

CPSC – F – 06 – 0088

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
Computer Battery Consumer Recall Focus Groups

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REPORT VERSION FINAL

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I. Introduction & Methodology

the polling company™, inc. is pleased to present to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) this report of findings from two focus groups conducted in Washington, D.C. on August 21, 2007.

The objective of this research was to gain a better understanding of how consumers have responded to recall notices in the past and what would propel them to take action in the future. Specifically, the discussion emphasized knowledge, experience and reaction to the Computer Company X battery recall of 2006.

To qualify for the group, each prospective participant was interviewed to ensure that he or she satisfied all criteria designed by the polling company™, inc. and approved by CPSC staff prior to commencement of the project. The participants represented a mix of ages, race/ethnicities, incomes, education levels, and marital/familial and employment statuses. Each resided in the greater metropolitan Washington, D.C. area.

All participants were the original owners of a Computer Company X laptop computer and had received written notice of the Computer Company X battery recall at least once in the past. Each participant currently owned and operated a Computer Company X laptop, although only some of them had actually fulfilled the recall recommendations of a battery replacement.

Kellyanne Conway, President & CEO of the polling company™, inc. directed both sessions and was assisted by Amanda Kealey, Project Manager and Danielle King, Operations Manager. An original discussion guide was crafted by the polling company™, inc. and approved by CPSC staff prior to execution of the groups. It is attached to this report as Appendix A.

II. Participant Profile

A total of 22 people residing in and around the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area (including Maryland and Virginia) took part in these discussions. Relevant information about each participant follows:

Group One (5:30p.m. - 7:30p.m.)

Female 1, 51

- White Female
- Single
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$80,000-\$100,000

Male 1, 46

- Puerto Rican and African American Male
- Single
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$80,000-\$100,000

Female 2, 24

- African American Female
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$45,000-\$60,000

Female 3, 38

- African American Female
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income More Than \$100,000

Male 2, 43

- White Male
- Married
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income More Than \$100,000

Male 3, 52

- White Male
- Married
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$80,000-\$100,000

Female 4, 25

- White Female
- Single
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$80,000-\$100,000

Female 5, 28

- White Female
- Single
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$60,000-\$80,000

Male 4, 29

- Asian Male
- Single
- College Graduate
- Full-Time Student
- Household Income \$80,000-\$100,000

Male 5, 25

- White Male
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$45,000-\$60,000

Group Two (7:30p.m. – 9:30 p.m.)

Female 6, 43

- African American Female
- Married
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income Over \$100,000

Female 7, 26

- African American Female
- Single
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$80,000-\$100,000

Female 8, 38

- White Female
- Single
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income Less Than \$35,000

Male 6, 34

- White Male
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income More than \$100,000

Female 9, 33

- African American Female
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$45,000-\$60,000

Male 7, 36

- African American Male
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$60,000-\$80,000

Male 8, 36

- Asian Male
- Married
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income More than \$100,000

Male 9, 40

- African American Male
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$80,000-\$100,000

Female 10, 28

- White Female
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$35,000-\$45,000

Female 11, 27

- White Female
- Single
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$45,000-\$60,000

Male 10, 67

- White Male
- Separated
- Post Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income More Than \$100,000

Female 12, 25

- White Female
- Single
- College Graduate
- Employed Full-Time
- Household Income \$45,000-\$60,000

III. Analysis of Findings

Staying Connected: The Internet Dominates As “Go-To” Source.

To initiate the conversation, these men and women of the Washington, D.C. region were asked to rate their own level of knowledge with respect to the current events and issues facing the local and national area. **When presented with a scale from “one” to “ten,” where “one” is “not at all informed” and “ten” is “extremely well informed,” these participants emerged with a 7.2 mean score.** It became evident that, while one woman regarded herself a “perfect ten,” most felt that assigning themselves such a high score would require greater effort and time to scour what they all admit is an infinite number of stories and sources.

“There are just so many time constraints. If I could spend all day reading the news, I’d be extremely informed.” – Female 11

“It really depends on the media, because if you were to stay on the Internet all day, you would be extremely informed with all their up-to-the-minute news. You could do that all the time.” – Female 7

The Internet was highly lauded as the main artery for news media, and some even named the specific websites they visit, from podcasts to Google News. Some discussants also reported signing up for email alerts, albeit with the rolled eye and audible annoyance that doing so produced massive quantities of unmanageable emails daily. For some, the benefit of email alerts in providing instant updates and even bargains was outweighed by the intrusive and seemingly infinite nature of “TMI” (too much information).

As consumers, these individuals are knowledgeable and nimble about who and what to consult for intelligence on everything from everyday products to international and local news. Yet when presented with the hypothetical scenario that each had entered a new life stage, e.g. marriage, children, buying a home, changing jobs or even careers, and asked who or what they would rely upon to learn more about the products, services and brands “new” to them, “friends first” was the guiding motto. Many suggested that they would ask colleagues, family and friends to share their experiences and literal word-of-mouth referrals. In what emerged as a two-step process, many indicated that they would take this advice and then research industry reviews and user accounts via e-pinions and Consumer Reports, among others, for a “second opinion.”

“I would go to friends first to see what products they have. I would then type in the model number online and see what comes up...I want to see the bad things they say as much as the good things too.” – Male 4

“I would go to e-pinions and see which products are sourced the most. You can also check and see what problems most people are having or have had in the past. Friends are also very helpful.” – Female 11

"If it's an electronic product then I would go to ZDNet.com. If it's a house or something really big, I'd probably find a website that was specifically geared to that product."

– Female 12

"Consumer Reports, especially for automobiles. It is the best." – Male 10

The Safety Check: Consumers' Natural Concerns or A Call to Action?

Next these individuals were asked to discuss some of the concerns, fears or frustrations they experience as consumers. In the first focus group, talk of "value," that is, getting the best deal possible without overpaying, dominated. A few also mentioned planned obsolescence. The term "product liability" or "product safety" emerged unprompted in both discussions, although their meanings had different applications for different individuals, from identity theft to government oversight.

"Whenever I purchase something I always think about whether I'm going to have to deal with customer service. If it's a complicated item, [I wonder] how long I am going to deal with customer service on the phone." – Female 4

"I think product safety is government mandated. The government has to get involved and say 'this is not safe.'" – Female 6

"It means to me that if use as directed, it will not harm you." – Male 9

The moderator then introduced the term "consumer safety," and asked participants to articulate the most accurate and meaningful definition to them personally. These men and women began to mention the numerous high-profile product recalls of the past year or so. **Many admitted that consumer product safety did not necessarily keep them awake at night because they presume it and consider it an innate attribute of the products they purchase.**

"[Consumer safety means] that this product should not harm me, it shouldn't be physically hazardous to me or environmentally hazardous to me." – Female 3

"If it's a product like a battery then it won't cause a fire and there are no long-term harms like on a cell phone. Like the recent cell phone recall." – Male 4

"I'm really not sure I do have consumer safety. To me it is not a term that I feel connected to, it just has too many connotations." – Male 5

Safety: A Simple Expectation.

After noting some of the general manifestations of consumer safety, participants were asked about their opinions, past experiences with, and examples of “**product safety recalls.**” In response, participants demonstrated diverse knowledge of specific recalls, including tires, ground beef, pet food, spinach, cell phone batteries and other electronics. A handful mentioned the Computer Company X battery recall uninitiated, and one person included Company Y as a player in that particular product recall.

Others demonstrated a fluency in the process by which recalls take place. One participant, for example, stated that a recall is the result of multiple reports on the defect of a particular product. Another opined that the typical process by which recalled products are collected entails a pre-registration of the product itself.

Discussions suggested that many feel ignorant of the relative safety of their products until an announcement is made, subscribing to a blind faith game of “no news is good news.” **It is quite simply just expected that the products they purchase exhibit a high degree of functionality and safety.** This notion gathered a formidable consensus in both discussion groups.

“I don’t think that much about [product recalls]. Things don’t really come to mind instead of just buying a car. I do think of safety in terms of finances, though, like personal identity theft.” – Female 10

“I don’t really think about it, but sometimes you do get information on things like fraud, credit card, etc. that are very important.” – Female 11

“The thing is I don’t immediately think ‘this is going to harm me’ as soon as I buying something. When I purchase something, I just assume, this is safe.” – Female 9

A “product recall” is the request that consumers return a product to the maker (manufacturer) for a new one, repair the product, or collect a refund due to the discovery of a potential safety hazard or because the product is defective.

After hearing a brief definition of product recalls described in the above textbox, discussants recounted their experiences with such a recall. Individuals in each group immediately mentioned the recall of their Computer Company X laptop computer batteries. **All but four noted that they were indeed affected by the battery product recall in a raised-hand vote.**

“It happens when there has been a failure in the product, like someone somewhere might be harmed by the product.” – Female 5

“The Computer Company X laptop battery was recalled. And two days ago they recalled the cell phone battery too. Most of [product recalls] deal with electronics and toys from China.” – Male 4

“I just got a notice about a dishwasher product wiring problem; something like if you use a certain dishwasher detergent, it could pose a fire hazard. I checked the model number. It was a written notice sent to me.” – Male 10

“A laptop battery was recalled. Maybe I got an email from Computer Company X or maybe I just saw the news.” – Male 6

The Heat Is On: Taking Action On The Computer Company X Battery Recall.

After acknowledging the fact that all of the focus group participants were invited to the discussion because they were all sent written notice that their Computer Company X laptop computer battery had been impacted by the 2006 recall, these individuals were asked to recall their experiences and impressions surrounding the event.

It quickly became evident that there was no one single method that trumped others in getting recall information to these consumers. While some individuals mentioned “seeing it on the news” first and taking action thereafter, like logging onto the company’s website or calling its 800-number, others had received word from friends and family that the recall was in effect. **It appeared that most were notified first by the media or personal contacts than by Computer Company X itself.** *No one said that they had contacted the Consumer Product Safety Commission directly to learn more.*

In commenting on media-directed recall information, many looked upon their news sources positively, having received word of the recall in what they believed was a quick and comprehensive form.

“I check Slashdot hundreds of times a day. I must have seen news of [the Computer Company X battery recall] there first.” – Male 6

“It was all over the television, radio. My family called me first and told me to check my model number.” – Female 8

“It was on the front page of MSN. I went to the [Computer Company X] website and entered my battery code, filled out my name, and got a new battery.” – Male 9

“The [Computer Company X battery recall] happened last year. I have two Computer Company X laptops at work. All were recalled, so I went online and punched in the model number one by one. And I got [the batteries] sent back to me.” – Male 4

“I don’t remember how I first heard about it, but by the end, from talking to friends and family, I had several emails about the recall. My whole house had to replace their batteries and we worked off the AC adaptor for a week or so.” – Female 10

One participant reacted so quickly upon hearing the news about the recall that she received her replacement battery in advance of any notification by CPSC or Computer Company X.

"I was either on Google News or Drudge Report. By the time I got the letter from Computer Company X I had already ordered my new battery and may have already received it. But it was nice to have gotten the letter. I felt like it was good customer service and that they had handled it well." – Female 12

For others, the foremost memory of the event was the challenge they had in entering their model number on the Computer Company X website or the less-than-stellar service they received when calling Computer Company X customer service. But these challenges and criticisms were limited, as all but one who sought information and satisfaction (a replacement battery) received both.

"I was delayed because on the website I couldn't punch in my model number. I went back the next day and was able to put in my information but that was frustrating."
– Female 11

"I didn't ever receive the battery even though I sent in all the information. I think I contacted [Computer Company X] back in October or November. It should be coming any time now." – Male 7

"I heard about it from work and then on the news, and I think I got something online. My customer service experience with Computer Company X has been pretty much the same because I was typing the number online it wasn't working, so I had to call Computer Company X...and the person on the phone was not very informed. My computer crashed the next day and so there was no need to get a new battery. I went back to my old computer." – Female 3

*"I would say that my experience was moderate. It took a few times and then it finally registered that I had to return my old battery. **There were specific instructions, but it was just difficult for me to get there.**"* – Female 4

Most of these participants mentioned "feeling the heat" before ever getting word of the recall, yet the prevalent sentiment was that heat emitting from laptops was a natural function of the computers. Some took extra precautions prior to the recall to guard against overheating, such as turning off their computers regularly, using spare batteries or the power cord and adaptor, or placing a non-conductor such as cloth or wood underneath the computer to protect their clothing and skin from the heat.

"My computer was hot, but I thought 'this is just what computers do.' Three weeks after the new battery arrived my computer box burned out, so I had to buy a new one anyway. I called Computer Company X and they assured me that it wasn't related to the new battery, but it seemed like such an odd coincidence because it was just three weeks after the new battery arrived." – Female 8

"I had to start using some of those laptop bean bags so that the computer wouldn't heat my legs." – Female 2

"I have my computer on two pieces of wood on top of my desk. I noticed the heat even on top of two pieces of wood. I even got the transformer piece because I know that heat will wear things out so I try to cycle things out so that it preserves the machine longer. When I heard about the battery recall I did go online, I got confirmation on what I thought. I don't know that I got any confirmation on how to extend the life of the product." – Female 1

Still, just one person of the group stopped using her laptop entirely until she received the new battery in the mail. The larger majority said they used the adaptor cord as the backup until the new battery arrived. Many empathized with this participant's comment that any personal injury from an overheating battery was nothing in comparison to the loss of critical files or information on their computer. Specifically, Female 10 said, *"I wasn't concerned for personal safety. I was concerned for data safety. If this explodes on me, all my files will get lost."*

Recall Notices: Preference For Short, Sweet, and To The Point; Fewer Words, More Bullets and Pictures.

After discussing consumer familiarity with and response to the Computer Company X battery recall generally, participants were shown four different notices announcing the recall and asked about the degree to which they could "recall the recall." While everyone remembered the story on the news, little more than half of participants could verify that they had also seen written notification from Computer Company X directly, either by postal mail or email.

The first notice, entitled "Important Safety Advisory," was the initial statement notification that was sent to these consumers at the onset of recall in 2006. Participants were given a copy of the statement and asked to review it. About half of the participants were at least somewhat assured that they had received this particular piece of mail, while only two asserted they had never seen it before. After reviewing the document, most felt that it was overlade with too much detail to be memorable or to compel them into action.

"There is just so much information in here. Most of it I'm not sure that I need. It is a little too text heavy." – Female 7

"I do remember getting this notice after I received the replacement battery. I took action early because there was this mother saying that someone at her work saw the recall on the news." – Female 8

"It looks to me like it was written by Computer Company X's lawyers." – Male 2

The second document presented, with the title heading “Computer Company X Updates Battery Recall,” was then read and examined by both groups. Participants looked it over and seemed to suggest it was “the same document” shortly thereafter. As such, their comments were largely similar to the initial advisory notice, namely that of *information overload*. The addition of this second document encouraged many to question which exact notice they had personally received. The moderator reminded them that if they had acted within a certain time frame following the first notice, they may not have received a second notice.

“I remember getting this one I think. Or maybe it was the first one.” – Male 6

The third notice with the same title as the first and the added “Exhibit 3: Customer Letter DRAFT/Templates” as the heading received question marks among group members who largely agreed that they had never seen it before.

Later in the discussion, a fourth piece of documentation was offered to the discussants, a printed announcement of the recall as it was distributed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) on 2006 with the headline “Computer Company X Announces Recall of Notebook Computer Batteries Due to Fire Hazard.”

While few, if any, could recall previous exposure to the CPSC notice, many were impressed with its clarity and simplicity. The notice outline encouraged readers to “skim through” and locate the information most relevant to them, namely the 11 subcategories listed on the first page, the most helpful of which were “Name of Product,” “Hazard,” “Incidents/Injuries,” “Description,” “Remedy” and “Consumer Contact.”

The pictures that followed were extremely well-received by group members, many of whom found it difficult (or knew of others who struggled) to find their particular serial number on the laptop battery when they were first recalled. The visuals in the announcement allowed them to cross-reference their own items with those on the page. While none remembered seeing this particular CPSC alert in the past, they agreed that it was something they would expect to find as an online resource, such as at CPSC’s and Computer Company X’s respective websites.

“That was my problem, I didn’t have any pictures when I heard about the recall. I didn’t think it would match my battery.” – Male 2

“This is much better. It is more of an easy read [because] there are pictures and it’s just all there. You don’t have to dissect it.” – Female 2

“Already this gives me much better information, I can easily see all the different parts of it...it is more factual and there are less wordy sentences. ‘Six reports,’ all good information.” – Female 10

Participants who expressed an opinion on the matter were of two minds on the CPSC notice and its relation to Computer Company X's recall efforts. A few who were not familiar with the role of the CPSC worried that if this particular alert was coming from CPSC, not Computer Company X, that the manufacturer might be abdicating its responsibility in the recall incident. Others saw enhanced value in a government-sourced message, as a non-biased authority who was adding to the weight of recall notices coming from the manufacturer itself.

"I would have liked to see this notice come from the manufacturer directly. I think things coming from the government directly tend to generalize the problem. Like the headline news...can be overblown. I don't think they have the expertise to know what is being recalled and what is not. If I see this first, I would still go to Computer Company X and see what they say." – Male 4

"I would have rather heard it from Computer Company X because they should be taking responsibility for their products. But on the other hand, they should also be accountable to someone else." – Male 5

"I would say that I like getting it from the federal government because a lot of times there is corporate interest involved and I think there should be a third party. Computer Company X could take a particular spin on it." – Male 1

"Computer Company X has a bigger interest in retaining their client base. The CPSC notice is just the facts, which is what I like. There is definitely a place for each notice." – Female 5

Self-Diagnosing 'Urgency': Factors That Influence Opting Out of Recall Opportunity.

These Washington, D.C. consumers were aware of the Computer Company X battery recall and while a majority of them had fulfilled the instructions of the recall notice and ordered the new batteries, others had not. Outside the focus group facility, a larger cohort of non-responders did exist. Such behavior begs the question: what motivates consumers to power off when it comes to responding to recall notices despite multiple efforts to encourage them to do so?

Discussants in each group shared a cost-benefit analysis that shapes their decision-making process when it comes to product recalls. Prior to acting on the recall, they weigh a number of factors, from inconvenience and hassle to "time cost," perceived immediacy or danger of threat, plausible outcome, product value, among others, in determining *whether and how* to respond to a product recall.

"It's always an evaluation isn't it? My first response is always to evaluate the recall: Is it easy? Is it expensive? Is it dangerous? All the people I know make decisions that way. And if it's easy, you know, I'll do it." – Male 5

"For me it depends on time. I still haven't changed my Computer Company X laptop battery because it just seems like a pain. It is more likely to be like 'I don't have time to do this now.'" – Male 1

"If it's a laptop battery, it is not that bad. I changed the battery but I could also understand saying 'I'll just take a chance because it is a hassle.' If Computer Company X ships me the battery, I have to ship my old one back. It's just a pain."

– Male 4

With the Computer Company X battery recall specifically in mind, participants noted a number of hypothetical questions that they considered before taking action on the recall, including:

- ✓ *How likely is it that my computer will be affected?*
- ✓ *How often do I use my computer to make it worthwhile to replace the battery?*
- ✓ *Is there a real threat of fire?*
- ✓ *Who will I need to speak to in order to get the correct instructions about the recall?*
- ✓ *How many others or others' property have been harmed?*
- ✓ *How much time I have to spend and what actions will I need to take to get the necessary parts?*
- ✓ *Will I be spending any money to get my new battery (e.g. time, shipping costs, part installment, etc.)?*
- ✓ *What condition will my computer be in after I change the battery?*
- ✓ *What computer will I use in the interim before the new battery arrives?*
- ✓ *What is the likelihood another recall will occur with my new laptop battery?*
- ✓ *How successful have others been in receiving the new battery?*

It became clear that the perceived threat of an exploding computer and the even more ominous potential loss of files trumped the inconvenience (including temporary loss of productivity) these consumers might experience to acquire the new battery. Most agreed the cost of replacing the whole computer would be an unnecessary and expensive alternative to the recall process.

Discussions revealed that these same questions often carried over into other products as well.

"It also depends on my reliance on the product. If it's a car, then I will do what I have to do. If it is something that I use often, then absolutely." – Female 10

"[Responding to a recall] really depends on the situation. I can't tell you unless I know what is being recalled and how I could respond. What's more serious to me is that the breaking system in your car is not working and you could crash. If it's like the dehumidifier in your basement and the water bucket doesn't tell you if it's working properly, it's not a really big deal to me." – Male 1

"It really depends. Is it personal harm or just an annoyance?" – Male 3

"I also have to think to myself, 'Okay, do I have to have someone come to my house and now deal with their timeframe?' It's an annoyance." – Female 4

"It seems like things are getting progressively more serious. Whatever the recall is today (as opposed to a recall 10 years ago) I think I should know what it is. It's also how it's going to affect you and when. Is it something where you'll die today or is it something that they'll find out about it being a problem 10 years from now?" – Female 3

Notably, the recall did not dramatically impact the brand perception of Computer Company X for these consumers. Some even admitted to feeling *better* about Computer Company X after a positive customer service experience. Just one individual felt that his relationship with the company had been forever soured by the battery recall.

"Granted I don't own any other laptops other than Computer Company X. It hurt my image of them but I can't compare." – Male 4

"I actually came out with a more positive perception of Computer Company X. They had an opportunity to turn it around and they did. I waited several weeks and then finally send [the battery] away and the new battery came in quicker than expected. It was easy to send back the battery. They gave the consumer lots of information on how to get it back. I typed in my serial number on the computer and they said it was defective." – Female 5

"I think of the negative side of all of this. I always had a higher regard for their products and then this happened." – Female 3

Taking Action: Recall Situations That Set Consumers In Motion.

After discussing the Computer Company X battery recall, participants in both groups were presented with four scenarios that sought to uncover what circumstances would convert their shrugged shoulders into raised eyebrows and prompt them to dispose of the products in question and/or contact the manufacturers to remedy the situation. After reviewing each one individually, these consumers were asked to select the situations they felt would propel them to either return the product, order the new part, or receive a rebate for the cost of the item.

Recall #1: A manufacturer sends out a recall saying that the slats could separate on a child's crib making it an entrapment hazard. The company is asking that you stop using the crib until you receive a repair kit and make the necessary repairs.

The fact that this first recall involved a child spurred many into immediate action. About one-half would follow the instructions on the recall notice and contact the manufacturer for the repair kit. Others suggested that they might purchase a different crib by another manufacturer or repair it themselves instead of going through the motions to get the replacement pieces. It seemed that if there were minimal (if any) cost to them, they would patiently wait for the repair kit, while others felt that they would sooner demand a new crib than await a remedy to the previously hazardous one. A larger portion of group two members reasoned that the concern loomed large enough to warrant a new crib, propelling them to say "no, thank you" to the manufacturer's repair kit and seek out a full refund.

"The other thing about this scenario is that it is for someone else, it's not just my safety. I'm responsible for overseeing that the other person is safe, so I need to protect them."

- Male 1

"In that situation you are talking about a choking hazard. That's a big deal." – Male 3

"Well I don't have kids so I would try to imagine what my brother would do. Where would the children sleep? Or would do something themselves so that it wouldn't fall apart until they go the repair? Or would they go to the hardware store and get some nice bolts so that it doesn't fall apart?" – Female 8

"I would say [to the manufacturer]: 'You are going to send me a repair kit! You're not going to send a repairman?'" – Female 10

"The problem is, when you have a child, you don't have a lot of time to repair a crib."

- Female 12

Recall #2: A candle manufacturer has found that one of their \$8 candles poses a fire hazard. You are asked to mail the candle back for a full refund.

This second hypothetical received audible chatter and in some cases, chuckles, among group members. One of the question marks was the fact that candles are, in their very nature, meant to generate fire, and so the recall seemed almost ironic.

A handful of discussants – about six in total – believed that they would immediately get a refund for the faulty candles after learning of this recall. This response seemed more likely to them if they, like many consumers, had purchased multiple candles. Returning four candles at \$8 a piece seemed a more worthwhile venture than a single one. More participants felt that it would cost less time and hassle to simply dispose of the candles than bother with shipping them back.

"I'm just trying to think of what it would cost just to send that candle back!" – Female 9

"It's just too much money with the postage, the postage box, getting to [the post office]. It's all just too much for an \$8 candle." – Male 9

Recall #3: A maker of lighters has found that they are not child-resistant and could pose a fire or burn hazard to children. The recall says to stop using the lighter and dispose of safely. Alternately, consumers can return the lighter and receive a gift certificate to use for other products from the company.

As was the case with recall #2, the lighter recall elicited more questions than answers for these participants. Once again, if they were using a lighter in the first place, there is an assumed risk that a fire-generating product could erupt into a bigger problem for them and their surroundings. Further, many wondered aloud why a child would have access to a lighter in the first place, and as such, believed it was their responsibility as consumers to keep the product out of the reach of children regardless of any suspected defect.

"It's my responsibility not to put that lighter in the hands of a child." – Male 5

"It's a lighter. I could easily keep a child from accessing it. If it were one of the 99 cent lighters, I would easily just throw it away." – Female 5

*"I'm the only adult in my house so I really never worried about child hazards before."
– Female 11*

The cost of the lighter also appeared to be minimal enough to warrant a quick toss in the garbage rather than request a gift certificate. Additionally, at least five participants said that they would maintain ownership of the lighter in spite of the recall.

For nearly all, the direction "dispose of it safely" seemed unclear. Among members of group one, the term either told them to destroy the lighter by breaking it into pieces, draining the lighter fluid, or simply throwing it away "as is." In the second group, not one individual demonstrated a clear understanding of what to do in this scenario and admitted they would need further instruction to accomplish the task successfully.

Recall #4: A furniture manufacturer has found that one of their entertainment stands poses a tipping hazard and needs to be readjusted. Consumers are told to contact the company for a free repair.

This scenario resulted in one of the bigger "tipping points" in consumers' reactions to recall notices. Their concern was similar to that of the crib in that the plausible outcome (that of a falling entertainment stand) was critical enough to take action. In this particular instance, the concern for the items placed *on* the entertainment stand was greater than any possible destruction of the furniture itself. Further, the very real possibility that a person might be near the entertainment stand when it collapsed and would be subject to bodily harm was enough to sound the alarm.

While all respondents indicated that they would take some type of action, about 15 in total indicated that they would call the manufacturer for a readjustment. This left the others either repairing it on their own, or, in two cases, tossing the item in the garbage. The actual cost and effort made to purchase the entertainment stand in the first place seemed to encourage participants to hold onto the product and take precautions to ensure it did not pose the hazard cited.

"There is so much more at stake than just an entertainment stand with some trinkets on it. Someone could get seriously hurt." – Female 3

"Knowing that I would have to schedule something, I would try to fix the tipping hazard myself like fasten [the entertainment stand] to the wall or something." – Male 3

One participant vehemently demanded a full refund of the item regardless of the projected repair.

"I would act immediately and return it. I knew someone who was killed by a filing cabinet because of a tipping hazard so I don't want it anywhere around. I want a full refund. "Getting the refund sends the message to the manufacturer. It is a vote that I demand a good product. I vote with my dollars." – Female 1

Consumer response to these recalls harkens back to the cost-benefit analysis they introduced in the specific Computer Company X battery recall. If the product value (monetary and otherwise) is greater than any costs on their time or finances, and depending on the threat of harm, injury or death, these individuals will be more encouraged to follow through with the recall.

On Good Authority: Government Oversight A Critical Component of Consumer Product Safety.

These residents of the nation's capital region were asked to consider whom or what they believe is responsible for deciding which products to recall. Several votes were lodged for "manufacturers" and in some cases, product "sellers" themselves. Then respondents were then asked about their knowledge of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Nearly all said that they were at least somewhat familiar with the agency, while two claimed to be completely unaware.

"The Commission is responsible for setting industry standards. A maker that doesn't follow those standards, well, then their product should not stay on the market." – Female 3

"They are a government agency responsible for overseeing consumer products. I don't know if they test anything in general or what. If it's private then they get money from private industries and it's a conflict of interest." – Male 10

"They make the notices of recalls to the public." – Female 5

For most, the CPSC website was the key reference point and exposure to the agency's work with product safety recalls. Most described the agency's responsibility liberally as broadcasting product safety notices to the public. Others expanded on the CPSC's stated roles and responsibilities, one dubbing it as the "consumer watchdog."

*"[The Consumer Product Safety Commission] has a website. I have gone there before because I was curious. I go on once or twice a month just to see what is happening."
– Male 6*

"I went on their website and looked up their information. They have a lot of information online." – Male 3

"I went on their website once. The only reason I looked on there was for my cell phone and frankly, I still don't know if my cell phone is killing me or not." – Female 4

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is responsible for protecting the public from the risk of hazards from more than 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. They cover products such as toys, computers, clothing, and general household items. They are not responsible for cars, drugs, cosmetics or firearms.

Learning that the CPSC was a federal government agency (as presented to the groups verbatim by the moderator as in the above textbox) did little to influence their perception of their organization either negatively or positively. Only one person said that hearing this fact actually soured his impression of the agency.

"I don't know that it is a good thing that they are part of the government. They have interests and the companies themselves should be responsible for saying 'We were wrong.'" – Male 4

"I'm not sure some of these government agencies are not completely influenced by some of the private industries. I'd love it if I felt like there were no private interests being served and it's just in the interest of the consumer." – Female 8

Messaging to the Masses: Conveying Caution, Spreading Safety.

Respondents were asked to contemplate another critical, yet hypothetical role, of leader of the CPSC: *you were just named the Chairman of the CPSC and were responsible for getting information out to the public on hundreds of recalls a year.* Discussants described a number of media avenues they would solicit to spread the word about product recalls to effectively and efficiently reach consumers like them. A number of them mentioned the big three, television, radio, and the Internet, as the best methods of advertising to effectively “reach them.”

Discussants were then presented with a list of 8 different message delivery systems and asked to select their top three preferred methods of contact regarding a future product recall. As demonstrated in the adjacent table, “email alerts” were the favored option in both groups, with nearly all individuals suggesting them. Though certainly not the top choice, traditional television advertising emerged as the secondary option for reaching these consumers, following closely by radio and online links. The use of in-store displays did little to incite these individuals.

<i>Medium</i>	<i>Votes</i>
Email Alerts	19
Television	10
Radio	9
Website Link	8
Direct Mail	7
Newspaper	6
Phone Call	4
In-Store Display/Alert	2

“I like the email alerts and the phone call. Even though I pick up the phone less frequently than I should, I like the fact that I had an opportunity to respond – even if I got an automated message. With a newspaper ad, I would have no way of responding or connecting to it.” – Female 4

“I agree; I like the email alerts. I would of course assume there was a website link inside the email to go to and get more information.” – Male 3

“If you hear something on the radio, you just hear it and then it’s gone. Others are more persistent and you can find the information you need.” – Male 2

“Perhaps try to get some seconds on the news that relate to the products, like in the business or home sections. Maybe something where you can always check on recalls when you order products from Amazon. I trust that more than people who give their feedback on Amazon.” – Female 8

“I think a public television program would be helpful. They accept sponsorship and so they have institutional sponsors. There is no reason why a government agency couldn’t sponsor that.” – Male 10

“I would like to go to a website and link it up to the products you purchase – either as you are purchasing it or as you are browsing. It could be in the packaging somehow and all of the registration materials as well.” – Female 6

"I agree that getting in the stores is important. I watch FOX 5 News everyday; while they rerun things they also stick in there a few new things. I know Channel 9 does the same thing. Radio is good, especially for the people that don't have computers."

- Male 7

After discussing these messaging systems more broadly, participants described the elements that should be included in the CPSC's website. This list included clear and easy access and search functions, company contact information, product registration, and ongoing, up-to-the-minute updates. By combining these media avenues and effectively branding CPSC as the go-to resource for product safety recall information, these consumers showed interest.

"It would be nice to have a way to contact the companies or the manufacturers. It should be something current, like within the last six months or year." – Female 8

"I think for all of us convenience is a huge issue so there has to be multiple ways for us to respond. There would have to be a sensitivity to people who are not used to computers. Convenience will always be the most important thing." – Female 12

"For me, the website would have to be attached to some other website. It would have to be attached to Google because those are the things that I look at." – Female 2

"I think the most important thing would be personal testimonials: it would say, because you got this information, there has been an improvement in lifestyle, a change in buying habits, more awareness. Generally just show how the [recall information] was helpful and effective." – Female 1

Parting Advice

In bringing the discussion to a close, the moderator invited participants to: 1.) reveal any details or information related to product recalls that were particularly helpful from the evening's discussion or 2.) offer CPSC one or two pieces of advice to assist the agency in communicating with the public about product safety recalls.

In response, many recounted the "easy access" format they would expect when it comes to receiving information about product safety recalls (be it in hard copy or electronic form) like website design, pictures, limited text and the like. They expect that when contacted by manufacturers or the CPSC, the communication provides the absolute necessity information with the simplest instructions of "what to do" in responding to the recall.

"The best way to reach me is just by providing me with everything in a very simply format, include the hazard, the scope and then the suggested response." – Female 4

"I want to know the facts and the risk is important too. I just really want to know how critical it is. They wouldn't be telling us if it wasn't important but how important is it? However you want to advertise is fine to me, but I want to know how big the problem is. That would help me react faster." – Female 3

The participants' comments suggested that there might be no one method of accomplishing the goal of communicating with the public. Still, **a larger marketing, branding and public relations campaign might build awareness of and goodwill toward the CPSC and brand the agency as the go-to resource for all things safety.**

"I think [the CPSC] should make themselves more available, maybe with a campaign. For example, maybe the next big recall that goes out they can put a little card out that says 'visit our website.'" – Female 2

"I think these agencies have to react faster. And then they could use their expertise to determine why these products are recalled in the first place. An online forum would be good because I have public trust." – Male 4

"I think if the CPSC wants to be on par with others as a source, then there needs to be a marketing push." – Female 5

"I think one of their biggest problems is recognition. No one really knows that they are out there. An extensive advertising campaign is better than just a commercial. I think they need to register with search engines and get their name out there." – Male 3

APPENDIX A: Moderator's Guide

the polling company™, inc. *for the Consumer Product Safety Commission*
"Recall Effectiveness"
Computer Company X Notebook Battery
Group Discussion Guide

Introduction & Explanation of Session (5 minutes)

Ask each participant to introduce themselves to the group:

- Name
- Employment Status/Occupation: retired, full-time or part-time work, homemaker?
- Residence: How long have you lived in the Washington, D.C. area? Where are you from originally? What brought you here?
- Family: number of people in household; married, kids, grandchildren, children living at home?

General Opinions (10 minutes)

To begin, how up-to-date do you consider yourself to be on current events and issues facing your local area, the United States, and the world in general? What do you do, if anything, to keep up on news and media? What's the biggest barrier for you in getting information about news and events?

Please pretend for a moment that you have just entered a new stage in your life, perhaps you got married, bought a home, became a parent, or started a new job. Assume you are going to be making some purchases of brand new products to go along with this change – where would you go for more information? (If respondents rely on Internet: Where would you go if you didn't have a computer?) Would you confer with friends, family members, call a 1-800 number or expert, contact the company? Why? What would you ask them?

As a consumer, what is your greatest concern? What worries you most when you buy a product? Anything else?

What does the term "consumer safety" mean to you? How do you know when it exists? Is it blind faith? Some sort of tangible? Something you see or hear? Certain trusted brands? Do you know it by reading the instructions or going online to see if it has been recalled?

Product Safety Recall Behavior (80 minutes)

Knowledge Testing – 10 minutes

I'd like to switch topics now and ask if any of you have ever heard of the term "product recalls," sometimes called "product safety recalls?" How would you define this term to those who might be unfamiliar? Anything else?

To be sure that we are all operating under the same set of facts, a "product recall" is the request that consumers return a product to the maker (manufacturer) for a new one, repair the product, or collect a refund due to the discovery of a potential safety hazard or because the product is defective.

Based on this information, do you remember seeing, reading, or hearing anything in the media regarding product safety recalls? How long ago? What do you remember about what you saw or heard? Did you respond in any way to this information? If so, how did you respond?

Notification - 15 minutes

We have asked you to come here today because you were sent written product recall notice for the Computer Company X notebook computer batteries. Is anyone familiar with the recall of the Computer Company X batteries? What do remember about it? Is this the first time for anyone having heard of the Computer Company X battery recall?

Do you remember receiving any information about it in the past? Where did you hear about or see it (probe: written notice, television/radio, newspaper, friends/family, website, etc.)?

What do you remember about the recall specifically? If you were to describe the recall notice to someone who knew nothing about the situation, how would you describe it?

To be sure that we are all operating under the same set of facts, the Computer Company X notebook computer batteries were recalled when it was discovered that the lithium-ion batteries in the computers were overheating, posing a direct hazard to users. Though the batteries were placed in the Computer Company X notebook computers, the batteries themselves were manufactured through Company Z.

Thinking back to when you first heard about this recall, what was your initial reaction? What were your concerns and questions? How did you react?

Did the recall notice give you any instructions about what to do or how to handle the situation? What, if any, options were offered to you?

Were you aware or had you noticed your computers getting hot? If so, did you take any action to remedy the situation prior to receiving the notice?

Pass out specific recall notice sent to participants directly from Computer Company X (“Notice #1”). Do you recognize this notice? Have you ever seen it before? If so, where do you remember seeing it?

Show participants update letter (“Notice #2”): and what about this notice? Does this updated notice seem familiar to you? Have you ever seen it before? If so, where do you remember seeing it?

Thinking back to when you received this notice, did you actually read the letter? If so, did you read the entire notice or just a part of it? Why? If not, why did you decide not to read it? Anything else?

After you received this notice, what was your initial reaction/response? What were you doing when you received it? How did reading it make you feel: nervous, anxious, relieved, etc.?

Show participants third letter (“Notice #3”): and what about this notice? Does this updated notice seem familiar to you? Have you ever seen it before? If so, where do you remember seeing it?

Thinking back to when you received this notice, did you actually read the letter? If so, did you read the entire notice or just a part of it? Why? If not, why did you decide not to read it? Anything else?

After you received this notice, what was your initial reaction/response? What were you doing when you received it? How did reading it make you feel: nervous, anxious, relieved, etc.?

I’d like you to think about this specific notice on a scale of one to five, with “one” being “very helpful” and “five” being “not at all helpful,” how helpful was this notice in alerting you to the Computer Company X notebook battery recall?

What, if anything, did you need more information on or what questions did you still have? Did you search for more information? If so, where?

Consumer Response - 35 minutes

By a show of hands, how many of you took some type of action after hearing about the Computer Company X notebook battery recall? Specifically, what did you do? (Mention the following if not discussed unprompted: returned computer? Contacted Computer Company X received replacement battery? Used AC adapter and power cord instead of the battery to power computer? Thrown the product away? Asked for recommendations from friend or family?) Anything else?

For those who DID NOT respond:

Why did you choose to not take any action? Would you say that the Computer Company X battery recall itself or your own individual life circumstances at the time were the bigger reason for your decision NOT to take action?

Which of the following was the biggest reason for your decision not to take action: time/commitment, cost, safety was not a concern, or something else? Please explain.

Did you have any particular experience in the past that made you less inclined to respond to the recall?

Please finish this sentence: If I were to receive another recall notice tomorrow about ANY technology product I own, the one thing that would motivate me to respond is _____? Probes: additional information in notice, more media attention, greater concern for family/friends, more convenient, etc.? Anything else?

For those who DID respond:

What motivated you to respond to the Computer Company X battery recall? What steps did you have to go through to complete this process? Did you act immediately after reading the notice or did you wait? If there was a delay, why didn't you act immediately?

What information was particularly important for you to know before you responded to the Computer Company X battery recall? Did you seek out any more information than what was in the letter? For example, did you look online (specify websites), in newspapers, talked to friends or family, contacted manufacturer, local government, or retailer? How did you know where to go or where to look? Did you actually receive information that was helpful to you? What?

Did you talk to anyone else about the Computer Company X battery recall? If so, what did you say? Did you try to find others who may have received the notice? If so, why and how? Why was finding others who were in the same situation important to you?

What did the recall notice say to do about remedying the situation (probe: discontinue use, replace battery, eject battery/use a power cord, return the computer, throw computer away, etc.)?

Did you seek out the assistance of anyone to remedy the situation? If so, who? What was the final outcome? Were they helpful/unhelpful/other? Did they make it easier to take the necessary steps?

The recall specifically said that the batteries were overheating. What if the recall only said that the batteries were defective, and stopped working after a certain point? Would your reaction have been different? If so, how? If not, would you have reacted the same?

In general, how important is the specific reason for the recall to your decision of how to react? Why or why not?

After reading the Computer Company X battery recall, did you check if any other products you owned had been recalled? What motivated you to do this? Which products did you examine specifically? Why those and not others? Where/how did you check about other recalls?

Looking back, would you have done anything differently? If you were to have received information about a similar recall (such as for another electronic device) would you take the same action? Why or why not?

Did the recall affect your relationship with the retailer, product manufacturer, or some other company involved in the recall? Anything else?

Does a recall influence your impression about either Computer Company X or Y? After learning of the recall, which company do you have a worse impression of? Better? How so? In general, are you likely to have a more positive or more negative impression of the Computer Company X after learning about the product recall, or does it make no difference? Why?

Are you more or less likely to buy a product from a manufacturer, such as Company Y that has issued a recall OR the retailer, such as the Computer Company X store, or does it make any difference? Why?

Thinking more generally now, is this the first time you had ever responded to a recall? If not, do you typically respond to recalls? Describe the situation when you last responded. What was the product being recalled? Where did you find information about the recall? What was your initial reaction? What action did you take? What was the result?

Consumer Motivation - 20 minutes

I'd like to talk about 4 different scenarios that are typical of product recalls. For each one, please tell me whether you would be likely to comply with the recall in each case:

(NOTE: 2-3 scenarios may be tested in each group, depending on time).

- 1.) A manufacturer sends out a recall saying that the slats could separate on a child's crib making it an entrapment hazard. The company is asking that you stop using the crib until you receive a repair kit and make the necessary repairs.
- 2.) A candle manufacturer has found that one of their \$8 candles poses a fire hazard. You are asked to mail the candle back for a full refund.
- 3.) A maker of lighters has found that they are not child-resistant and could pose a fire or burn hazard to children. The recall says to stop using the lighter and dispose of safely. Alternately, consumers can return the lighter and receive a gift certificate to use for other products from the company.
- 4.) A furniture manufacturer has found that one of their entertainment stands poses a tipping hazard and needs to be readjusted. Consumers are told to contact the company for a free repair.

Probe responses of group: Why do you think you would be more likely to respond to some of these but not others? What specifically about these scenarios would motivate you to take action?

Would you be more or less likely to respond to the recall if you were offered an incentive to do so? What would that incentive have to be to interest you?

If I were to tell you that you would receive a rebate from the manufacturer in return for the recalled item, how likely would you be to consider following through with the return?

Now let's make some assumptions: 1) You feel that you or a family member is at risk of injury from the product OR 2) You feel that you or a family member is not at risk of injury from the product. Also, let's say the rebate would be for the full price of the product. What if the rebate was 20% of the price (for example, you would receive a \$5.00 rebate for a \$20.00 shirt).

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) (25 minutes)

Based on what you know, who do you think is responsible for determining that a product should be recalled? Who do you think is responsible for communicating recalls to the public? Who do you think should be responsible for communicating recalls to the public? Why?

How familiar are you with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) (very, somewhat, just a little bit, not at all)? How and when did you first learn about it? What, specifically, did you see or hear about the CPSC?

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is responsible for protecting the public from the risk of hazards from more than 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. They cover products such as toys, computers, clothing, and general household items. They are not responsible for cars, drugs, cosmetics or firearms.

Given this information, how likely would you be to look into information about CPSC? Have you ever heard of CPSC's toll free hotline? Website? Have you ever used their website or contacted CPSC directly? Please tell us about the experience(s).

If you were to learn that the CPSC was a federal government agency, would you be more or less favorable to them? Why or why not?

Pretend for a moment that you were just named the Chairman of the CPSC and were responsible for getting information out to the public on hundreds of recall a year. What would you do to get this information to the people that need it most? Anything else?

As you may or may not know, there is a website, www.recalls.gov which posts information about recalls, allows visitors to sign up for email notifications, and search information about consumer products. Based on this information alone, does this sound like a website you would likely use? Why or why not? What information would you hope to find?

What if you were told that six federal agencies, including the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) came together to develop the www.recalls.gov website. Do you think this is a good thing? Why or why not? Would this information make you more or less interested in going on and using the website? Why?

Messaging to Consumers (25 minutes)

Thinking about the next time you purchase an item similar to a Computer Company X notebook computer, such as another electronic device, how likely will you be to seek out information about whether there are any safety concerns either with that product, brand, or manufacturer? Please explain. Where would you go to look?

Hand out the CPSC news release entitled "Computer Company X Announces Recall of Notebook Computer Batteries Due to Fire Hazard." This news release from the CPSC concerned the Computer Company X battery we have discussed today. Have you ever seen this before?

This is the type of news release that the CPSC produces every day about a number of product recalls. Looking over this information, how effective do you think this is? What information would you want that is not supplied here? Anything else?

Where would you expect to find this notice? Where should it be posted? Why?

The CPSC posts many of these alerts directly on their website. Is this something you would be likely to access in the future? Why or why not?

What, if anything, should be changed about notifying consumers about recalls? Would you be more or less apt to respond if there were more visuals, such as pictures, diagrams, etc.? Why or why not? Would you be more or less likely to respond if the safety of the product were highlighted? Why or why not? Anything else?

Please finish the following sentence: The best way to contact me about a recall is ____? Imagine for a moment that you own a product that is going to be recalled tomorrow and the manufacturer is looking to alert you so that you can return the product. Considering a typical day in your life, what would need to be done to make sure that the recall got into your hands?

Probe: Ask participants to vote for the top method of contacting them about product recalls? (Write on flip chart)

- Email alerts
- TV Ad
- Radio Ad
- Newspaper Ad
- Website Link
- Direct Mail (specify source)
- Phone call
- In-store display/alert

You may or may not know that a product safety registration card is one way to get recall information to the people that own products. The cards are typically given to consumers when they make some purchases so that the manufacturer can identify owners of products that are later recalled. Have you ever registered a product? If so, where? How did you complete the registration? Do you register some products and not others? If so, which products are you likely to register?

Would you be more or less likely to fill out a registration card if you were not asked about your personal buying habits?

What form of registration would you be more likely to use – filling out a card and mailing back to the manufacturer or using the manufacturer’s website to register the product? Why or why not?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Finally, I would like to thank all of you again for participating in what has been a productive exchange of ideas and opinions. I’d like to go around the room and have everyone name one or two things that would make you more likely to respond to a product recall or any advice you would give to the CPSC on how they might be able to motivate more people to respond to product recalls? It can be related to something we talked about today or something else that is on your mind. (For those who say nothing, ask them why it is not worth it to them to respond to product recalls).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN TODAY’S DISCUSSION!

APPENDIX B: Recall Notices

(Notice #1)

IMPORTANT SAFETY ADVISORY

Date

Dear Customer,

█ has identified a potential issue associated with certain batteries sold with █ notebook computers. In cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and other regulatory agencies, █ is voluntarily recalling certain █-branded batteries with cells manufactured by █ and offering free replacements for these batteries. Under rare conditions, it is possible for these batteries to overheat, which could pose a risk of fire.

Potentially affected batteries were sold with the following models of █ notebook computers or provided or sold separately as secondary batteries:

█
█
█

In addition, these batteries may have also been provided in response to service calls. The batteries were shipped to customers between █. The words "█" and one of the following are printed on the batteries: "Made in Japan" or "Made in China" or "Battery Cell Made in Japan Assembled in China" or "Assembled in Taiwan".

We are notifying you because our records show that you may have received one or more of the notebook computers and/or battery packs affected by this recall. You should immediately discontinue use of the battery. You may continue to use your notebook computer safely by turning the system off, ejecting the battery, and using the AC adapter and power cord to power your system until your replacement battery is received.

Please go to www.█.com to determine if you have any batteries that are subject to this recall and to order the replacement batteries. █ will provide a means for you to return the affected batteries for proper disposal. If you have additional questions not covered on the recall website, or cannot access the website, please call █

Customers also can write to the company at [REDACTED]

Please note that only the described batteries are subject to this recall and not the notebook computers themselves.

[REDACTED] apologizes for the inconvenience caused by this issue. Shipment of quality products always has been and continues to be our foremost concern. As always, if you have questions or concerns about this or any other subject, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

(Notice #2)

Title: [REDACTED] Updates Battery Recall

Initial Screen Text:

[REDACTED] is asking customers to recheck their batteries at [www.\[REDACTED\].com](http://www.[REDACTED].com) if they have not yet ordered or received a replacement battery as part of the recall announced [REDACTED] 2006. Revised supplier data provided to [REDACTED] has resulted in a revised list of battery serial numbers.

More details:

On [REDACTED] 2006, [REDACTED] announced a recall of batteries manufactured with [REDACTED] cells. As part of the recall process, [REDACTED] continues to require its suppliers to revalidate the data which led to the recall. This has resulted in a revised list of battery serial (identification) numbers. The affected battery model numbers and date range remain unchanged.

To ensure that all potentially affected batteries are identified and returned to [REDACTED], the company is requesting that customers recheck their batteries at [www.\[REDACTED\].com](http://www.[REDACTED].com) if they have not yet ordered or received a replacement battery.

The batteries which were recalled contain cells manufactured by [REDACTED]. The affected battery model numbers and date range remain unchanged.

Potentially affected batteries were sold with the following models of [REDACTED] notebook computers or provided or sold separately as secondary batteries:

[REDACTED]

In addition, these batteries may have also been provided in response to service calls. The batteries were shipped to customers between [REDACTED]. The words "[REDACTED]" and one of the following are printed on the batteries: "Made in Japan" or "Made in China" or "Battery Cell Made in Japan Assembled in China".

Please go to [www.\[REDACTED\].com](http://www.[REDACTED].com) to determine if you have any batteries that are subject to this recall and to order the replacement batteries. [REDACTED] will provide a means for you to return the affected batteries for proper disposal. If you have additional questions not covered on the recall website, or cannot access the website, please call [REDACTED]

Customers also can write to the company at [REDACTED]. **Please note that only the described batteries are subject to this recall and not the notebook computers themselves.**

[REDACTED] apologizes for the inconvenience caused by this issue. Shipment of quality products always has been and continues to be our foremost concern. As always, if you have questions or concerns about this or any other subject, please feel free to contact us.

(Notice #3)

EXHIBIT 3: Customer Letter DRAFT/ Templates

IMPORTANT SAFETY ADVISORY

Date

Dear Customer,

On [REDACTED] 2006, [REDACTED] announced a recall of batteries manufactured with [REDACTED] cells. As part of the recall process, [REDACTED] continues to require its suppliers to revalidate the data which led to the recall. This has resulted in a revised list of battery serial (identification) numbers. The affected battery model numbers and date range remain unchanged.

To ensure that all potentially affected batteries are identified and returned to [REDACTED], the company is requesting that customers recheck their batteries at [www.\[REDACTED\].com](http://www.[REDACTED].com) if they have not yet ordered or received a replacement battery. Throughout this recall, [REDACTED] primary concern continues to be the safety of its customers.

We are notifying you because our records show that you may have received one or more of the notebook computers and/or battery packs affected. You should immediately discontinue use of the battery. You may continue to use your notebook computer safely by turning the system off, ejecting the battery, and using the AC adapter and power cord to power your system until your replacement battery is received.

Please go to [www.\[REDACTED\].com](http://www.[REDACTED].com) to verify if your battery or batteries are subject to this recall and to order the replacement batteries. [REDACTED] will provide a means for you to return the affected batteries for proper disposal. If you have additional questions not covered on the recall website, or cannot access the website, please call [REDACTED]

Customers also can write to the company at [REDACTED]. **Please note that only the described batteries are subject to this recall and not the notebook computers themselves.**

[REDACTED] apologizes for the inconvenience caused by this issue. Shipment of quality products always has been and continues to be our foremost concern. As always, if you have questions or concerns about this or any other subject, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

(Notice #4)

(Available at:
[http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/\[REDACTED\].html](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/[REDACTED].html))

**NEWS from CPSC
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission**

Office of Information and Public Affairs Washington, DC
20207

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[REDACTED], 2006

Release [REDACTED]

Firm's Recall Hotline: [REDACTED]
CPSC Recall Hotline: (800) 638-2772
CPSC Media Contact: Scott Wolfson, (301) 504-7051
[REDACTED] Media Contacts: [REDACTED]

**[REDACTED] Announces Recall of Notebook Computer Batteries Due To
Fire Hazard**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

Name of Product: [REDACTED]-branded lithium-ion batteries made with cells manufactured by [REDACTED]

Units: About [REDACTED] million battery packs (an additional [REDACTED] million battery packs were sold outside the U.S.)

Battery Distributor: [REDACTED]

Battery Cell Manufacturer: [REDACTED]

Hazard: These lithium-ion batteries can overheat, posing a fire hazard to consumers.

Incidents/Injuries: [REDACTED] has received [REDACTED] reports of batteries overheating, [REDACTED]. No injuries have been reported.

Description: The recalled batteries were sold with or sold separately to be used with the following [REDACTED] notebook computers:

[REDACTED]

"[REDACTED]" and one of the following markings are printed on the batteries: "Made in Japan," "Made in China," or "Battery Cell Made in Japan Assembled in China." The identification number for each battery appears on a white sticker.

Sold through: [REDACTED] Web site, phone and direct sales as part of a service replacement program, and catalogs from [REDACTED]. The computers with these batteries sold for between [REDACTED] and individual batteries sold for between [REDACTED].

Manufactured In: Japan and China

Remedy: Consumers should stop using these recalled batteries immediately and contact [REDACTED] to receive a replacement battery. Consumers can continue to use the notebook computers safely by turning the system off, ejecting the battery, and using the AC adapter and power cord to power the system until the replacement battery is received.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact [REDACTED] toll-free at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] log on to the firm's Web site at [REDACTED] or write to: [REDACTED]