



Case Report

1	Case Number	0176/12
2	Advertiser	Pacific Brands Holdings Pty Ltd
3	Product	Clothing
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Billboard
5	Date of Determination	23/05/2012
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The ad is large format outdoor billboard and features an image of a woman wearing a bra. The image is cropped, so the focus of the ad is on the woman's cleavage. The copy line that appears on the ad in question is 'Get your boobs done in your lunch hour' the logo/positioning line Berlei Your Body appears at the bottom of the ad.

THE COMPLAINT

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

According to section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics claims regarding the portrayal of sex sexuality or nudity and objectification will be looked in to.

This ad features a woman in a bra designed to highlight and exaggerate her breasts and yet it doesn't show her eyes or much of her face which means the focus really is only on her breasts. This is objectifying women and sends the message to everyone that there is nothing more to women than their bodies and women must look sexy. This is a terrible message to be sending our girls and young women as they struggle to make an identity for themselves and as they battle issues like body image; It is also a dangerous message to be sending boys and young men as they learn how to treat women.

If this were an ad on TV I could stop my children watching TV while the ad was showing on TV however because it is a billboard they see it every single time we drive past certain

places and because of the size of the billboard- and the content- how can they not see it and stop to stare?

It is also very dangerous having such a pornographic image plastered on billboards particularly on the major roads I have seen them at as it distracts people while driving as they stop to ogle at it or perhaps compare them self to the woman in the ad.

I implore you as someone who cares a great deal about the welfare of other people to take these ads down. It is jeopardising the futures of both our young women and our young men. On one of the posters and billboards next to the ladies bust was the phrase "get your boobs done in your lunch hour."

I find this offensive and concerning especially because these images and phrases are at school bus stops where young girls and boys will be seeing them.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

1. *Complaint: The focus of the ad is on her breasts.*

Response: Berlei is an intimates brand that manufactures, markets and retails bras and underwear for women. The focus of the 'Get your boobs done in your lunch hour' creative is on the product: Fabulous Fit Boost Bra, which is designed to give your boobs a subtle boost hence it needs to be shown on the body to convey this product benefit.

2. *Complaint: The ad objectifies women and sends the message to everyone that there is nothing more to women than their bodies, and women must look sexy.*

Response: To the contrary, the campaign celebrates women and shows them how Berlei products (in this instance Fabulous Fit Boost Bra) can help to naturally enhance their bodies. We are in the business of marketing and selling bras and in order to show the product benefit it must be shown on the body. The tone of the headline is deliberately a little cheeky and designed to bring a smile to her face. It reminds women they don't require surgical intervention to enhance their cleavage, they just need a Berlei bra. We think this sends out a positive message.

3. *Complaint: [Get your boobs done in your lunch hour] is a terrible message to be sending our girls and young women as they struggle to make an identity for themselves and as they battle issues like body image.*

Response: It's accepted wisdom that a woman who feels good about her body tends to be more confident than one who doesn't. This ad is one of a campaign that seeks to cheekily demonstrate to women natural and easy ways to enhance their bodies and to feel good about themselves. The model used in the advertisement is 26 years old and has had very minimal re-touching. Berlei has been designing bras to enhance women's bodies for over 90 years, a quick look at our history will demonstrate that this current campaign is in line with what Berlei has done throughout this long history. Berlei is a brand that supports and cares for women and is all about encouraging them to look their best and feel confident in themselves.

4. *Complaint: It's also a dangerous message to be sending boys and young men as they learn how to treat women.*

Response: The ad is talking directly to women. We are a brand that is for women and the campaign has come from insights out of research we have done with women about how they feel about themselves and their bodies, not in relation to men. We have no mention of men or

inclusion of images of men or boys in any of the ads. The ad copy is irreverent and light-hearted in nature and we don't see how this sends a dangerous message to boys and young men about how to treat women.

5. *Complaint: It's dangerous having such a pornographic image plastered on billboards, particularly on the major roads – as it distracts people while driving as they stop to ogle at it, or perhaps to compare them self (sic) to the woman in the ad.*

Response: The ad features a beautiful 26 year old woman in Berlei bra and briefs; this can in no way be construed as pornographic in nature. We market and sell bras to women and need to show the product on the body to demonstrate the benefit it delivers. We have a 90 plus year history of doing this, caring for women and designing products to make them look and feel better about themselves.

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 features an inappropriate image of a woman’s chest which is sexualized and objectifies women.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.2 of the Code which 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 the advertisement is a large format outdoor billboard and features an image of a woman wearing a bra. The image is cropped and does not include the woman’s full face/head. The text that appears on the right of the image is ‘Get your boobs done in your lunch hour.’

The Board noted that the woman is posed in a manner which is clearly intended to show the bra and is not overtly sexualised. The Board considered that the image does focus largely on the model’s breasts but that the relevance to the product is apparent. The Board considered that although the image could have included the full face of the woman, the relationship between the product being advertised and the image shown is not about promoting the woman as an object but about the benefits of a well fitting bra that will enhance the appearance of your breasts.

The Board considered that the woman is not represented in a manner which could be considered exploitative and degrading.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading and did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Board then 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 that the advertisement is featured on a billboard. The Board considered that it is reasonable to expect an underwear advertisement to feature imagery of underwear ie: a bra and noted that the advertisement is aimed at women seeking to buy bras.

The Board noted that the advertisement is visible to a broad audience that includes children and considered that most members of the community would not find the image used in this advertisement to be inappropriate for a broad audience.

Based on the above the Board considered that the advertisement did treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

The Board then 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 Board considered that the use of the term ‘boobs’ is common slang and is used in a manner that is consistent with modern Australian vernacular. The Board also considered that the use of “get your boobs done” is not sexualised and is the type of language many women would use themselves. The Board considered that the language does not contribute to a sexualised or demeaning feel of the advertisement and is not strong or obscene and does not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

The Board noted that they had also considered similar images and text as part of a larger campaign in case references 0185/12, 0189/12 and 0190/12 and dismissed the complaints in each of these matters as well.

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