



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	232/06
2. Advertiser	Optus Communications (octopus)
3. Product	Telecommunications
4. Type of advertisement	Print
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 11 July 2006
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This print advertisement theme asks “Who says men can’t multi-task?” and features a graphic of an octopus with its tentacles seemingly occupied with various beer scenarios, and with one connected to a Nokia 6280 phone.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

This ad clearly tries to imply that men can only think of one thing – and that is “beer”, unless of course there is a mobile phone involved so they can stretch it to two things.

It portrays....negative stereotypes, this ad is the thin end of the wedge.....who knows where it will end up?

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

The ad is directed to young males who typically view TV programs such as The Simpsons. One of the lead characters is portrayed as being obsessed with food, beer and TV.

The ad does not exceed the boundaries of generally prevailing community standards and does not amount to discrimination or vilification on the basis of gender or sex.

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 advertisement’s depiction of an octopus thinking of beer and also holding the new Optus phone. The inference of the advertisement is that it is not true to think that men can only do one thing at a time because in fact it is possible for men to think about beer and use a mobile phone at the same time.

The Board noted that the advertisement depicted a stereotype of men but did not consider that the representation was sufficient to amount to the portrayal or depiction of men (or a common behaviour of men) that was discriminatory or vilified men as it was intended to be, and would be considered by most members of the community to be, a humorous take on a commonly held stereotypical view of men.

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