



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0584/17
2	Advertiser	BCF
3	Product	Sport and Leisure
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Print
5	Date of Determination	24/01/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A Christmas catalogue Advertisement for BCF

THE COMPLAINT

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

The use of "Fing" as a subliminal reference to a common profanity. The link between "Fing" being a known abbreviation for the word "Fucking". This is a disgusting turn in public advertising, being received also by primary and secondary school aged children, who find this amusing, and also by a large section of the community who cannot understand the necessity of such vulgar references especially when used by a prominent retailer.

I insist that use of such references be more closely scrutinised in the future, and that this particular advertising campaign be modified immediately.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE



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

In regard to advertising complaint reference 0584/17, BCF Australia expresses the wish to respond to the complaint raised under Section 2 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics for review by the Advertising Standards Board.

BCF Australia has taken the liberty to interpret the above complaints in order to correctly respond to the advertisement of concern.

The BCF advertisement under review is a print adaptation of the brand TV advertisement which has previously been dealt with under Complaint Reference 0434/16. This complaint referred to the use of the jingle “Boating, Camping, Fishing is BCFing fun!” and was dismissed by the Advertising Standards Bureau on 26th October 2016. The current print adaptation of this campaign (which is the subject of this complaint) are the two BCF Christmas catalogues with the headlines “Make it a BCFing Christmas’ and ‘The BCFing Chrissy Countdown’.

The complaint refers to the meaning of ‘BCFing’ in the headlines, suggesting that the ‘F’ denotes offensive language (Section 2.5 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics). This is not correct as the letters BCF have a direct translation to Boating, Camping and Fishing which is our core business and brand name. The first headline translates to ‘Make it a Boating, Camping, Fishing Christmas’ and the second to, ‘The Boating, Camping, Fishing Chrissy Countdown’. Both uses of the word ‘BCFing’ in these catalogue covers are not a reference to offensive language but a call to action for our audience to get outdoors over the holiday season.

With over 45% of BCF’s target audience identifying as a family unit with children living at home (Stellar Market Research, September 2016); it is never our intention to use language that is offensive or inappropriate for children. We have tested the campaign concept with our customers through focus groups without issue, and have received a CAD Classification of W for the TV adaptation which indicates the advertisement is suitable for broadcast at any time except during P and C programs or adjacent to P or C periods. With a clearly defined target audience of men aged 25-54, at no time would our media buy target children.

BCF Australia regrets any offence taken by the complainants pertaining to this advertisement however BCF suggests that the advertisement is within the AANA code of ethics, community and Government standards, and that a reasonable person would not have grounds for complaint as it does not display any notion of offensive language.

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 features offensive and inappropriate language.

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

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 this print advertisement features images of products available to purchase from BCF along with the headline of, “Make it a BCFing Christmas!” and “the BCFing Christmas Countdown”.

The Board noted it had previously dismissed similar complaints about print advertising from the same advertiser in case 0578/16. in which:

“The Board noted the current advertisement features on the cover of BCF catalogues and considered that the word ‘BCFing’ has less impact in its written form as it is clearly presented as an extension of the acronym ‘BCF’. The Board acknowledged that some members of the community could find this use of extending a word not normally extended to be crude and suggesting of a swear word but considered that most members of the community would find the advertisement to be cheeky but not inappropriate for the relevant audience of customers of a boating, camping and fishing store’s catalogue.

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

Consistent with the above determination the Board considered the phrase used is clearly presented as an extension of the acronym ‘BCF’.

The Board acknowledged that some members of the community would find this use crude however considered that most members of the community would find the use of the phrase not inappropriate for the relevant audience of customers of the store.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not use strong or obscene language and that the use of BCFing in conjunction with Christmas is not inappropriate. The Board 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.