



ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BUREAU

Level 2, 97 Northbourne Avenue, Turner ACT 2612
Ph (02) 6173 1500 | Fax (02) 6262 9833
www.adstandards.com.au
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0117/14
2	Advertiser	Smith's Snackfood Co Ltd The
3	Product	Food and Beverages
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	23/04/2014
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement depicts a number of situations that are an ode to the Aussie past time of "one upping" e.g. the size of moustache, the size of the card tower built. In one scene we see a man showing off the woman he has attracted before being outdone by another man who has attracted two women.

THE COMPLAINT

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

Women are treated solely as trophies in the competition between men. It's this sort of portrayal of women, as objects to be played upon by men, that leads to the continued problems our society has with sex equality!

I object to this particular advertisement because it portrays women in a sexual manner in order to enhance the man's 'manliness'. The woman in the shot poses suggestively/sexily and wears a very revealing black dress that is much too short. Both the women have their arm around the man and the shot is designed to present the man as manly. It degrades women I believe to present them in such a sexual manner. The advertisement is directed towards men but is seen by children or adolescents like myself.

The ad portrays women as objects. They are shown in aesthetically pleasing outfits that verge on overtly sexy and with bland/adoring/blank/sexually aggressive looks on their faces. The man with two of these women hanging off of him is presented as superior, as he has been able

to "collect" or "win" a greater amount of these women as if they are nothing more than objects or trophies. They are obviously only there to illustrate the man's worth. It is blatant sexism.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The new Smith's Maxx Potato Chips advertisement takes a tongue-in-cheek, humorous approach to the idea of "man sized" and the concept of one-upmanship, in line with the positioning of this product, which is that the deeper ridges in the chips unlock massive flavour.

The advertisement depicts a number of situations that are reflective of the Australian notion of "one upping" – or having something more than someone else e.g. one person is able to stack cards higher than his mate, another has a bigger moustache than his friend, one mate can sing higher, one guy is playing pool with a girl while his mate is watching with two girls. In most scenes, including the pool table scene the person who wins the game of "one - upmanship" is the one with the bag of Smith's Maxx Potato Chips.

In developing this commercial it was our intention to entertain adult viewers, not offend them and the advertisement is intentionally light hearted in tone. The scene referred to in the complaints takes this tone also. The women portrayed in the scene are fully clothed and are participating in the joke, or the one-upmanship. The way they are portrayed in the scene is in no way exploitative.

We have a responsibility to ensure our advertising and promotion meets appropriate community standards. We believe that the advertisement is in line with Prevailing Community Standards.

We do not believe that the advertisement is in contravention of sections 2.1, 2.3, 2.5 or 2.6 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics as the advertisement does not portray any discrimination or vilification, violence, language or any behaviour that is contrary to the Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

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 depicts women as trophies to be won by men, and the clothing of some of the women is inappropriate.

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

The Board 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, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.'

The Board noted the advertisement shows people outdoing each other by building taller card

towers, sporting larger moustaches, singing in louder, deeper voices and having attracted more glamorous women.

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that it is sexist to depict the men trying to outdo one another by attracting more women.

The Board noted that in one scene a man appears to be proud to be accompanied by a young woman and then another man shows that he is accompanied by two women. The Board noted that this is one brief scene amongst many depicting one-upmanship in the advertisement and considered that whilst the women are being used as trophies in the Board's view they are not presented in a negative manner. The Board acknowledged the complainants' concerns but considered that overall in the context of the light-hearted and humorous tone of the advertisement, which is focusing on men trying to outdo one another, the depiction of the women did not amount to discrimination or vilification of a person on account of their gender rather the context is a humorous depiction of silly things men do to outdo each other.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

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 in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people."

The Board noted that in order to be in breach of this section of the Code the image would need to be both exploitative and degrading.

The Board noted that some members of the community would prefer that women were not used in a manner which utilises their gender to promote a product but considered that in this instance the advertisement did not present women in a manner which would be considered both exploitative and degrading.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience".

The Board noted the complainant's concern regarding the clothing of some of the women in the advertisement.

The Board noted that some of the women are wearing short dresses. The Board noted it had previously dismissed a complaint about a woman wearing a short dress (0133/12) and considered that consistent with its previous determination the clothing the women are wearing is not inappropriate attire for women to be wearing in a pub environment.

The Board noted that the advertisement was rated as 'W' by CAD and was broadcast in the appropriate times.

The Board noted that the private areas of all women are covered and considered that the

advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant 'W' audience.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

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