



**ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BUREAU**

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Case Report

1	Case Number	0063/14
2	Advertiser	Lion
3	Product	Alcohol
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Billboard
5	Date of Determination	12/03/2014
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.6 - Health and Safety Depiction of smoking/drinking/gambling

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The Advertisement captures a moment shared amongst a group of six adult friends on a Mexican summer holiday. The group is depicted relaxing at the end of the day with a beer in hand, sitting in various positions on the beach watching the sun go down. The imagery suggests that the group will be camping overnight, with their large utility truck parked nearby, two tents and a clothes line set up in the surrounding area under a palm tree. Corona's brand positioning and tagline, 'From Where You'd Rather Be', is featured in the top right hand corner of the advertisement, along with the Corona Extra logo.

THE COMPLAINT

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

My concern is that although you cannot see the faces of these youths, their physique and styling is underage. This is close to my son's school, St Joseph's Gregory Terrace, which is also close to other high schools in the area. Much like cigarette advertising use to be, I think it subtly targets teens to drink alcohol.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

To confirm, the Advertisement was pre-vetted internally at Lion and by the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC), receiving approval from both. The Advertisement was placed in an approved location in Bowen Bridge Rd, Bowen Hills, carefully considered by Lion and in line with guidelines set out by the Outdoor Media Association.

The Advertisement does not breach of Section 2, Clause 2.6 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics. We believe the Advertisement abides with prevailing community standards on health and safety and presents a responsible and moderate approach to the consumption of alcoholic beverages. The Advertisement does not in any way target underage teenagers to drink alcohol (as alleged in the complaint).

Lion is a long standing signatory to and is fully committed to the ABAC scheme and the AANA Code of Ethics. Lion takes these matters seriously, and has an excellent advertising compliance track record.

Lion's Response

As stated above, and to provide some relevant background, Corona's brand positioning is 'from where you'd rather be' – its advertising has always evoked a laid-back, reflective, summer holiday feel and the Corona brand prides itself on being a benchmark for relaxed, responsible consumption. The Advertisement captures a moment shared amongst six friends, both male and female, on a Mexican summer holiday. All models featured in the advertisement are over the age of 25, and the Advertisement has been pre-vetted and approved by AAPS and its outdoor placement approved by the Outdoor Media Association.

We do not believe that this Advertisement in any way encourages underage drinking, nor does it have strong or evident appeal to children or adolescents. Accordingly, we believe the Advertisement to be fully compliant with prevailing community standards on health and safety. Further, we consider the reasonable person would assume that this Advertisement depicts a group of adult friends, consuming alcohol in a responsible, mature way that is typical of a relaxed Summer holiday. No activity or imagery displayed in the Advertisement has strong appeal to children or adolescents, and the attire and styling of those depicted is typical of Summer beachgoers.

In response to the specific complaints:

- 1. The male youths' physiques and styling appear to be under-aged*

Careful consideration was made in the casting of the Advertisement to ensure that all models are over (and appear to be over) the age of 25. We believe that the reasonable person would assume that those featured in the Advertisement are adults and not children or adolescents.

As stated, this Advertisement was pre-vetted both internally at Lion and via AAPS, to ensure that it does not breach any section of the ABAC, most relevantly having significant appeal to children or adolescents.

As outlined in section b) of the ABAC, advertisements for alcohol beverages must -

b) not have a strong or evident appeal to children or adolescents and, accordingly –

i) adults appearing in advertisements must be over 25 years of age and be clearly depicted as adults;

The Advertisement's compliance with this section of the ABAC was confirmed by both Lion's internal and external Legal teams and External Relations team, as well as AAPS as part of the usual pre-vetting process (see attached approval form).

It is important to note that not all models featured in this Advertisement are male, as the complainant suggests – in fact, there are three females and three males depicted in this Advertisement.

Females generally have naturally smaller physiques than males, but this does not suggest that they are in fact under-age. Lion rejects the suggestion that anything included in the visual suggests that those depicted are under-age.

The attire of those depicted is typical of beachgoers and holidaymakers, including hats, singlets, summer dresses and board shorts. These items of clothing are commonly worn by a wide cross-section of people who are relaxing on holiday or camping at the beach. We believe the reasonable person would not assume that this type of styling is 'under-aged' or targeted towards children or adolescents, but rather associated with anyone who is at the beach or on holiday.

2. The Billboard has been placed close to my son's school and other high schools in the area – it is seen 'on the drive' to and from school

The placement of this Advertisement was carefully considered by Lion and approved by the Outdoor Media Association. The location of the Billboard, on Bowen Bridge Rd, is 850m from the nearest school, a sufficient and appropriate radius from surrounding high schools.

Whilst it can be appreciated that the billboard may be viewed 'on the drive to and from school', it may also be viewed by many people on their daily drive to work, to surrounding shops, parks and other areas of interest. We do not believe that a reasonable person would consider that an advertisement placed in a high traffic area, passed by many motorists, is unreasonably or 'subtly' targeting children or adolescents to drink alcohol. Lion confirms that this was not the purpose for the placement of the Advertisement.

3. *Like cigarette advertising, the advertisement subtly targets teens to drink alcohol*

As stated above, we do not consider that (as alleged in the complaint) this Advertisement in any way encourages underage drinking, nor does it subtly (or at all) target teenagers encouraging them to drink alcohol. To the contrary, the Corona brand prides itself on being a benchmark for relaxed, responsible and moderate consumption of alcohol, and this Advertisement is clearly aligned with this positioning.

The Advertisement shows each person holding only a single beer. There is no behaviour or other visual cues that either suggest or encourage excessive, irresponsible or underage alcohol. We believe the Advertisement fully complies with prevailing community standards on health and safety, and the reasonable person would assume that it is completely natural for a group of adult friends to unwind at the end of the day with their favourite beer. As stated, all models, both male and female, are over (and appear to be over) the age of 25 years, and their styling and attire is consistent with a group of friends enjoying a relaxed Summer holiday at the beach.

Lion is confident the advertisement is compliant with the AANA Code of Ethics.

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 underage drinkers on a billboard in close proximity to a school and that this is not appropriate as it could encourage teens to drink alcohol.

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

The Board considered Section 2.6 of the Code. Section 2.6 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety”.

The Board noted that the advertisement depicts a group of people sitting on a beach at sunset.

The Board noted the advertiser’s response that the actors used in the advertisement are all over the age of 25 years as this is an Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC) requirement. The Board noted that the faces of the actors are not visible but considered that in the context of a group of people camping at the beach next to a vehicle there is not a logical conclusion that the people are under 18 years of age. The Board considered that the actors do not appear to be underage.

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the location of the advertisement near a school could encourage teenagers to drink. The Board considered that the nature of outdoor advertising means that advertisements are likely to be viewed by a broad section of the community and that in this instance the advertisement is not directed at children and does not depict material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

Based on the above the Board considered that the advertisement did not depict or encourage under age alcohol consumption.

The Board considered that in this instance the advertisement does not depict any material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

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