of juice – and works like a miracle! For two days you give up all bad food habits. . . .

Hollywood’s best-kept diet secret. This amazing diet has been rushed to the sets of E.R., Friends, plus many of today’s biggest celebrities. It’s what actors, actresses and models use to fit into those sleek suits and sexy dresses – fast! . . .

And it’s clinically proven. Tested by an independent lab, this remarkable diet produced impressive results. A clinical trial involving 10 volunteers found that subjects

lost an average of 4% of their initial body weight and noted ‘obvious results’ at the end of two days. . . .

There are no failures on this diet – you will lose weight – guaranteed! . . .

Don’t take our word for it

[Consumer endorser:] ‘I lost 10 pounds in 48 hours. I broke my plateau weight of 135 to 125 pounds. It was so easy – I’m telling all my friends about it!’ Elizabeth K., New York City.

6. Through the means described in Paragraph 5, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that:

- A. Scientific evidence proves that consumers who use the Hollywood Diet can lose an average of 4% of their initial body weight in two days.
- B. An endorser named Pete Johnson lost weight by using the Hollywood Diet.

7. In truth and in fact:

- A. Scientific evidence does not prove that consumers who use the Hollywood Diet can lose an average of 4% of their initial body weight in two days.
- B. The endorser referenced in Exhibit 1 as Pete Johnson does not exist, and the events related in his endorsement are fictional.

Therefore, the representations set forth in Paragraph 6 were, and are, false or misleading.

8. Through the means described in Paragraph 5, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that:

- A. Consumers who use the Hollywood Diet can lose 10 lbs. in 48 hours.
- B. Many celebrities, actors, actresses, and models – including some that star in the shows E.R. and Friends – have lost substantial weight by using the Hollywood Diet.
- C. Testimonials for the Hollywood Diet reflect the typical or ordinary experience of members of the public who use the product.

9. Through the means described in Paragraph 5, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that they possessed and relied upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 8, at the time the representations were made.

10. In truth and in fact, respondents did not possess and rely upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 8, at the time the representations were made. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 9 was, and is, false or misleading.

Enforma

11. Respondents have disseminated or have caused to be disseminated advertisements for Enforma, including but not necessarily limited to the attached Exhibit 2. These advertisements contain the following statements:

Dieters' dream . . . 'Exercise In A Bottle!'

Enforma is the natural system for eliminating fat without crazy diets or strenuous exercise.

By Donna White

Like millions of Americans, you've probably tried many different diets, special food programs and other plans that have just not worked. If they did work, it was probably for a short period of time, and they failed you when your willpower gave in and you ate the foods you really love. That doesn't have to happen, not with the Enforma System. This remarkable program can help you shed those unwanted pounds, keep them off and give you power to eat what you want and enjoy yourself.

What's ideal . . . what's real. Most people know that certain things must occur for us to lose weight and keep it off, and this amazing system automatically provides them. . . . The desired result can be achieved by reducing our intake of calories as well as burning surplus calories with exercise. Unfortunately, both ways of ridding ourselves of unwanted fat are usually difficult to sustain. None of us wants to cut out delicious foods from our diets, and we can't always exercise when we want. In fact, many of us don't exercise at all. The Enforma System allows us to accomplish the goals of shedding pounds and keeping them off with its two breakthrough products, Fat Trapper and Exercise In A Bottle.

A one-two punch. We all know how hard it is to change eating habits, and when it comes to fatty foods, the habit may seem impossible to break. That's where Fat Trapper comes in. It literally binds up and traps fat as it enters your digestive system, before it can become absorbed into your body and stored on your hips, thighs, stomach and other parts of your body.

12. Through the means described in Paragraph 11, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that:

A. Consumers who use Enforma can lose substantial weight without the need for a restricted calorie diet or exercise.

- B. Consumers who use Enforma can avoid weight gain without the need for a restricted calorie diet or exercise.

13. Through the means described in Paragraph 11, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that they possessed and relied upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 12, at the time the representations were made.

14. In truth and in fact, respondents did not possess and rely upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 12, at the time the representations were made. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 13 was, and is, false or misleading.

BMI Magnetic Kit

15. Respondents have disseminated or have caused to be disseminated advertisements for the BMI Magnetic Kit, including but not necessarily limited to the attached Exhibit 3. These advertisements contain the following statements:

‘Bio Magnets are superior to anything I’ve used before’

– **Ronnie Lott, 10-time All-Pro**

Amazing magnets from BMI reduce pain from muscle strain and injury without drugs, needles or physical therapy.

by C. Eddie Vernon

I have a spot in my lower back that can just kill me. . . . if I lift something heavy the wrong way, it throws my back out, and the pain is excruciating.

Frantic for pain relief. . . . I’ve tried the ‘traditional medicine’ route, with anti-inflammatory drugs that made me doopey. I’ve been massaged, had my back ‘cracked’ by 3 chiropractors, and even tried acupuncture. I’m so frustrated, I’ve been on the verge of demanding an expensive and dangerous operation on my spine!

Sports medicine breakthrough. Nothing provided satisfactory relief, and that’s why I tried ‘magnetic field therapy’ using BMI Magnets. The results have been excellent: my ‘bad back’ feels better than it has in YEARS! I get relief because of two football guys – George Anderson, an ex-trainer from the Oakland Raiders, and Ronnie Lott, an ex-defensive back. With decades of experience in a bone-crushing sport, including 7 Super Bowl wins, they know injuries . . . and how to handle them.

They tried magnetic field therapy, and saw for themselves it works. It is believed that the magnets work on the human body by actually enlarging the diameter of veins, arteries, and capillaries. This ‘vaso-ventilation’ increases blood flow, aids circulation, reduces inflammation, and suppresses the body’s production of pain-causing chemicals. . . . [It] has been used by thousands of former pain sufferers. . . . My advice to anyone with chronic or occasional pain is to give these a try. . . .

BMI MAGNETIC THERAPY [anatomical chart]

Lower Back Pain

Tennis Elbow

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Hand Pain

Ankle Strains

Neck Pain

Shoulder Pain

Hip Pain

Muscle Strains

Knee Pain

[Consumer endorser]: . . . 'I've used hundreds of pain relieving products from all over the world and BMI's bio magnetic therapy products have given me the best results.' –

Kurt Angle 1996 U.S. Olympic Gold Medalist.

16. Through the means described in Paragraph 15, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that an endorser named C. Eddie Vernon experienced significant pain relief by using the BMI Magnetic Kit.

17. In truth and in fact, the endorser referenced in Exhibit 3 as C. Eddie Vernon does not exist, and the events related in his endorsement are fictional. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 16 was, and is, false or misleading.

18. Through the means described in Paragraph 15, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that:

- A. The BMI Magnetic Kit relieves severe pain, whether chronic or occasional, anywhere in the body, including lower back pain, tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome, hand pain, ankle strains, neck pain, shoulder pain, hip pain, muscle strains, and knee pain.
- B. The BMI Magnetic Kit can relieve pain more effectively than traditional medicine, anti-inflammatory drugs, massage, acupuncture, or chiropractic treatment.
- C. The BMI Magnetic Kit relieves pain through magnetic field therapy, which enlarges the diameter of veins, arteries and capillaries, increases blood flow, aids circulation, reduces inflammation, and suppresses the body's production of pain-causing chemicals.
- D. Testimonials for the BMI Magnetic Kit reflect the typical or ordinary experience of members of the public who use the product.

19. Through the means described in Paragraph 15, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that they possessed and relied upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 18, at the time the representations were made.

20. In truth and in fact, respondents did not possess and rely upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 18, at the time the representations were made. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 19 was, and is, false or misleading.

Nisim New Hair Biofactors System

21. Respondents have disseminated or have caused to be disseminated advertisements for Nisim, including but not necessarily limited to the attached Exhibit 4. These advertisements contain the following statements:

Finally . . . a drug-free way to combat hair loss!

Nisim International has combined the wisdom of ancient phytotherapy with modern science to create a dramatic hair-loss therapy.

by Justin Ellett

‘Thanks for the haircut, Margot, but what’s that big, bare spot on the top of my head?’ That was me, a year ago, joking with my hairdresser. Some joke! I was balding fast. I hounded barbers and hairdressers, thinking that among all their bottles, vials, and potions they must have a solution to what was becoming a major embarrassment for me. . . .

Personal advice from a pro. Well, Margot came through for me when she recommended Nisim New Hair Biofactors® Stimulating System. She confided she used it herself and she has the thickest head of hair you’d ever want to see. (That’s why she does!) She told me there were several hair restorers out there, but she warned, ‘Those prescription ones actually get into your blood stream.’ I had enough trouble with hair loss. I didn’t want to risk who-knows-what with hair growth drugs floating through my system.

Concentrated Nisim is about a fraction of the cost of heavily-advertised restorers, is simple to use (just 2 steps), and is formulated for both men and women. Herbal-based solution may stop excessive hair loss in a matter of days.

22. Through the means described in Paragraph 21, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that an endorser named Justin Ellett obtained positive hair-growth results by using Nisim.

23. In truth and in fact, the endorser referenced in Exhibit 4 as Justin Ellett does not exist, and the events related in his endorsement are fictional. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 22 was, and is, false or misleading.

24. Through the means described in Paragraph 21, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that:

- A. Consumers who use Nisim can stop excessive hair loss in a matter of days.
- B. Nisim is as effective at stimulating hair growth as prescription products, or other heavily advertised restorers (such as Rogaine or Propecia).
- C. Testimonials for Nisim reflect the typical or ordinary experience of members of the public who use the product.

25. Through the means described in Paragraph 21, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that they possessed and relied upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 24, at the time the representations were made.

26. In truth and in fact, respondents did not possess and rely upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 24, at the time the representations were made. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 25 was, and is, false or misleading.

Clarion Ionic Filter Ceiling Fan

27. Respondents have disseminated or have caused to be disseminated advertisements for Clarion, including but not necessarily limited to the attached Exhibit 5. These advertisements contain the following statements:

The world's most effective air purification . . . and it takes up no floor space!

The Clarion air filter fan removes dust, smoke particles, pollen, molds and other airborne contaminants as small as 0.1 micron.

by Michael Terry

. . . Every silent stroke of the 5 fan blades cleans away stale smoke and cooking odors.

Dangerous dust mites and pet dander are swept from the air.

All day, all night, relief from allergies. Many notes from allergy sufferers tell us what an amazing difference the Clarion fan has made. Why is it more effective than traditional air cleaners? First, because its use is almost automatic: You flip on the fan and it goes to work, silently efficiently, circulating air throughout your room – filtering pollen, mold, airborne contaminants, with every turn of the blade. . . .

[Consumer endorser:] 'I have asthma and allergies . . . I use my Clarion fan in my bedroom and I absolutely love it! I just can't say enough about it . . . don't ever discontinue it! S.B. Easton, MA'

28. Through the means described in Paragraph 27, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that:

- A. Consumers who use the Clarion fan will experience relief from allergies and other respiratory problems.
- B. The Clarion fan eliminates dust mites and pet dander from a user's environment.
- C. Testimonials for the Clarion fan reflect the typical or ordinary experience of members of the public who use the product.

29. Through the means described in Paragraph 27, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that they possessed and relied upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 28, at the time the representations were made.

30. In truth and in fact, respondents did not possess and rely upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representations set forth in Paragraph 28, at the time the representations were made. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 29 was, and is, false or misleading.

Sila Ionic Air Purifier

31. Respondents have disseminated or have caused to be disseminated advertisements for the Sila Ionic Air Purifier, including but not necessarily limited to the attached Exhibit 6. These advertisements contain the following statements:

Three ionic solutions for everyday pollution problems . . .

by Rob Gilmore

If you think air pollution is strictly an outdoor problem, you're in for a surprise. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, indoor air pollution represents our nation's biggest pollution problem. . . . people are more likely to get sick from the air they breathe indoors than outdoors. That's because we are trapped inside with everything from mold and mildew to bacteria and chemicals. Pet odors, organic odors and chemical odors are simply an indication of what we are breathing. Now an innovative company has developed breakthrough technology that can actually recreate the natural process that combats air pollution. . . .

The indoor pollution solution. The Sila Air Purifiers and Deodorizers from Lentek use new Zyonic technology to neutralize nasty odors and create cleaner, fresher air. They help solve the problem of indoor air pollution the same way that nature tries to solve pollution outdoors. They rid air of pollutants and odors by creating super

oxygenated molecules, which convert the odors to pure oxygen. This process also introduces negative ions to pollutants like dust, smoke, soot and pollen. The combined molecules drop to the ground, significantly reducing the number of airborne pollutants.

32. Through the means described in Paragraph 31, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that the Sila air purifier eliminates mold, mildew, bacteria, chemicals, and pollutants from a user's environment.

33. Through the means described in Paragraph 31, respondents have represented, expressly or by implication, that they possessed and relied upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representation set forth in Paragraph 32, at the time the representation was made.

34. In truth and in fact, respondents did not possess and rely upon a reasonable basis that substantiated the representation set forth in Paragraph 32, at the time the representation was made. Therefore, the representation set forth in Paragraph 33 was, and is, false or misleading.

35. The acts and practices of respondents as alleged in this complaint constitute unfair or deceptive acts or practices, and the disseminating of false advertisements, in or affecting commerce in violation of Sections 5(a) and 12 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

THEREFORE, the Federal Trade Commission this fifteenth day of April, 2002, has issued this complaint against respondents.

By the Commission.

Donald S. Clark
Secretary

SEAL: