



Case Report

1	Case Number	0331/15
2	Advertiser	Target Australia Pty Ltd
3	Product	Clothing
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Billboard
5	Date of Determination	26/08/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This billboard advertisement features five women wearing Target underwear. The text reads, "Yay for every body" and the Target logo is on the right hand side.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The location of the advertisement was clearly visible so everyone heading on the freeway north. It is inappropriate especially with my child in the car and husband. There is enough pornography around without it being shoved down our throats as we are traveling in our car. I would like the ad removed from public view.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We refer to your letter regarding the complaints received in relation to the billboard for women's underwear in the YAY campaign Target Australia Pty Ltd (Target) is currently conducting.

The billboard forms part of the suite of YAY campaign advertisements promoting Target's products, including underwear. Further advertisements will feature homewares, children's wear and menswear.

The billboard features five women wearing a range of Target's underwear for women. The women are all post-adolescent and come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. They are shown in relaxed, natural poses and have a range of normal body shapes found within the Australian community. The image seeks to emphasize that the range of underwear available for women at Target is comfortable and suitable for a wide range of body types.

We respectfully disagree with the complainants. The target market for the advertising is women and the main message is that the Target range of underwear is accessible to the Target customer. We consider the advertisement to be appropriate and in line with Target's brand values.

Target is strongly supportive of women feeling good about themselves and has a clearly documented history evidencing this stance. Target recognises that how women feel about their body image does play an integral part in many women's feelings about themselves and how they feel they are perceived. Target does not view bodies as the only measure by which women should be valued. Our advertisements do not portray women in this light. Feeling like you are wearing the right clothing in the right size for you makes a big difference to how you feel about yourself.

We consider that the advertisement is appropriate for and reflective of our target market and would not offend the sensibilities of the general public within the context of an advertisement for women's underwear.

Target does not consider the advertisement to breach any part of Section 2 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics (the Code) or the AANA Code for Advertising and Marketing Communications to Children (the Children's Code).

Target submits that the advertisement does not fall within the definition of an "Advertising or Marketing Communication to Children" as set out in section 1 of the Children's Code. The advertisement is not primarily directed to children aged 14 years or younger and is not an advertisement for a product which is targeted toward or has principal appeal for children.

The relevant sections of the Code you have asked Target to consider in our response provide as follows:

2.1 Advertising or marketing communications 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.

2.2 Advertising or marketing communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people.

2.3 Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.

2.4 *Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience.*

2.5 *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.*

2.6 *Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.*

Section 2.1 of the Code prohibits advertising or marketing communications that “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”. We consider that the advertisement does not breach section 2.1 of the Code.

Section 2.2 of the Code provides that advertising should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people. Target strongly refutes that the images in the billboard could be considered exploitative or degrading. The images in the billboard are positive: showing the models feeling good about what they are wearing. The images are not sexualised or provocative. It is designed to make women feel good about themselves whatever their shape.

Section 2.3 provides that advertising should not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised. There is no violence depicted in the image.

Section 2.4 of the Code provides that “advertising shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience”. We submit the images would not be considered pornographic, sexual or exploitative by the general community. The women are wearing bras which cover as much, or more, than bikini tops would. We consider the underwear to be tasteful, not sheer or tawdry. We consider that our audience would view the advertisement as supportive and respectful of women. In our view the advertisement does not breach section 2.4 of the Code.

Section 2.5 of the Code requires only language which is appropriate in the circumstances (including appropriate for the relevant audience and medium). The advertisement has no language which might be considered inappropriate. We consider the advertisement does not breach section 2.5 of the Code.

Section 2.6 provides that advertising should not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety. We do not consider that there are health and safety concerns attached to the advertisement. We consider the advertisement does not breach section 2.6 of the Code.

Target is committed to upholding the standards of the Code in its advertising and appreciates your review of our response to these complaints.

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 pornographic material and is not appropriate for outdoor display where children can view it.

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

The Board then 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 billboard advertisement features five woman modelling Target underwear and the text reads, “Yay for every body”.

The Board noted it had previously dismissed similar complaints about the television advertisement from the same campaign in case 0330/15 and considered that consistent with its previous determination, the depiction of women in underwear does not of itself amount to pornographic material.

The Board noted that the women in the advertisement are wearing Target underwear and considered that the underwear is not overly sexy and does cover their private areas. The Board noted the poses of the women and considered that they are portrayed as happy and confident and their poses are not sexualised or inappropriate.

The Board noted that this billboard would be viewable to the broad community which would include children but considered that the content of the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to this relevant audience.

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

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

