



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0197/18
2	Advertiser	Aqua Cleanse Pty Ltd
3	Product	Health Products
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Billboard
5	Date of Determination	24/04/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This billboard advertisement is for a colonic irrigation service. The billboard reads "It's ok to lose your (poop emoji) sometimes because if you don't, you'll end up full of (poop emoji)."

THE COMPLAINT

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

Because the expression 'to be full of shit' is crude, the picture of the 'poo' is crude. Children might query the board and the service being advertised. It's also providing false facts - people won't be full of feces if they don't have a colonic irrigation. Finally, it's just not a service most people want to think about as they drive their car through St Kilda.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this





advertisement include the following:

Advertiser response to follow as supps.

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Panel noted the complainant’s concern about the use of offensive language and the medium in which it was displayed.

The Panel noted it had considered a previous version of this advertisement in case 0325/17 where the Panel upheld complaints about the advertisement.

The Panel reviewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser did not respond.

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 that this billboard advertisement is for a colonic irrigation service. The billboard reads “It’s ok to lose your (poop emoji) sometimes because if you don’t, you’ll end up full of (poop emoji).”

The Panel noted the complainant’s concern that the advertisement features crude language which is not appropriate for public display, and that the service being offered is distasteful.

The Panel noted the complainant’s concern that the advertisement’s subject matter, and visuals, are distasteful and not appropriate for a billboard advertisement. The Panel noted that advertisers are free to use whatever images and phrases they wish in an advertisement provided that such images or phrases do not breach a section of the Code. The Panel considered that the issue of taste falls outside of the Code therefore the Panel cannot consider this aspect of the complaints when making its determination.

The Panel noted that it had considered a previous version of this advertisement in case 0357/17 in which”

“In the Panel’s view the actual meaning of the words themselves are relevant to the service advertised, however in the Panel’s view the phrases “full of shit and “lose your shit” have, a mildly aggressive reference and that in the context of a billboard for colon health the advertisement is not appropriate in this context particularly on a



billboard that would be visible to a broad audience including children.”

The Panel noted that in the revised advertisement the word ‘shit’ has been replaced with the poo emoji. The Panel considered that this emoji is colloquially known as the ‘poop emoji’ and its official name is ‘pile of poo’. The Panel noted that the word ‘poo’ is not offensive or explicit and does not have the same aggressive reference as ‘shit’. The Panel noted that ‘poo’ is used commonly by the broader community, particularly those with children.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not contain strong or obscene language and 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.

