



## Case Report

1	Case Number	0007/12
2	Advertiser	Leading Edge Telecoms
3	Product	Telecommunications
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	08/02/2012
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Modified or Discontinued

### ISSUES RAISED

- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women
- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement opens with a close up of a woman's chest. She is wearing a white t-shirt with the words, "Do you know where your assets are?" emblazoned across the front.

The camera pans out and we see the woman is standing next to a blue ute with the words, "Leading Edge Telecoms" written on the side.

A male voice over talks about how the Navman Wireless asset tracker can help cut costs.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*I find the abovementioned advertisement offensive in the wording across the T-shirt the woman is wearing.*

*I thought our predecessors fought and suffered for the freedom of women. The suggestive nature of the words right across her breast in this ad is not necessary to convey the worth of a product. If said product is worth advertising - tell us up front what it does how it works and how much it costs. Why try to be-little a woman by showing her as an empty headed blonde bimbo who needs a man to show the way?*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*When we are selling Navman Wireless face to face the first qualifying question we ask the potential customer is "do you know where your assets are".*

*I would also like to note that the actor ("the empty headed blonde bimbo") within the advertisement was asked to choose her own outfit for this segment.*

*The Ad explains what the Navman Wireless does and how it works, this is demonstrated by the fact that the actor is sitting at a computer screen and assessing the on line vehicle locator. We do not advertise the cost of the system as it is calculated on a business case by case requirement and advertising a single price point would be false advertising.*

*At no stage did we try to "be-little" the actor in fact she was a unemployed single mother who was paid for the Ad and is now employed by us as a Navman Wireless sales specialist, we are also paying for 7 weeks of intense Telstra Business training to up skill her and provide her with valuable qualifications.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the advertisement depicts offensive wording across a woman's chest and thus belittles women.

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

The Board noted that the advertisement begins and ends with an image of a woman wearing a white shirt with 'do you know where your assets are?' across it. The board also noted that the advertisement commences with a full screen shot of the woman's chest and shirt and that the advertisement then pans out to see the woman in full.

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 woman in the advertisement is shown working in an office environment as well as promoting the business on her t-shirt. The Board agreed that the focus on the woman's shirt was objectifying of the woman however the Board noted that, as well as being depicted posing next to a vehicle, the woman is shown as an employee of the business and is seen seated at the computer and working. The Board considered that, although there is a focus on the woman's chest in the advertisement, the woman is not depicted in a

manner which presents her in a negative manner and that the advertisement as a whole does not discriminate against or vilify women.

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.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.2 of the Code which states, “Advertising or Marketing Communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people.”

The Board noted that at the start of the advertisement there is a close-up of the woman’s chest and the wording across her t-shirt, “Do you know where your assets are?”. The Board considered that the close up of the woman’s chest was a use of ‘sexual appeal’ in the advertisement.

The Board also considered that the focus in the advertisement on the woman’s chest is an exploitative use of sexual appeal. The Board also considered that the combination of the close-up of the woman’s chest, the implied reference to the woman’s breasts as ‘assets’, and the connotation that the assets were a possession of someone other than the woman amounts also to a use of sexual appeal that is degrading.

The Board determined that the advertisement did employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading and that it did breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did breach Section 2.2 of the Code, the Board upheld the complaint.

## **ADVERTISER RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION**

We have modified the advertisement by removing the offending matter at the start and end of the ad.