



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Ad Standards Limited
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Case Report

1. Case Number :	0306-21
2. Advertiser :	SocietyOne
3. Product :	Finance/Investment
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	TV - Pay
5. Date of Determination	10-Nov-2021
6. DETERMINATION :	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.1 Discrimination or Vilification

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This Pay-TV advertisement depicts three people/scenarios.

One features a man in a home gym using milk bottles for weights. One features a woman surrounded by hanging laundry in a house. One features a couple trying to fit many items in a car.

The following scenes show the people after presumably obtaining an advertised loan. The man has a gym with real equipment. The woman has a dryer and is no longer surrounded by laundry. The couple has a bigger car.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The man applies for a personal loan to buy equipment for his home gym. The woman buys a washing machine. I believe this is perpetuating out dated gender roles that are outdated.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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



The complaint suggests that the depiction of the characters in the advertisement perpetuate outdated gender roles.

SAPL Response: We do not believe showing these tasks performed by alternative genders would change the message or context of the ad.

We provide the following comprehensive comments by way of responding to each of the section

2 codes code below which directly relates to the complaint:

Code 2.1 - Discrimination or vilification: Advertising shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the

SAPL Response:

The ad shows a character in a home gym, one character in the home and another two with a car.

We do not suggest that any character identifies as a specific gender and while these show the characters performing tasks commonly associated with a gender, the ad does not discriminate, vilify or suggest these roles can be exclusively performed by any one gender. The fact is that both men and women perform these tasks/roles, and there is nothing inherently discriminatory or offensive by having the genders appear in the ad as they do.

Code 2.2 - Exploitative or degrading: Advertising shall not employ sexual appeal: (a) where images of Minors, or people who appear to be Minors, are used;

Or (b) in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of any individual or group of people.

SAPL Response: There are no scenes in that present a character with sexual appeal in the advertisement that might be seen as exploitive or degrading.

Code 2.3 – Violence: Advertising shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.

SAPL Response: There are no scenes of violence in the advertisement.

Code 2.4 - Sex, sexuality and nudity: Advertising shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience.

SAPL Response: There are no scenes in the advertisement that reflect sex, sexuality or nudity.



Code 2.5 – Language: Advertising 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.

SAPL Response: The language used relevant to the intended audience and does not include any strong or obscene language.

Code 2.6 - Health and Safety: Advertising shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

There are no scenes that include material that may conflict with healthy and safety standards.

Code 2.7 - Distinguishable as advertising: Advertising shall be clearly distinguishable as such.

We feel it is clear to the audience that this is an advertisement with the length of the ad (30 seconds), media placement and combination of the script and visual elements of the add presenting the brand name, product and product features along with a call to action.

Hoping this is now sufficient however, should you have any further questions please e-mail me directly.

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 features outdated gender roles.

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

Section 2.1: Advertising or Marketing Communication shall not portray people 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 AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of:

- Discrimination - unfair or less favourable treatment
- Vilification - humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule
- Gender - refer to the attributes, roles, behaviours, activities, opportunities or restrictions that society considers appropriate for girls or boys, women or men. Gender is distinct from 'sex', which refers to biological differences



Does the advertisement portray material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person on account of gender?

The Panel noted the guidance on gender stereotypes included in the Practice Note for the Code:

“Harmful gender stereotypes are unacceptable because they perpetuate unconscious bias and rigid norms of femininity and masculinity that shape what it means to be a girl, woman, boy or man. Advertisements should take care to avoid suggesting that skills, interests, roles or characteristics are:

- *always uniquely associated with one gender (eg. family members creating a mess while a woman has sole responsibility for cleaning it up);*
- *the only options available to one gender; or*
- *never carried out or displayed by another gender,*

as this may amount to discrimination on the basis of gender.”

The Panel considered that the impression of the advertisement was that in each of the three scenarios people were faced with problems that could be solved through borrowing money. The Panel noted while these scenarios included a woman doing washing and a man working out, the advertisement also included a scene where a man and woman purchase a bigger car because they can't fit all their shopping in the smaller one.

The Panel noted that while the first two scenarios in the advertisement may be stereotypically associated with each gender, the Panel considered that there is no suggestion in the advertisement that only women can do washing or that only men can work out.

Overall, the Panel considered that the advertisement did not perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes and did not discriminate against or vilify anyone on the basis of their gender.

Section 2.1 conclusion

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

Conclusion

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