



# Case Report

1	Case Number	0281/17
2	Advertiser	Harvey Norman
3	Product	Information Technolo
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	12/07/2017
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## ISSUES RAISED

- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender
- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features a man using Microsoft's software assistant, Cortana, to help him plan his day. We see the man say to his tablet, "Hey Cortana, how's my day looking?" and a female, computer-generated voice replies to say, "Here's what you have today..." The man then introduces himself to the viewer to say his name is Ameer and he runs a bakery. We see Ameer working and using his tablet. On-screen text reads, "Modern PC at Harvey Norman".

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*One of the bearded actors asks his computer a question, PUTANA, WHATS MY NEXT APPOINTMENT. PUTANA is Italian for slut. I object to this use on TV. Imagine if we reversed the roles the outcry we would have. If not removed I will take this complaint to the radio talkback jocks.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*The Modern PC TVC Ameer says to the computer 'Hey Cortana, how's my day looking'.*

*Cortana is a software assistant created by Microsoft. The application is voice activated. 'Cortana' helps you plan your day.*

## **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 depicts a man calling his computer, ‘Putana’ which is Italian for ‘slut’ and is offensive and inappropriate.

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 this television advertisement features a man using Microsoft’s software assistant, Cortana, to help him plan his day.

The Board noted that the complainant had misheard the name ‘Cortana’ as ‘Putana’ and considered that although the words do sound similar in the Board’s view the man is clearly saying ‘Cortana’ and there is no suggestion that the advertisement is trying to imply the word ‘Putana’.

The Board noted that Cortana is the name of a software assistant and considered that this is not of itself a derogatory name for a woman as it is a made-up name. The Board noted that the remainder of the advertisement depicts the man going about his normal day and 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.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board 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 Board noted that the complainant had incorrectly heard the name ‘Cortana’ as ‘Putana’ and considered that this is not of itself a word which is strong or obscene and in the Board’s view the language used in the advertisement was not inappropriate.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not use strong or obscene language and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

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