



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0012/18
2	Advertiser	True Local
3	Product	Professional Service
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Email
5	Date of Determination	07/02/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

An email advertisement which features a still image from a video of a man reclining on an office chair. On the wall behind him is a poster of a woman in a bikini which looks like a calendar.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The advertisement shows a tradesman, as a yobbo, with a pic of a bikini clad girl on his wall behind him in his office

When the email is opened it shows Steve, leaning back in his office chair, with a bikini clad girl on his wall, looks like from a magazine, not a photo, due to the background. Not the worst example of sexist advertising. But still inappropriate, given the level of violence against women that exists.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE





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

I have read through the complaint and disagree that a poster of this woman in the background of the video in any way promotes sexism or violence against women. This is a genuine depiction of an office of an every day Australian business owner. We did not photo shop or edit the image in, we did not brief it in to the agency, it was actually already on the wall in the office we used on the shoot.

We will not be using this still in any of our future activity (email or otherwise) and we won't be putting any spend behind the video it's from.

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the advertisement is objectifying and demeaning to women.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.2 of the Code. Section 2.2 of the Code states: "Advertising or marketing communications should not employ sexual appeal: (a) where images of Minors, or people who appear to be Minors, are used; or (b) in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people."

The Board noted that in order to breach this Section of the Code the advertisement would need to be using sexual appeal in a manner that is considered both exploitative and degrading.

The Board noted this email advertisement features a still image from a video of a man reclining on an office chair. On the wall behind him is a poster of a woman in a bikini which looks like a calendar.

The Board noted the picture of the woman in a bikini and considered whether this advertisement was using sexual appeal.

The Board considered the advertiser's response that the advertisement was filmed in a real office and that the picture of the woman in a bikini was already on the wall and was not a feature of the advertisement.



The Board considered although this picture was not a feature or a focus of the advertisement it is still a sexualised image.

The Board then considered whether the ad used sexual appeal in a manner that was exploitative and degrading.

The Board noted the AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of the terms exploitative and degrading:

“Exploitative - means clearly appearing to purposefully debase or abuse a person, or group of persons, for the enjoyment of others, and lacking moral, artistic or other values.

Degrading – lowering in character or quality a person or group of people.”

The Board considered that this advertisement plays on a negative stereotype of tradies in male dominated areas having pictures of women on their wall. The Board considered that this was an out-dated concept and considered that in most workplaces this would not be considered appropriate office decoration.

However, the Board considered the picture of the woman was not the focus of the advertisement, and that the woman was fully clothed and the picture itself did not lower the woman in character or quality.

The Board considered that although having a picture of a bikini-wearing woman on wall of an office is an outdated stereotype, the use of the image itself was not a use of sexual appeal in an exploitative or degrading manner.

In the Board’s view the overall impression was that the image did not breach section 2.2 of the Code.

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

