



Ad Standards Community Panel
PO Box 5110, Braddon ACT 2612
P (02) 6173 1500 | F (02) 6262 9833

AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0121/19
2	Advertiser	Roadshow Films
3	Product	Entertainment
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Outdoor
5	Date of Determination	08/05/2019
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.3 - Violence Weapons
- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This outdoor advertisement promoting the movie Hellboy features an image of the demon-like main character holding a gun and the text 'Forecast for April...Hot AF'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

*Appalling and malevolent images totally
Inappropriate and out of keeping with the local suburban ambience.*

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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



HELLBOY is a motion picture in the fantasy genre - the film released on the 11th April and received an R18+ classification.

The creative for HELLBOY contains no discriminatory material, exploitative or degrading material, strong or obscene language, nudity, or material contrary to health and safety standards. The creative does not contain supernatural themes but could be seen to contain scary themes as the image is of a half human/ creature and has a red hue over it.

This image is however of the main character in the movie and is relevant to the Film being advertised and accordingly unavoidable.

THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement was appalling and malevolent.

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

The Panel noted the outdoor advertisement was promoting the movie Hellboy and featured an image of the demon-like main character holding a gun and the text 'Forecast for April...Hot AF'.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 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 Panel considered that there is no blood or gore in the advertisement and that the violent themes in the advertisement are mostly suggested through the inclusion of the weapon, the fire and smoke in the background and the inclusion of the demonic main character.

The Panel considered that the inclusion of these violent themes was justifiable in the context of advertising an action movie which included violence.

In the Panel's view the violence portrayed in the advertisement was justifiable in the context of the product advertised and did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.



The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.5 of the Code. Section 2.5 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances (including appropriate for the relevant audience and medium). Strong or obscene language shall be avoided”.

The Panel noted the inclusion of the phrase ‘Hot AF’ in the advertisement and that this would be understood by most young adults to mean ‘Hot as fuck’.

The Panel noted the Practice Note for Section 2.5 of the Code which provides:

“Words and acronyms that play on the ‘f’ word, eg WTF and LMFAO, but do not use the actual word are normally considered acceptable if used in a light-hearted and humorous way, are in subtitle rather than the spoken word and are appropriate to the situation.”

The Panel noted that they had previously considered advertisements that used the terms ‘WTF’ (0372/17, 0500/17) and ‘BCFing’ (0023/17, 0573/16) and in these cases had determined that the language was not strong or obscene and did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

Consistent with previous determinations, the Panel considered that the language used in the advertisement is not inappropriate, strong or obscene and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

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

