



Case Report

1	Case Number	0029/12
2	Advertiser	Hewlett-Packard Australia Pty Ltd
3	Product	Information Technology
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Cinema
5	Date of Determination	08/02/2012
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Violence Causes alarm and distress to children

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A man wakes to noises in his house and goes down stairs to investigate. He finds two of his friends watch a scary movie. They are all frightened by the life-like quality of a zombie-like character that appears on the screen during the movie.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The image of the corpse was horror movie material and frightening to young children it was unsuitable and inappropriate. I had to tell my child to shut her eyes because of the corrodible image of the corpse the effect was to be scary. This was an ad preview for a children's movie Tin Tin and there were lots of children in the audience.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

No response received from advertiser.

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 complainants’ concerns that the advertisement is alarming and inappropriate for viewing especially by children.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the absence of a response from the advertiser.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised”.

The Board noted that the advertisement depicts a man waking to a noise in his home who then creeps downstairs and startles others who are watching something on the laptop. The image on the laptop then switches to a zombie style scene from a scary movie.

The Board considered the complainants’ concerns that the zombie type image that appears on the laptop is frightening and could cause distress to children and adults and alike.

The Board noted that the advertisement itself does not depict violence but that this type of image would likely be frightening to children and agreed that the advertisement is suited to an ‘M’ rated timeslot so as to limit any viewing by young children.

The Board noted that this type of advertisement would be more suitably screened at movie sessions directed to adults but noted that there is no formal clearance body for cinema advertising and that the screening of advertisements is left to the discretion of the independent cinema venue.

In the Board’s view the advertisement does present violence in a manner that is justifiable in the context of the product being advertised, as it is considered that quality imagery and sound is considered important by the community in relation to computer products and in particular those who utilize their computers for watching movies.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach section 2.3 of the Code.

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

