



Case Report

1	Case Number	0321/12
2	Advertiser	Kimberly-Clark Aust Pty Ltd
3	Product	Toiletries
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	08/08/2012
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.6 - Health and Safety within prevailing Community Standards
- Other Social values

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This ad follows a playful Labrador puppy as he sniffs his way through the day, approaching various people from behind. He sniffs his way over to a mum who's kneeling on the floor of the living room, playing with her child, the puppy then joins in the game. We then cut to the puppy as he runs towards the kitchen where the plumber is on his knees, head under the sink. The puppy sniffs towards the plumber's backside, and then runs out of the room. Cut to puppy running on a footpath towards the postman, who's crouching down to pick up some letters he's dropped. Then the puppy lets the postman give him a friendly pat. We then cut to the puppy exploring the garden. The puppy then approaches a man who is on his hands and knees, weeding the garden. The puppy sniffs his way up to the man's backside, then turns and runs away. As the v/o speaks, we cut away to a roll of Kleenex Cottonelle, and then zoom in to a close-up profile shot of the narrower ripples. The camera pans back out from the roll of toilet tissue scene as the puppy comes in and pushes the roll of toilet tissue along the floor, right up to the plumber who smiles at the puppy. End on Kleenex Cottonelle pack shot with puppy.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The point of the ad was that if you used this brand of paper your arse would not smell and dogs would not sniff you. How gross. Surely there is some other way of advertising paper for wiping arses than stooping to such banality. I do not wish to be subjected to dogs sniffing people's arses.

The idea that people are somehow unclean or that they emit offense odours if they do not use this product is in itself offensive. However in addition the portrayal of dogs sniffing the private areas of humans is socially and culturally offensive.

I find it offensive and I do not think that it is suitable for transmission during daytime hours when the elderly & children may see it; I find it abhorrent.

This ad is totally disgusting and in poor taste it infers that unless you use this type of toilet paper then you will have poo in your pants after you use the toilet. Revolting? Yes.

I think this advertisement is offensive! It insinuates that unless you use the 'gripples' Kleenex toilet paper you have not cleaned yourself properly after visiting the toilet - and you smell! This suggestion by the makers of this type of Kleenex Toilet Paper - suggests that this is the only paper that cleans and in my opinion should be pulled from future TV adverts.

I ask you what does this have to do with toilet paper. To suggest that people who do not use Kleenex are walking around with faecal matter attached to their bottom is ludicrous. Must we be submitted to such poor taste? This is not clever; this is the lowest that a toilet company can get without displaying someone actually using the toilet. Is that to come next?

After seeing the new advert on TV - Kleenex Gripple effects I have to express my disgust with its content.

It's lewd and inappropriate to have a puppy sniff at people's bottoms signifying clean vs. unclean behinds.

I fully understand that Toilet Paper adverts must be hard to keep tasteful but this one is just wrong.

I am offended to see this dog sniffing people's behinds and object to them stating that it's only Gripples cleans properly.

I think this advertisement should be removed.

It is just ridiculous to have something like that on TV that relates directly to someone's BUM!!!

It is distasteful and offensive to attribute dog habits and to show them in this way.

This ad is absolutely disgusting vile and disgusting. It is hugely undignified for the animal involved. Why is this allowed to be on television?

I don't believe the use of an animal sniffing at humans in this way is necessary to sell a product and I find the concept of the ad offensive.

Because it is offensive. In very bad taste. Does not comply with community standards.

Ad is not funny and it is offensive. Most people take pride in cleanliness whatever toilet paper they use it is pointed and rude. In fact that very ad would put me off buying that toilet paper. Surely there is a better advertise the new toilet paper.

It is offensive to suggest that puppies/dogs sniff peoples' anal regions. That is an animal behaviour and should not be applied to a human situation. The obvious suggestion is that some smell bad indicating that they are not cleaning themselves properly. It is especially disgusting if you happen to be eating at the time. It suggests that you need to use the new style of toilet paper with 'The Gripple Effect' to get a good 'grip' on your faeces.

I find the whole scenario to be in very poor taste and believe the advertisers have dipped below the line of basic decency. I would like to see the advertisement removed from view altogether. Entertain us or annoy us but please do not use '3 year old childish toilet humour' to make us remember your product.

A dog (even a cute puppy) sniffing the behind of a person on national television is disgusting! It not only implies most people have unclean toilet habits it borders on the obscene! I cannot

believe a company would condone such a crude method of advertising toilet paper. Also I find it difficult to understand the mentality of the people participating in the ad. Their only motive can be money. They obviously don't have any modesty! Whatever happened to TV commercial censorship? If it still exists how can an ad of this filth be passed?

How is it ads like this get on TV? First we were subjected to a person urinating in a soup cooking pot (another company) now we have to watch a dog sniffing backsides!! This ad should be removed immediately!

I believe this is in extremely bad taste. I feel we are being treated with no respect. What next? The ad shows the very cute lab pup going up to people's bottoms the plumber in the cupboard and others and sniffing them and then running away because obviously they aren't using the new closer ripple better clean paper. A bit off! The previous lab tested for softness ads are fine this is unnecessary and I'm pretty broad minded. Do we really need to see that? Spoken to some of my GF and we all agree.

I was offended by the implication that unless you used this particular product then you would be regarded as one of the 'unclean' and would be accosted by backside sniffing dogs when you ventured out and even they would be repulsed.

Advertisers need to raise their standards rather than lower them into the sewer. (Good pun ??)

There are much more honest and simple ways of promoting the advantages of this product by using plain factual terminology - as in the recent excellent case of Carefree products rather than resorting to these crass tactics.

We are not prudes but having a dog sniffing the backsides of people to see if they are clean or have wiped themselves properly is beyond what we would expect from advertisers. Disgusting. It is just another example of advertisers pushing the limits and I hope I do not see it again.

I found this advertisement very offensive as I am sure most decent Australians would. I do not know how it passed the scrutiny of the members of your Board.

The fact it is a puppy doing the sniffing does not lessen the degrading and disgusting action being done by the dog. The first time I saw the commercial it actually put me off the dinner I was eating. Any animal sniffing the bottom of a human has no place on TV in a commercial or otherwise. The commercial is in poor taste.

I am embarrassed and stunned with the Kleenex Gripples toilet tissue advertisement. It is so offensive to see a dog sniffing at peoples backsides to tell if they have wiped properly. And this is how they want to sell their product to intelligent respectful people- what other parts of our bodies will they have the dog sniff to promote a product. Disgusting.

Offensive that a) people are inherently unclean if not using the product and b) that a puppy dog would be offended by this.

I have had dogs (including Labradors) all my life and I have never seen a Labrador puppy or any puppy for that matter sniff someone's bottom in the manner shown in the advertisement. I do know that Kleenex promote the Guide Dogs so some people could also get the impression that it is a Guide Dog puppy sniffing the various bottoms. I am sure Guide Dogs would not want the public to have the perception that Guide Dog puppies are behaving in this way. I find the whole advertisement unnecessary and in bad taste.

It is offensive to show the little puppy sniffing backsides and suggesting that some are not as clean as they could be because they have not used the product being advertised.

This puppy has been used before as in nice situations of playfulness with toilet rolls but on this occasion the suggestions that bottoms are not all clean deepening on the paper one uses plus that the puppy smells that to let you know is not a nice funny or clever way of advertising a different textured & designed toilet paper.

I felt the dog sniffing people's bottoms to see if they had wiped them properly was in very poor taste.

Sick.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

In response to the complaints received indicating the Kleenex Cottonelle advertising is 'offensive' as we are showing a dog sniffing people's backsides.

The Labrador puppy has been a long standing branding device used on Kleenex Cottonelle in communications and it is a puppy's natural behaviour to sniff people as well as to be playful. We have used the puppy to highlight common toileting issues because we know from our extensive research that discussing toileting issues can be considered a sensitive subject. The advertising is designed to use a light hearted manner to get the message across that the new Kleenex Cottonelle toilet paper can deliver a superior clean, after all that is the purpose of toilet tissue.

The dog in the TVC is a puppy that is behaving like a typical puppy, sniffing, being inquisitive and playful. Whilst the puppy approaches most of the people in the TVC from behind, at no stage during the TVC does the puppy actually come into direct contact with any of the backsides of the cast. His demeanour and manner is always playful and innocent.

Prior to production of this TV commercial, this concept was rigorously researched across 600 consumers (male and females aged 18-69 years) with a significant majority of people liking the ad (i.e. Likeability was high).

Kimberly-Clark Australia markets numerous products that are used in the care of the family and maintains the highest standards possible in promoting those products, especially with regards to health & safety. We are serious about being an ethical, responsible corporate citizen and are always mindful that our advertising, or any other communication, should not mislead, harm or offend and be acceptable to Prevailing Community Standards.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standard Board ('the Board') considered whether the advertisement complied with the AANA Code of Ethics ('the Code').

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement implies that people are unclean and is offensive and in poor taste.

The Board noted that bad taste is not an issue which falls under the provisions of the Code and considered that whilst many complainants were concerned that this advertisement was in poor and/or bad taste, this is not something which the Board can adjudicate on.

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

The Board then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of 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 that the advertisement depicts a Labrador puppy as he sniffs his way through the day, approaching various people from behind. The puppy approaches people such as the plumber, the postman and someone in the garden whilst the voiceover describes the new toilet paper. The audience is shown a close-up profile shot of the narrower ripples. The advertisement ends on Kleenex Cottonelle pack shot with puppy.

The Board noted the complainants’ concerns that the advertisement portrays the people as ‘unclean’ and is offensive and unsuitable for viewing on television. The Board noted the advertiser’s response that the advertisement complied with Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice and the advertisement was classified with a “G” rating and appears in the appropriate timeslots for the rating given.

The Board noted that the puppy maintains a distance between the bottoms that are being “sniffed” and considered that this behavior is consistent with a puppy’s natural instincts. The Board noted that there is mild suggestion that the actors may have used different toilet tissue (without gripples) and that this has not been as effective as using the advertised product that does contain the enhanced ripples for a more effective result. The Board considered that this was not suggestive of the people being unclean but was taking a lighthearted approach to a delicate issue.

The Board considered that most members of the community would find the advertisement to be cheeky and humorous and would recognise the advertiser’s response regarding the puppy being a long standing branding device used on Kleenex Cottonelle.

The Board noted that some members of the community would prefer that the correct usage of toilet tissue not be referred to, however the Board considered that the advertiser handles the subject in a relatively discreet and humorous fashion.

In the Board’s view, most reasonable members of the community would find the advertisement to be amusing and not contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety. The Board considered that the advertisement 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.

