



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	364/09
2. Advertiser	Roadshow Film Distributors
3. Product	Entertainment
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Violence Other – section 2.2 Other - Causes alarm and distress
6. Date of determination	Wednesday, 26 August 2009
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The television advertisement is a promotion for the film "Drag me to Hell." It starts with a young woman sleeping and an insect creeping up her nose. The voice over refers to the "curse that will leash hell on earth." The advertisement then shows the woman being frightened in the night and the image of a lamia type monster lying next to the woman. The ad cuts to depictions of the lamia behaving in a terrorising manner with vampire-like tendencies and spooky eyes and markings on its face. The advertisement shows coffins, knives, screaming, fire and the look of fear on the face of the victims.

THE COMPLAINT

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

I find the scenes they have included from the movie in order to advertise it to be extremely disturbing, even though I have only seen the ads later on in the night they are still are something that I as an adult don't want to see. I feel they have gone too far by including too much of the horror scenes which really have no place being on T.V where not everyone watching would want to see so many intense horror scenes. There is no real warning to let the viewer know what will be included in the ad. I ended up seeing the extended add in full the first time around as it starts out looking like a normal ad & before you realise what the ad is for you are already subject to the distasteful & scary parts of whats in the movie.

Very inappropriate during a family showing program. I am very disappointed as it has traumatised our 12 year old daughter.

As I said the themes were highly confronting and I do not believe that people should be subjected to them without consent. If people choose to see this movie then that is entirely their decision and I have no problems with that. However, I do not want to be subjected to them in the privacy of my own home and I believe I should not have to be. I consider it a disgrace that this ad is on Australian television. My son was with me at the time, he is only ten years old and he was so disturbed by the ad that he had nightmares that night. I do not believe that he, nor I should have been subjected to those frightening images. To say that after 8:30 is when children should be in bed is naive and irresponsible. I look forward to your reply and ultimately, this ad being removed from air.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The television spots were sent to and approved by CAD. The spot received a rating K" CAD classification and the film received an "MA" film censorship. The "K" classification May be broadcast: 1930-2030 in PG programs and after 2030 with no restrictions. The content of the television commercials is within the context of the product we are advertising that being the film DRAG ME TO HELL.

Roadshow Films has ensured that all advertisements created for "DRAG ME TO HELL" campaign have been carefully scrutinised both internally and externally to ensure they are appropriate and suitable in light of all circumstances to the Australian television viewing audience.

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 complainants' concerns that the advertisement depicted confronting, frightening and explicit horror themes and that children might be affected by viewing the scary images.

The Board noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement had received a "K" CAD classification and such a rating entitled the advertisement to be broadcast from 19:30pm during PG programs and from 20:30pm with no restrictions. The Board noted that the scenes in the advertisement are from the horror movie being advertised and that the violence is therefore relevant to the product advertised. The Board considered that the particular images in the advertisement were justifiable in the context of the product and noting the timezone classification. The Board considered that the advertisement did not breach section 2.2 of the Code.

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