



ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BUREAU

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Case Report

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| 1 | Case Number | 0254/14 |
| 2 | Advertiser | VISA International |
| 3 | Product | Finance/Investment |
| 4 | Type of Advertisement / media | Internet |
| 5 | Date of Determination | 23/07/2014 |
| 6 | DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

ISSUES RAISED

2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement depicts a woman that appears nervous and worried via her facial expressions. When listening to the voice over that accompanies this sequence you assume this uneasiness is associated with a fear of shopping for tickets online. However when you pull back you realise that the woman isn't worried about shopping online as she has paid with Visa, and what she is really nervous about is crowd surfing at a concert for the first time.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The close up of the very young woman at the start has a pornographic nature to it. The way her eyes are slightly dazed and her mouth is wet and going into a shape as though she was about to give some bloke a head job is highly reminiscent of such constant images in pornography. Partly wet open lips, etc. In a very subtle way she is pornographies/sexualised as a fantasy women about to engage in some sexual act. The film then quickly changes to her as a normal happy girl at a rock concert, but the initial image is of her through sexualised lens.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The advertisement is aimed at people who are looking to make purchases online but are concerned with the security of using their credit card. The close up of the woman's face features nervousness or apprehension. There are no sexual connotations and there was never any intention for there to be any.

This is reinforced by the voice over, which refers to nerves and fear. The reason for the apprehension soon becomes clear. Whilst it might initially be attributed to a fear of shopping online in fact it is because the woman is about to crowd surf for the first time.

We have shot the same script with two male actors. They show similar expressions of nervousness or apprehension. Again there is no sexual connotation and there was never any intention for there to be any.

We have another film in the same series that starts with a man similarly looking nervous, before launching into a bungee jump.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L06BjZqiz8g&list=UUZyo20JIwo-OTj5whUInzQ&index=4> The advertisement does not feature sex or nudity. It features a close up of a woman's face featuring

nervousness or apprehension. It is our view that this does not use sexuality. It cannot be considered as insensitive to the relevant audience. It does not breach section 2.4 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics. Nor can it be suggested that the advertisement breaches sections 2.1 or 2.2 of the Code. The

advertisement does not discriminate against or vilify women by portraying the woman in a sexualised way. The advertisement does not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of women.

We believe that the advertisement is in line with prevailing community standards.

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 contains imagery of a young woman that is of a sexual nature and inappropriate.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience".

The Board noted that this internet advertisement features a focus on a woman's face, followed by an image of the woman crowd surfing at a concert. The voiceover describes the uncertainty surrounding purchasing tickets online. The camera pulls back and the woman is seen crowd surfing at a concert for the first time.

The Board noted the complainant's concern that in the beginning of the advertisement, the facial expressions of the woman with slightly opened and wet lips is reminiscent of imagery used in pornography.

The Board noted that the woman's face is depicted as nervous and worried as she bites her lip and looks side to side showing her uncertainty with what she is doing. The Board noted that the voiceover clearly describes the feelings that many people have about purchasing tickets online and how nervous this often makes people feel. The Board considered that the overall impression is not one that is of a sexual nature.

The Board considered that there is no sexual context or suggestion and that the depiction of the woman does treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant broad audience which could include children.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

The Board then 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 scenes of the woman crowd surfing. The Board considered that the act of crowd surfing is an activity that does take place at music concerts and other events. The Board considered that while it does not support the idea of crowd surfing, the advertisement is not condoning or encouraging people to crowd surf but rather is focused on the security of being able to purchase online safely to get to your chosen concert. The Board considered that most members of the community who are likely to relate to the product being promoted ie: Visa, are adults who can easily evaluate any safety issues around the activity of crowd surfing.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety and 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.