

Is it advertising?

A checklist to help determine what is clearly distinguishable advertising

This checklist list provides a reference for the Ad Standards Community Panel (the Community Panel) to guide determinations related to Section 2.7 of the AANA Code of Ethics regarding clearly distinguishable advertising:

Advertising or Marketing Communication shall be clearly distinguishable as such to the relevant audience.

- If an advertisement meets all four of the first-tier criteria, then the Community Panel can be confident that it is clearly distinguishable as advertising.
- If one or more of the first-tier criteria are missing or lacking, there will likely be greater confusion or uncertainty amongst the target audience and the potential advertisement will need greater scrutiny.

First Tier (highest importance)	The person/people in the post/image look like they are modelling
	The imagery/photography/videography looks staged
	The post contains tags and/or hastags of the brand or product
	The brand/product/service is central to the post/layout/article/video
Second Tier (middle importance)	The label on the product is visible
	The language used sounds like advertising
	The imagery/photography/videography looks professional
	The post/layout/article/video makes the product appear desirable
Third Tier (least importance)	It was posted/written by a prominent person or celebrity that would post advertising
	Advertising is to be expected in the format on this channel
	The logo of the brand/product/service is visible

Source:

This information is intended as a guide only to assist Community Panel decisions and has been sourced from active social media participants in Ad Standards research conducted by Colmar Brunton in December 2018.

The full research report '[Community perceptions of clearly distinguishable advertising](#)' is available on the Ad Standards website.

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