



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Ad Standards Limited
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Case Report

1. Case Number :	0133-20
2. Advertiser :	Thirsty Camel
3. Product :	Alcohol
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	Internet - Social - Facebook
5. Date of Determination	8-Apr-2020
6. DETERMINATION :	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.6 Health and Safety

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This Facebook advertisement is a shared image with the text "People:*stocking up on toilet paper and water*

Me: " and an image of a shopping trolley full of wine. The caption of the image is "Stocking up the bunker for the weekend...(series of emojis) and the Thirsty Camel logo is on the image.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The Facebook post by Thirsty Camel Bottleshops WA encourage excessive consumption of alcohol that is inconsistent with the Australian Alcohol Guidelines. The photo of the trolley full of wine has the caption 'Stocking up the bunker for the weekend', which implies that all the wine would be consumed in one weekend. The post contravenes section (3)(a)(i) of the ABAC Code.

The health system and police are under huge pressure preparing for and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The opportunistic use of a health crisis to promote and sell more alcohol hardly seems consistent with principles of responsible marketing.



I also note that the Thirsty Camel Bottleshops WA Facebook page is accessible when you are not logged in to Facebook, indicating there is no age restriction control in place. This contravenes placement rule (ii).

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Thirsty Camel Bottleshops take the responsible advertising and marketing of alcohol seriously. We are aware of the Code requirements and undertake practices in line with ensuring compliance with all relevant advertising, alcohol and marketing guidelines.

In response to a complaint about a Thirsty Camel WA Facebook post, and in consideration of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics Section 2, in particular 2.6 Health & Safety\Within prevailing community standards and the ABAC Code, the following is submitted.

- *The Thirsty Camel WA (TC WA) Facebook page is managed externally as a social media marketing tool and does not undertake direct product nor price advertisements for alcohol.*
- *The page is managed primarily as branding and entertainment to our Facebook audience.*
- *The Facebook audience of over 28k, opt-in expecting to view social commentary posts relating to topical events, largely presented in a humorous manner.*
- *The page is age restricted to 18+ and material is aimed at our predominate audience demographic of 25-44 years, 56%. (14%, 18 -24 years, 30%, 45+)*

The post identified by the complainant involve topical comments about the current circumstances in which we find ourselves in regards to COVID19 and the necessary restrictions this has imposed on society. This situation is now part of our daily lives, social conversations and the dominant topic across all media.

Post - Trolley of Wine - Repost from a popular Facebook page.

- *The post continues ongoing commentary across the TC WA Facebook page about the current social conditions relating to the panic buying of goods, in particular, toilet paper and water.*
- *The portrayal of the trolley full of wine makes a statement about current events in which people have over reacted in their buying and been criticised by much of society as a result.*
- *The minor comment, "stocking up the bunker for the weekend" continues this theme as a dig at this over reaction by identifying how ludicrous the suggestion is.*
- *There is no bunker, no implication that the reader should panic buy anything, nor consume such a quantity over any given period of time.*



- *The post image and text do not suggest or infer that panic buying or purchasing a trolley of wine is something that the reader should do. Any suggestion of such would be counter to previous posts on the TC WA page which reject the idea of panic buying of any goods.*
- *It is disputed that any reasonable person would infer that the post suggests action such as buying excess wine, nor that the writer actually intends to do so either.*

Age Restrictions to Thirsty Camel Bottleshops WA Facebook Page

The TC WA Facebook page has an age restriction of 18+. These were confirmed in 2014 when the page commenced daily management by Media Today and remain in place, see screenshot - Age Restriction.

The TC WA Facebook page is not visible unless logged into Facebook, see screenshot - Login required.

Conclusion

Thirsty Camel WA are cognisant of the Codes under which we operate and vigilantly aim to meet them. Whilst we outsource the daily running of the Facebook page to an external agency, Media Today submit posts for approval where they are unsure of the material.

Whilst these two posts were not submitted we are of the opinion that they do not contravene the relevant Codes, social mores, expectations of the general community nor our Facebook audience.

Thirsty Camel WA take pains to ensure the responsible service of alcohol and to this end pre-emptively advised our Bottleshops to introduce buying limits; prior to the government mandate to do so. We do not support excessive purchases nor consumption.

The TC WA Facebook is primarily an entertainment source for our audience and provides branding for the business.

Whilst we are disappointed that this post have caused concern we do not believe that the complaints are warranted.

Thirsty Camel WA welcomes your review of this complaint and await a determination.

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 promotes excessive consumption of alcohol.



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

The Panel noted that concerns about the accessibility of the advertisement and references to the ABAC Code are outside the scope of the Panel and have been forwarded to the ABAC Adjudication Panel for their consideration.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement complied with 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 Panel noted that image of the trolley of wine has appeared on various social media during the time of the Covid 19 pandemic. The Panel considered that the post is a reference to news reports of people hoarding supplies such as toilet paper and water.

The Panel considered that the advertisement is intended to be a comedic reference to people who prefer to stock up on wine rather than food or toilet paper. The Panel considered that most members of the community would not consider the advertisement to be seriously promoting or encouraging excessive alcohol consumption..

The Panel considered that most members of the community would consider the advertisement to be a humorous reference to people who are hoarding during the Covid 19 pandemic and not a depiction which is intended to encourage people to buy a trolley of wine for a weekend in a bunker.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not contain material which would be contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and determined that it did not breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach any other section of the Code the Panel dismissed the complaint.