

## Case Report

1. Case Number :	0105-24
2. Advertiser :	Universal Pictures Entertainment
3. Product :	TV - Free to Air
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	17-Apr-2024
5. Date of Decision:	Dismissed
6. Decision:	

### ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.3 Violence

### DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement for the film Abigail includes the scenes:

- a hand over a little girls mouth
- the young girl grows fangs and bites someone on the neck
- man hitting head on the stairs and getting dragged away
- the young girl with blood on her mouth and clothing
- the young girl strangling a man.



## THE COMPLAINT

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

*The ad was shown on Channel 9 at approx. 8.50pm. The ad showed many snap images of horror scenes which is complete inappropriate especially in this time slot & during school holidays when many children are up later watching tv*

*Extreme violence, blood and gore for an R rated movie that was aired at 8.53pm during a 60 minutes episode on Tesla, a show that many children with an interest in science and technology would be watching.*

*I am absolutely disgusted by an ad shown as my 9 year old daughter and I were watching MAFS together. The ad was for a horror movie called Abigail depicting a child with sharp fangs killing people. All at 8:42 at night which considering it is school holidays that kind of ad should not be shown at that time of night under any circumstances. I am shocked that such a horrific ad would be shown at this time of night. Absolutely appalled*

*This ad was screened on channel nine during Mafs around 8pm 1/4/2024. This is a truly terrifying advertisement in a time slot when children may see this and be traumatised. Not appropriate*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*Advertiser did not provide a response.*

## 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 complainants' concerns that the advertisement was frightening and inappropriate for broadcast at a time when children were watching.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser had not provided a 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 Practice Note for this section of the Code states:

*“In considering whether the violence or menace depicted in an advertisement is justifiable, the Community Panel may have regard to the audience of the advertisement. Graphic depictions of violence or a strong suggestion of menace have been found to present violence in an unacceptable manner especially when visible to a broad audience which includes children. For example, advertising for violent or horror movies, tv shows or video games should take care not to include images that give the impression that a character has just committed violence against someone (for example, a weapon with dripping blood), was the victim of violence (for example, freshly severed limbs) or is about to commit violence against someone (for example, gun aimed directly at a person or the viewer) where there is a broad audience which includes children.”*

#### **Does the advertisement contain violence?**

The Panel noted that the advertisement features scenes from the MA15+ rated movie.

The Panel considered that all versions of the advertisement contained scenes of violence including a young girl who grows fangs and bites and attacks other characters.

The Panel considered that the advertisement contained violence.

#### **Is the violence portrayed justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised?**

The Panel considered that the scenes are fleeting and relevant to the promotion of a violent movie. The Panel considered that while the advertisement depicts blood and the girl attacking other characters these depictions are fleeting and do not show the person who is injured or any resulting injuries.

The Panel considered that the advertisement creates a high level of tension and menace, however in the context of promoting a violent horror film, the level of physical and graphic violence shown is justifiable.

The Panel noted that the advertiser had not provided a response, and the classification of the advertisement was not known. The Panel noted that the of complainants viewed the advertisement during *Married at First Sight* and *60 Minutes* after 8:30pm during school holidays.

The Panel acknowledged that the advertisement may be scary for children, however considered that even during school holidays the audience after 8:30pm and during the named programs would predominately be adult, or older children in adult company.

The Panel considered that the advertisement contained violence that was justifiable in the context of advertising an MA15+ rated horror film.

### **Section 2.3 Conclusion**

The Panel found that the advertisement 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 complaints.