



Case Report

1	Case Number	0224/11
2	Advertiser	The Tool Shop
3	Product	Hardware/Machinery
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Radio
5	Date of Determination	13/07/2011
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Sex

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A bubbly young female discusses purchasing tools and equipment from the Tool Shop's internet site.

She comes across in a confused state as she doesn't understand how it's possible to purchase large items like wheelbarrows and put them into a shopping cart.

THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

The ad portrays the female narrator as being extremely stupid and makes obvious sexual statements - e.g. "down your load". This advertisement stereotypes females as stupid and tradies as being easily attracted to the product via sexist advertising.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

In response to the complaint about this radio advertisement we believe that we have treated the issue of sex with sensitivity according to section 2.3 in the AANA code of ethics. We believe that we have done everything within our capabilities in our arrangement with Nova 106.9 FM to ensure that our message has been broadcast to the correct audience within the correct time zone in accordance with section 2.3 of the AANA code of ethics. Our main aim with this advertisement is to promote our website to busy tradesman that are time poor but need to source new tools and equipment. In addition, this ad is designed to target a clientele that most likely isn't aware that purchasing our range of products is possible. In no way do we believe we have portrayed women as being "extremely stupid", nor do we believe that we have promoted any "stereotype" or used "obvious sexual statements" to get our message across. The ad is intended to be humorous and has been perceived that way by the vast majority of our clients. In no way did we believe that tradesmen (our target audience) would be especially attracted to our business because of a "stereotype" or "sexist advertising". When creating the ad, we consulted with Nova FM creative writers and specifically ended up choosing a "unique" female voice. Unique - because it is more ""annoying", then "sexual" in order to shy away from any incorrect perception which may have been formed.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standard Board ('the Board') considered whether the advertisement complied with the AANA Code of Ethics ('the Code').

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that this advertisement is discriminatory in its portrayal of women as stupid and trades as responding to sexist advertising.

The Board reviewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response.

The Board first considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.'

The Board noted that the advertisement features a young woman discussing how to purchase tools and equipment from the Tool Shop's internet site.

The Board noted the complainant's concern that the woman is portrayed as stupid. The Board considered the female's voice in the advertisement is made to sound as though the woman is not particularly bright however in the Board's view this depiction is not strong enough to be considered discriminatory against women. The Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement implies trades as "being easily attracted to the product via sexist advertising". The Board noted that this is not something which would fall under the provisions of the code.

The Board considered that the advertisement is not discriminatory towards women or men.

Based on the above the Board determined that, in this instance, the advertisement did not depict any material that discriminated against or vilified any person or section of society. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.