



ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BUREAU

Level 2, 97 Northbourne Avenue, Turner ACT 2612
Ph (02) 6173 1500 | Fax (02) 6262 9833
www.adstandards.com.au

ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0208/14
2	Advertiser	Carlton and United Breweries
3	Product	Alcohol
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	25/06/2014
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender
- 2.6 - Health and Safety Within prevailing Community Standards

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

“Adjoining” is part of the Carlton Mid campaign that embodies the idea of “Stay a Little Longer”. This campaign depicts the ingenious lengths that blokes go to in order to get some much needed mate time. The TVC in question shows three mates, who are on a romantic getaway with their partners on the same weekend and at the same resort, ‘discover’ they have adjoining rooms.

THE COMPLAINT

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

This ad is sexist because it is men drinking not women and the men ignore the woman just so they can drink beer, as though the beer is more important than the company of a woman. Carlton Draught have made a "series" of these ads all with the same people and all are at a hotel.

This ad promotes alcohol consumption not just in adults but in kids too because the men are all happy therefore promoting the view to kids that drinking excessive amounts of alcohol is okay and that it will make you happy. It also shows kids that women are second-rate to alcohol and that spending time with your mates is more important than you wife, partner or girlfriend.

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding complaint 0208/14. This single (1) complaint relates to a Carlton Mid 30 second television commercial (TVC) titled "Adjoining", which has been on air since June 2013. This execution sits as part of a campaign that includes a total of five TVCs.

The Carlton Mid campaign launched in March 2013 in regional markets and has been on air continuously since then. In June 2013 the campaign went to air in selected capital cities and then more broadly from November 2013. In metropolitan markets the "Adjoining" TVC has been viewed by over 6.3 million adults to date.

"Adjoining" is part of the Carlton Mid campaign that embodies the idea of "Stay a Little Longer". This campaign depicts the ingenious lengths that blokes go to in order to get some much needed mate time. The TVC in question shows three mates, who are on a romantic getaway with their partners on the same weekend and at the same resort, 'discover' they have adjoining rooms.

The complainant has raised issues with the TVC under section 2.1 (specifically discrimination against the female character) and section 2.6 (excessive alcohol consumption and appeal to children). In the Advertising Standards Bureau's "The Discrimination and Vilification Research Report – 1 March 2009" the definition of discrimination is as follows: "Acts with inequity... less favourable treatment to one person or a group because of their race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability and/or political belief." In relation to vilification the following definition is provided: "Humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred towards, contempt for...their race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability and/or political belief." We do not believe the Carlton Mid TVC discriminates or vilifies and it's important to note that this would never be our intention.

The complainant states: "This a is sexist because it is men drinking not women and the men ignore the woman just so they can drink beer, as though the beer is more important than the company of a woman." And also: "...all men then they say let's go to the pub, leaving the wife behind without giving her a second thought." The TVC depicts the mates hamming up their disbelief as they 'discover' they have adjoining rooms. It's clearly part of an elaborate plan they have concocted but in a humorous way highlights the lengths that these mates have gone to so they can spend time together. All the action/dialogue focusses on their delight at having adjoining rooms and there is no reference to going to the pub or leaving the female talent behind. You are very much left with the impression that the 7.30pm dinner plans (mentioned by the female talent) are unaffected and her partner/husband engages with her throughout the TVC. The TVC is a lighthearted depiction that doesn't show any of the talent (male or female) in a negative or disparaging way.

The complainant also highlights the fact the female is not drinking. It's fair to say that this particular beer advertisement focuses on the mates and the fact that they have conspired to get some mate time. Yes they do each have a beer in hand but they are also dressed and ready to go out. But that said, I don't think the fact that the female talent is not drinking has any special meaning or creates a negative impression as she is still in the process of getting ready. She may or may not end up having a drink in her hotel room or later when she is out. Importantly she is not excluded from enjoying a drink nor isolated from the group of men. It is for these reasons that I believe that the TVC is compliant with section 2.1.

On the point around the drinking in the advertisement, the men do each have a single Carlton Mid - a mid strength beer that is one standard drink - but they appear sober and alert. Very

clearly their excitement (from their words and body language) is derived from their 'adjoining rooms' discovery and not because they are intoxicated. Neither do I believe this advertisement could be said to encourage excessive consumption to children (or anyone) as it's fair to say the advertisement contains adult themes and shows only moderate consumption of a reduced alcohol beer. The advertisement also only airs post 8.30pm except on weekends/public holidays during live sport programming. For these reasons I believe the TVC is compliant with section 2.6.

Furthermore, the TVC is compliant with the code in its entirety - there is nothing sexual in nature or violent, there is no inappropriate language and nor are there any health and safety issues evident. In addition, whilst we respect that the complainant has a perspective of "Adjoining", given this is the only complaint we have received for this long running TVC, it's fair to say their view does not represent the way the broader community has interpreted the TVC. The Carlton and United Breweries (CUB) team take our responsible marketing commitments seriously and considered both the AANA Code of Ethics and the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC) during its development. For this TVC the CAD rating is L and the CAD reference is 979036. In addition, this TVC was independently prevetted through the ABAC scheme. The AAPS number is 577/12.

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 concern that the advertisement is sexist as it shows men drinking beer and ignoring the woman and that it promotes excess alcohol consumption which is against prevailing community standards.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.'

The Board noted that this advertisement features three men pretending to be surprised that their hotel rooms are all adjoining.

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the advertisement shows only men, not women, drinking alcohol and that the men ignore the woman in favour of the alcohol.

The Board noted it had recently dismissed a similar advertisement by the same advertiser in case 0148/14 where:

"The Board noted that the advertisement is clearly an exaggerated and humorous set up intended to appeal to the target audience of adult males who would be interested in a holiday away with their partners but also with the option of sharing a beer with their mates.

The Board noted that the advertisement is humorous, light-hearted and the men are not portrayed in a negative or disparaging way and it does not suggest that all men would behave in this manner."

In the current advertisement the Board noted that the men pretend to be surprised to find that they have adjoining rooms and considered that whilst these men are all holding a beer and the woman isn't in the Board's view it is clear that the woman is in the process of getting ready for a night out. The Board noted that the men all speak to the woman about their apparent surprise at finding themselves in adjoining rooms and considered that rather than being ignored the woman is being made the focus of the men's attention. The Board considered that the suggestion that the men have colluded to be with each other is light-hearted and does not suggest/represent that the boyfriend will ignore his partner.

Consistent with its previous determination the Board considered that the advertisement is humorous and light-hearted, the men and the woman are not portrayed in a manner which is negative and the advertisement does not suggest that all men would behave in this manner.

The Board considered that the advertisement does not depict material which discriminates or vilifies any section of the community on account of their gender and did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board 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 Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement promotes excess consumption of alcohol.

The Board noted that the three men in the advertisement are all depicted holding a beer. The Board noted that the men are not shown drinking the beer. The Board considered that the depiction of a person holding a beer does not of itself amount to a depiction of excessive consumption of alcohol. The Board noted that the woman and men in the advertisement are shown in their rooms preparing for a night out and considered that the suggestion of drinking in this situation is not suggestive of excess alcohol consumption.

The Board considered that the advertisement does not depict, suggest or condone the excess consumption of alcohol and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

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

