

Case Report

1. Case Number :	0283-23
2. Advertiser :	Nexters
3. Product :	Other
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	Internet - Social - YouTube
5. Date of Decision:	30-Jan-2024
6. Decision:	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.3 Violence

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This YouTube advertisement for Hero Wars features two cartoon vultures attacking a wolf puppy, a character then rescues the wolf by throwing a stick at the vultures. The puppy grows up and stays at the character's side while he engages in various battles. The wolf is then injured and the man pulls it along in a wagon before it is picked up by a vulture which flies away. The character attempts to rescue it but is defeated.



THE COMPLAINT

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

I'm sick of seeing people being stabbed. This one shows vultures ripping a dogs tongue out

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Our intention with the showcased content was to portray the Hero Wars character in a protective role towards their pet, emphasizing the nurturing and caring aspect of the game's storyline. We aimed to depict a positive and responsible representation of the relationship between the character and their pet.

As a responsible advertiser, we are committed to adhering to all applicable laws and regulations. Furthermore, we continually strive to align with the best practices within the industry, ensuring our content meets ethical and advertising standards. Should Ad Standards Australia find any elements within the advertisement that may contravene regulations or guidelines, we are fully prepared to engage in a constructive dialogue.

THE DECISION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement depicts violence and simulated animal cruelty.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response.

Section 2.3: Advertising shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised

The Panel noted that the advertisement features a violent vignette of a dog being attacked by vultures and its tongue being pulled, however noted that the scene is not gory or bloody.

The Panel considered that the scene is quite brief and noted that it ends with a man rescuing the dog from the vultures and continuing a journey with the dog as his companion.

The Panel noted that while the theme of the game is to go on a hero's journey and engage in battles, the scene in the advertisement may not be a part of actual gameplay.

Overall the Panel considered that the level of violence was mild and was relevant and justifiable in the context of advertising a product with a violent theme.

Section 2.3 Conclusion

The Panel determined that the advertisement did present or portray violence which was justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised and did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

Conclusion

Finding that the advertisement did not breach any other section of the Code, the Panel dismissed the complaint.