



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 493/08 |
| 2. Advertiser | Wrigley Co Pty Ltd The |
| 3. Product | Food & Beverages |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Violence Other – section 2.2
Food and Beverage Code – other |
| 6. Date of determination | Wednesday, 10 December 2008 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement for Wrigley's Extra Liquid Blast chewing gum shows an animated banana escaping from a city building. It jumps from the roof of the building, lands on a car windscreen which breaks. The banana then jumps off the car, brushes itself off and is then washed away, along with other animated food, by water from a water truck which has "Extra Liquid Blast" written on it. The banana continues its escape and turns a corner where viewers see a young man walking down stairs. The man takes a packet of Extra Liquid Blast from his pocket. The banana runs again, this time into a white scene where a packet of gum squirts (blasts) red liquid over it. The banana is knocked over. During this last scene a voice over says "Liquid blast helps wash away that furry feeling and freshens your mouth. Now available in strawberry and peach flavour".

THE COMPLAINT

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

When you see the various ads for this product, it's theme is about violence and the cartoon nature is appealing to children. I strongly object to the necessity for a confectionery to be promoted in this way. Our society is increasingly violent as if that is normal behaviour and the Extra Liquid Blast ads seem to portray this as okay. The ad in question seems to glorify fear and violence and it's cartoonish nature portrays this as innocent and it's plain gratuitous violence.

The theme is the same but in the ad the cartoon banana gets blasted with strawberry and disappears as if in a pool of blood. Which I find offensive in its nature. A reflection of the world we are in, but totally unnecessary.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Wrigley EXTRA® Liquid Blast™ launched across Australia on the 4th February 2008. The initial launch included two flavours, Peppermint and Spearmint in three pack formats (a 10 count Blister, a 30 count Bottle and a 10 count Blister 2-pack multipack). A new flavour, Extra ® Liquid Blast TM Strawberry Peach launched on 11th August 2008.

To communicate and announce the flavour extension, a new media campaign was executed. The creative utilized an existing Extra Liquid Blast commercial and was tagged to highlight the new flavour 'Strawberry Peach' to consumers.

The key claim in this 30 second TVC is "Extra Liquid Blast freshens your mouth. Now available in Strawberry Peach flavour."

The creative is part of our current food creature campaign which uses animated food creatures (a visual metaphor for the foods which build up in your mouth between brushing). It is intended to be light-hearted in nature reflecting the brand values and personality of Extra. The Food Creatures are not meant to communicate fear or violence as this goes against the values held tightly by the Wrigley Company and the Extra brand.

While the Banana in the end frame does get sprayed by a peach-coloured liquid, we ensured that it was clear the liquid originated from the product to communicate the product benefit of 'washing away' food (as stated clearly in the voice over). The colour and consistency of the liquid is not blood-like, it simply reflects the colour and flavour of the chewing gum (peach/pink). It is also clearly differentiated from blood in that it actually is sprayed onto the Banana rather than coming out of the Banana – therefore it is not a by-product of Banana getting hurt, but in fact the chewing gum that squirts him.

While the creative uses animation (e.g. the Banana), neither the media buy nor the creative is targeted at young children. The media for this campaign was purchased with a target of 18-39 year olds.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code"), the AANA Food and Beverages Advertising and Marketing Communications Code (the "F&B Code") and the AANA Code for Advertising to Children (the "Children's Code").

The Board firstly considered whether the Children's Code applied to the advertisement. The Children's Code applies to "Advertisements to Children", meaning "Advertisements which, having regard to the theme, visuals and language used, are directed primarily to Children and are for [goods, services and facilities which are targeted toward and have principal appeal to Children]". The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the cartoon nature of the advertisement may be appealing to children. The Board also noted the advertiser's response that neither the media buy nor the creative is targeted at young children, and that the advertisement had been given a "W" classification. The Board considered that the product was not one which was targeted toward or having principal appeal to children and, notwithstanding the use of animated creatures, the themes and language used in the advertisement were not directed toward children. The Board therefore determined that the Children's Code did not apply.

The Board considered the application of Section 2.2 of the Code, relating to violence. The Board considered the advertisement was humorous and presented in the style of an action film with the animated characters making it clearly unrealistic. The Board considered the liquid squirted on the character at the end of the advertisement did not resemble blood. The Board determined there was no depiction of violence, as understood by most ordinary members of the community, and therefore found no breach of Section 2.2.

The Board also considered the application of the F&B Code. The Board considered the advertisement did not make any claims in breach of Section 2 of the F&B Code. The Board considered that Section 3 of the Code did not apply as the advertisement was not directed towards children, for the reasons noted above.

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