



## Case Report

<b>1</b>	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0252/10</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>Wotif.com</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Travel</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>Poster</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>22/06/2010</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity      Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Outdoor poster in Central Station in Brisbane and shows a woman in her swimsuit on a beach, holding a pair of thongs in her hand, promoting the fact that Wotif.com has up to 60% off selected accommodation in Queensland until 6 June 2010.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*I am offended by this advertisement as it's rude. I do not want to be standing at the train station and have to close my eyes so I dont not have to look at a women's bottom. I also do not appreciate that this image is considered to be safe for children to see. I do not want my husband looking at another women's bottom as he goes to and from work. This should not be seen as unreasonable as it is a inappropriate place to post an enlarged image of a women's bottom. It is inconsiderate inappropriate and very offensive. It also does not promote the brand well and will not be driving their target audience to the website as effectively as it could it will instead be creating sexual imagery in the viewers mind & encouraging minimal morals towards women.*

*Currently thousands of commuters of all age groups including children are subjected daily to large extreme close up photographs of a female buttock hanging out of a skimpy bikini plastered on almost every vertical surface at Brisbane's Central train station. This distasteful advertisement also appears in various other locations around Brisbane on a less massive scale. I feel this image is blatantly gratuitous and visually offensive. Not only does this advertisement objectify women its sheer mass distribution makes it even more visually repulsive as patrons of Central Station are faced with literally dozens of enormous female*

*buttocks in their field of vision when walking on every platform of the train station. The advertisement is advertising cheap hotel rates in Queensland but the exposed buttock is the main focal point which causes the advertisement to lack taste and decorum and be seen as overtly sexual. IT LOOKS APPALLING AND DEGRADES THE IMAGE OF BRISBANE AND QUEENSLAND and should be removed immediately. I do not enjoy being force fed this image as a respectable citizen on my daily commute to and from work.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*Being a 'holiday break' campaign, it portrays iconic imagery of the quintessential Queensland lifestyle (our beautiful beaches) and importantly for the campaign it reflects a destination that has the ability to appeal to the aspirations of potential customers. The image is clearly a typical Queensland beach scene and as such shows appropriate attire for the beach setting, which traditionally involves wearing thongs and swimwear. It merely reflects what can be seen on Australian beaches at any time and by people of any age. In order to allow and encourage potential customers to 'place themselves' in the destination, it was important to have a human form in the ad. 'Going for a thong' is simply a play on words that is in tune with the 'fun loving' brand personality and attracts attention to the 'value' deals.*

## **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 objectifies women, is sexually suggestive and inappropriate for children to see.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone".

The Board noted there is no prohibition on including images of women in brief clothing in advertising provided the advertisement complies with the requirements of the Code.

The Board noted the advertisement was promoting a 'holiday break' in Queensland including reduced rates at selected hotels and considered the caption 'going for a thong' a play on words relating to the 'sale'.

The Board noted the back view image of a woman standing in bikini bottoms holding a pair of thongs is clearly a typical beach scene with which members of the community would be familiar and considered the woman was not objectified and that the image was not sexually suggestive or sexualised.

The Board determined that the advertisement did treat the product and target audience with sensitivity and therefore determined the advertisement did not breach section 2.3 of the Code.

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