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Opinions Vary Over BBB Membership

By [Doug Caverly](#) - Mon, 07/21/2008 - 11:30am.

Good draw or waste of time

The more thorough (and/or OCD) a consumer is, the more things he or she will want to know about a company. Prices, exchange policies, and friends' experiences may all come into play. And so might Better Business Bureau credentials, which is why business owners should consider becoming members.

For better or for worse, the BBB doesn't have a huge amount of power; consumers know they won't see anyone wearing its symbol arresting crooked businessmen. Individuals also know that not-great companies can join the BBB, which might make business owners not want to bother with the membership process.

Here's an idea, then: if you're doing so well that taking the time to join would be an inconvenience, by all means ignore the BBB. If there's a fair amount of dead time at the office, consider adding this to a "to do" list. Or just ask your customers what they make of the issue, since they're probably similar to people on the cusp of becoming your customers.

[Anita Campbell](#) concludes that, on the whole, BBB membership is "one more piece of evidence to take into account."

People with a special focus on ecommerce should also know that "[w]ith websites little things matter. Sometimes one small bit of evidence of trust is all it takes. That's why I think being accredited by the Better Business Bureau and displaying the BBBOnline insignia have value, even for online businesses with no brick and mortar component," Campbell continued.

The BBB has all sorts of additional information to help people decide about joining. The organization's minimum [accreditation standards](#) should probably be among the first things potential members consider.