



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	0187/18
2	Advertiser	Squarespace Inc
3	Product	Professional Service
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	24/04/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

2.6 - Health and Safety Unsafe behaviour

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features Keanu Reeves sitting next to a campfire creating a website on his laptop. Once he is finished he throws the laptop onto the fire and adds an accelerant.

THE COMPLAINT

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

After he throws the laptop in to the fire, he pours a container of accelerant on it and it flares up, but not as much as it really would. So many people have been seriously burnt by this behaviour, it should not be shown on TV as a safe thing to do. Or a cool thing, as it is done by Keanu Reeves..

The square space advert with Keanu Reeves shows him squirting accelerant onto an open fire, this is something that kids and adults alike could try with devastating circumstances.



This is showing children to stand next to fires and it is ok to feed open fires flammable liquids to watch flames grow and there is no consequences. If children mimic this action they can end up with 3 degree burns and hospitalization. I dont understand how this tv ad was approved. It is not appropriate advertising.

Near the end of the advertisement he pours some form of accelerant on the fire from shoulder height. The fire/accelerant effect has been minimised. Should a person copy his actions, with petrol for example, the effects would be catastrophic. The advertisement encourages dangers behaviours both to children and adults.

I find this ad is promoting extremely risky dangerous behaviour.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Advertisers response to complaint

"Making it with Keanu"

We believe that the TVC does not contravene the Advertising Association of National Advertisers Code of Ethics (Code of Ethics), the Advertising & Marketing Communications to Children Code (AMCC Code), or the Food & Beverages Advertising & Marketing Communications Code (FBAMC Code).

The last broadcast of this TVC was 7 April 2018, and it will not be broadcast again in Australia.

About Squarespace

Squarespace is a software service based content management system company. It offers individuals and businesses the opportunity to create and maintain blogs, websites and online stores.

Advertising Association of National Advertisers Code of Ethics

The complaints focus on Keanu Reeves pouring a tin of liquid on the fire and throwing his laptop on the fire.

Section 2.6 of the Code of Ethics provides:

'2.6 Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to



Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.'

Squarespace believes the TVC does not contravene section 2.6 or any other provision of the Code of Ethics, and it was clearly an exaggerated and dramatized film-like depiction of Keanu Reeves on a journey in the desert to discover his Squarespace website www.archmotocycle.com.

Advertising & Marketing Communications to Children Code

The AMCC Code applies to 'Advertising or Marketing Communicatios to Children', which is defined as:

"Advertising or Marketing Communications which, having regard to the theme, visuals and language used, are directed primarily to Children and are for Product."

We note that 'Children' is defined to mean 'persons 14 years or younger' and 'Product' is defined to mean: "goods, services and/or facilities which are targeted toward and have principal appeal to Children."

Squarespace believes that the AMCC Code does not apply to the TVC. Specifically:

(a) Squarespace services are not targeted towards, or have principal appeal to, children; and

(b) the TVC is not directed to children. The theme, visuals and language of the TVC are designed to appeal to adults who recognise Keanu Reeves and his action and sci-fi films, particularly those where he is involved in stunts. Further, the programs in which the TVC was broadcast are programs directed towards adults and would only reasonably be viewed by children with appropriate adult supervision.

Food & Beverages Advertising & Marketing Communications Code

The FBAMC Code does not apply to the TVC. The TVC is not advertising for Food or Beverage Products (as those terms are defined in the FBAMC Code).

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Panel noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement depicted unsafe behaviour.

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



The Panel 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 Panel noted the television advertisement depicts Keanu Reeves throwing his laptop into a campfire and adding accelerant.

The Panel noted the complainants’ concerns that pouring accelerant on a fire is dangerous, and children might copy such behaviour because a celebrity is doing it.

The Panel acknowledged that fire safety is an issue of concern in the community.

The Panel considered the actor in the advertisement is well known and therefore is likely a role model for some members of the community. The Panel noted that the actor is standing very close to the fire when he pours the accelerant.

The Panel noted the advertiser’s response that the advertisement was clearly an exaggerated and dramatized film-like depiction. The Panel considered that these film-like depictions were not sufficiently unrealistic for the broad community to see this as an unlikely scenario.

The Panel noted it had previously upheld complaints about the use of accelerants in case 0038/18 in which:

“The Board noted that...in the current advertisement the fire is not contained (although only the mower is on fire in the advertisement the fire is not physically contained and could spread) and the man is standing next to it with a jerry can. The Board considered that this is a depiction that is contrary to prevailing community standards on safety around incinerates and fire.

“The Board noted that it had previously considered a case where fire was shown destroying a family home (0508/11). The Board noted that this advertisement was a public safety advertisement regarding the importance of a fire safety plan and depicted life threatening fire situation.

“The Board noted that the current advertisement, unlike 0508/11, is not attempting to deliver a message about fire safety and there is no justification for the depiction of a motor vehicle on fire.”

The Panel considered that the actor is clearly shown standing very close to a fire and deliberately pouring an accelerant on the fire and this is a depiction which is contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety around fire.



The Panel determined this advertisement did breach section 2.6 of the Code and the Panel upheld the complaints.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

The Advertiser discontinued the advertisement on 7 April 2018.