



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Ad Standards Limited
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Case Report

1. Case Number :	0233-20
2. Advertiser :	Kimberly-Clark
3. Product :	Toiletries
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	TV - Free to Air
5. Date of Determination	12-Aug-2020
6. DETERMINATION :	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.1 Discrimination or Vilification

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features a voice over stating, "Here's Lisa. She got no assistance lifting this heavy bag of cement and sprang a leak. But Lisa has Poise. New Poise Thin and Discreet Extra pads are 45% thinner than Poise Extra pads with the same protection. It takes poise."

A woman is shown in a store looking at bags of cement in a store. A male employee is shown nearby on his phone. The woman pulls up her sleeves and lifts the bag. She stacks a number of cement bags on a trolley. And looks confident as she wheels it through the store.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The wording is offensive to me as a female. I've never seen ads about male incontinence.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE



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

General

Before addressing the substantive issues, Kimberly-Clark Australia would like to make clear that both our employees and our advertising agencies are acutely aware of our responsibility to the community in relation to the standard of our advertising and as such we take any complaints seriously.

Substantive Response to Complaint (Including Description)

The new Poise TVC features Thin & Discreet extra pad, the new product Poise launched recently, highlighting its key benefit via a product demonstration, and showcasing one of the key triggers of light bladder leakage for our target consumers: lifting heavy objects through Lisa's experience in the hardware store.

Kimberly-Clark Poise TVC script of the narration and supers:

Here's Lisa.

She got no assistance lifting this heavy bag of cement and sprang a leak. But Lisa has Poise.

New Poise Thin and Discreet Extra pads are 45% thinner than Poise Extra pads with the same protection.

(Super:

Poise extra pads

Poise Thin & Discreet

45% THINNER than Poise Extra Pads)

(Super:

Poise extra pads

Poise Thin & Discreet

SAME PROTECTION versus Poise Extra Pads)

It takes Poise.

(Super:

It takes Poise)

The TVC shows that can Lisa can lift heavy bags of cement on her own. She is able to do this due to her strength and also because she can manage any resulting light bladder leakage through Poise Thin & Discreet Extra Pads.

General

The advertisement was developed to normalise light bladder leakage and to encourage women to feel comfortable talking about the condition. The tone was intended to be light but also to be empathetic and respectful to our consumers and potential consumers.

In respect of the scenario itself, we wanted to choose one that enabled us to talk about the serious issue of light bladder leakage in a different and mildly humorous way. This scenario was intended to be relevant to our consumers by mirroring



women's experiences of LBL given our understanding, from consumer research, that bending and lifting heavy objects are amongst the most common triggers of light bladder leakage. It was also intended to demonstrate a woman feeling empowered by the fact she did not need any assistance to lift a heavy object, as assisted by the use of the Poise product.

This approach was intended to reduce the stigma around light bladder leakage and help normalise the issue to encourage our consumers and, society generally, to have a more open dialogue around the issue.

It was not our intention to offend or discriminate against women through the use of the "sprung a leak" language. This language does not specifically reference any parts of the female anatomy, nor do we consider it to be degrading to women. It was not intended to draw a distinction between male and female light bladder leakage, rather, the informal language was intended to normalise light bladder leakage and to encourage both women and men to feel comfortable talking about the condition. In developing this advertisement we took considerable measures to ensure that the language and tone of the advertisement was appropriate in the circumstances and was in line with prevailing community standards on health and safety, and also to ensure the way Lisa was portrayed resonated with consumers. The "Lisa" part of the story was developed in the US and we incorporated the product demonstration locally in Australia. Kimberly-Clark tested the US copy amongst our target consumers in the US: 35-54 year old women, incontinence category entry consumers who experience bladder leakage and are open to purchasing liners and pads. The feedback Kimberly-Clark received from the tested consumers was positive. In summary: the new "Lisa" storyline was relatable and engaging; it was bold because it showcased women taking charge of the situation through handling the bladder leakage confidently.

After completing the Australian copy, we asked 256 Australian target consumers for their opinions. Overall we received very positive feedback, 87% thought the points the advertisement made were relevant to them. The consumers tested liked the relatable situation, with one consumer particularly appreciating the fact that "It shows a woman being confident and independent and taking charge and not letting her LBL disrupt her life" (quote from consumer). There was no feedback raised of a similar nature to the Ad Standards Complaint 0233-20.

Nor are we aware of having received any similar complaints about this advertisement since it has been on television in Australia.

For the reasons stated above, we respectfully suggest that this advertisement does not contravene Section 2.1 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics (Code), in that it empowers, rather than discriminates against or vilifies, women. Similarly, we submit that it does not contravene Sections 2.4, 2.5 nor 2.6 of the Code because it is in line with community standards in these areas. We also suggest that as the advertisement does not employ sexual appeal, nor does it present any form of violence, it does not raise any issues under Sections 2.2 or 2.3 of the Code.



Finally, we submit that the advertisement is clearly distinguishable as an advertisement to its intended audience in compliance with Section 2.7, and otherwise complies with all other aspects of the Code.

For the reasons stated above, respectfully, the complaint should be dismissed in its entirety.

Kimberly-Clark Australia is pleased to have had the opportunity to respond to this complaint and to confirm its support for Ad Standards Board and the codes to which it is subject.

THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the 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 is offensive to women.

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

The Panel 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 Panel noted the Practice Note to Section 2.1 provides the following definitions:

"Discrimination – unfair or less favourable treatment.

Vilification – humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule."

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement is offensive to women, and that they do not see advertisements for male incontinence. The Panel noted that Poise is a company which sells products for women only and that therefore their advertisements are targeted towards women.

The Panel noted that the issue of incontinence is of concern to many women of all ages. The Panel considered that the depiction of a younger woman was intended to demonstrate that such an issue is of concern to younger women and to deconstruct the stereotype that incontinence only affects older women.

The Panel noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement was intended to demonstrate a woman feeling empowered by the fact that she did not need any assistance to lift a heavy object, as she was assisted by the use of the Poise product.



The Panel noted that the phrase “sprung a leak” is intended to be a humorous reference to incontinence, and to normalise and de-stigmatise such an issue. The Panel considered that while such a reference may be considered by some members of the community to be dismissive or trivialising such a concern, this was a view unlikely to be shared by the broad community.

The Panel considered that the woman depicted was not shown to receive unfair or less favourable treatment as a result of her gender. The Panel considered that the advertisement does not humiliate or intimidate the woman, and does not incite hatred, contempt or ridicule towards the woman in the advertisement or women in general.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was discriminatory or vilifying towards men, as a result of the depiction of the male employee in the advertisement. The Panel noted that the man is shown to not help the woman in lifting the heavy bags, instead looking at her and then down to his phone.

The Panel considered that the man is used as a device to set up the scene of the advertisement. The Panel considered that while he may be depicted in a less than favourable manner, he was not shown to receive unfair or less favourable treatment.

The Panel considered that while some viewers may find the man to be unlikeable or ungentlemanly, he was not humiliated or ridiculed because of his gender.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of gender and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code

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