



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number 186/08
2. Advertiser IKEA
3. Product House goods/services
4. Type of advertisement TV
5. Nature of complaint Health and safety – section 2.6
Other - Social values
Discrimination or vilification Age - Section 2.1
6. Date of determination Wednesday, 11 June 2008
7. DETERMINATION Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement begins with a close up of a boy (8-12 yrs) shaking a bottle of orange fizzy drink. The camera work is shaky, as though a home video. In the background an older man is sitting at a dining table with newspaper and a pen. A woman walks out of the room with bags of groceries. The boy walks in and asks: "Grandad, Grandad, can you open this for me?" Grandad replies: "Yeah OK, can't you open it?" He continues to read the paper as he takes the bottle and unscrews the lid. The soft drink sprays out of the bottle and the older man jumps from his seat shouting: "Oh look at that, oh you..." The young boy runs off around the table with the older man in pursuit. The boy is laughing and laughter can also be heard from the person holding the video camera. The older man looks into the camera and smiles. Text on screen: Let families be families. A range of furniture is shown with details of price. Ikea logo and text: Spend Less. Live More. www.IKEA.com.au

THE COMPLAINT

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

I am a woman of 80 years of age and I am very annoyed at the way an Ad shown tonight on TV portrayed a child asking an elderly member of his family to open a bottle of Fizz which spilled out all over the man. The child run away laughing with the elderly man chasing him and laughing too. I am a person who loves a joke and a good laugh but I was brought up to say 'Sorry' if I had that happen as a child to an elderly member of my family. Today there is so little respect shown to elderly people and I think this advert does nothing to improve the situation.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

Firstly, we would like to apologise for any offence that these advertisements may have caused. This certainly was not our intention.

IKEA is a brand that works hard to understand its customers and to cater for their needs in the home. In particular, it is a brand that has a real focus on the family.

Rather than prescribe an unrealistic and often unattainable image of how people live (as is often done in advertising), the series of recent advertisements was created in an attempt to communicate that IKEA products are designed to be used and enjoyed by real-life families.

IKEA research suggested that a big part of real life at home is centered around the good-natured

and light-hearted pranks that take place between different family members. The intent of the commercials was certainly not to advocate disrespectful or bad behaviour.

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 complainants' concerns and reviewed the advertisement under Section 2.1 which deals with discrimination and also Section 2.6 which deals with prevailing community standards on health and safety.

The Board viewed the television advertisement and found it to be humorous.

The Board agreed that it depicted a situation that many of the members could relate to.

The Board did not consider that the advertisement was discriminatory in its portrayal of the older man as he appeared to be happily engaged in the game with his grandchild.

The Board noted that the man further acknowledged that he had been *set-up* by his grandchildren with good humour.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not depict any activities that would be contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety as neither of the characters slipped in the drink or acted violently towards each other.

The Board was of the opinion that the advertisement successfully and safely displayed a sense of fun and family interaction which the community would relate to.

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