14 May 2009

Dell
Dell House
The Boulevard
Cain Road
Bracknell
Berkshire   RG12 1LF

Dead Sir/Madam,

<p align="center">**Re: 'Della' Web site**</p>

I am writing to you in two capacities:

1) My company, Memset Dedicated Hosting, is a significant customer of yours. We are one of UK's top Web & IT hosting companies, and have a strong ethos of corporate responsibility. We exclusively use Dell servers for our infrastructure, and even in this recessive climate we expect to spend several hundred thousand pounds on Dell equipment this year.

2) I am a spokesperson for Intellect's (the UK's high tech trade association) women in IT forum, and I am also closely involved with the British Computer Society's Women's forum strategic panel. In short, I am a strong voice in the movement to challenge the stereotypes and sexism that pervade the UK technology industry, and to encourage more girls towards careers in IT. These are my views, however, and you will likely get more diplomatic letters from those organisations individually.

My female colleagues and I (IT professionals and non-technologists alike) find the Della Web site to be patronising and sexist in the extreme. As IT companies, we all have a moral corporate responsibility to challenge the incredibly damaging stereotype that "women are clueless about technology", and it is all the more important with a product that will certainly appeal to impressionable girls!

The "tech tips" section leaves me positively fuming with its derogatory implication that most women are vain housewives who need to be treated like children when it comes to computers! Here are some of the particularly offensive "tech tips":

   2. Get healthier: Use your mini to track calories, carbs and protein with ease, watch online fitness videos, map your running routes and more.
   3. Eat better: Find recipes online, store and organize them, and watch cooking videos.
   4. Get organized: 'Remember the Milk' is a free, tweakable online task manager that's easy to use.

Please remove the offensive content immediately. I realise that it is part of the US Dell site, but we are in a global economy and the Internet does not recognise International borders!

You are already getting significant bad press as a result of this site's launch:

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2009/05/12/dell_launches_della/

The Register is the UK's leading technology news Web site, incase you did not know.

Further, I strongly urge that Dell Europe sign up to the Code of Best Practices for Women and ICT, produced by the EU Directorate General for Information Society and Media, and launched by Commissioner Reding last March, at a conference in Brussels. Please see the document "Cyberellas are IT", downloadable here:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/itgirls/doc/proceedings_09.pdf

Please feel free to contact via telephone on +44 1483 608010 or via email at md@memset.com to discuss this matter, or preferably just remove the insulting content.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Craig-Wood
Managing Director
Memset Ltd.