

Case Report

Case number: 0179-26
Advertiser: XCEM AlphaFloor
Medium: Instagram
Decision date: 5-Aug-2026
Decision: Breach
Action: Ad modified

ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITY PANEL

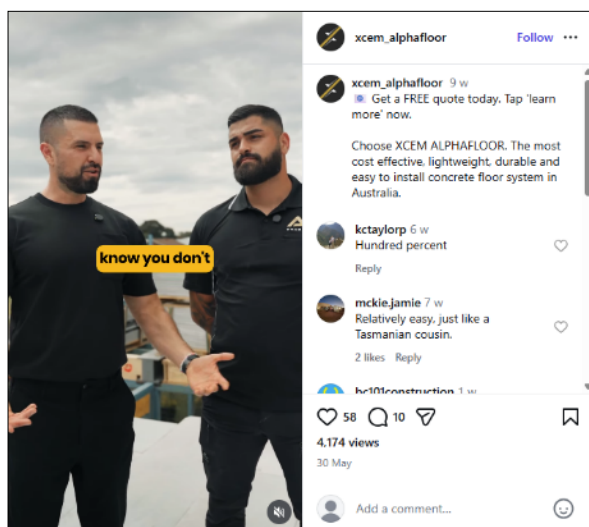
- AANA Code of Ethics - 2.1 Discrimination or Vilification - breach

AD DESCRIPTION

This Instagram ad features two men talking about Xchem Alphafloor flooring, noting that it is cost effective, lightweight and durable. Near the end, one man says to the other, 'I know you don't like to hear this particularly, but it's relatively easy to install. It's pretty straight forward, I mean look at Ava over here.'

At this point, the camera pans to a lady on her haunches attempting to drill into the floor. As the drill slips, she appears surprised, and looks at the camera saying 'What?'

The second man then looks at the camera while saying 'Relatively easy I reckon.'



SUMMARY

Complaint

A complaint was received on the grounds that this ad features unnecessary sexist attitudes. There is no reason to portray women as incompetent or less capable of doing construction work or using tools correctly.

Advertiser response

The advertiser did not submit a formal response.

Decisions

The Panel found that the ad was in breach of section 2.1 of the AANA Code of Ethics as it vilified a person on the basis of gender.

ASSESSMENT AND DECISIONS

Section 2.1 (AANA Code of Ethics): Advertising shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.

The Practice Note defines ‘discrimination’ and ‘vilification’ as follows:

Discrimination: unfair or less favourable treatment

Vilification: Humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule

The Practice Note adds:

A negative depiction of a group of people in society may be found to breach Section 2.1, even if humour is used. The depiction will be regarded as a breach if a negative impression is created by the imagery and language used in the advertisement of a person or group of people on the basis of a defined attribute listed above.

Advertisements can humorously or satirically suggest stereotypical aspects of a group of people in society provided the overall impression of the advertisement does not convey a negative impression of people of that group on the basis of one or more of the attributes listed above.

Panel assessment

The Panel considered that while listing positive attributes of the product, the ad focuses entirely on men who are performing the work. The men working appear experienced and professional. However, at the end, one man turns to the other and comments, ‘I know you don’t like to hear this particularly, but it’s relatively easy to install’, at which point he gestures towards ‘Ava over here’. The camera pans to show ‘Ava’ battling and ultimately failing to successfully insert a screw in one of the panels. At this time, the background music changes to a scratching sound, and then stops as Ava stops trying, looks at the camera, and shrugs while saying ‘what?’

The Panel considered that this deliberate change in pace and tone sets the woman apart on the basis that she is not competent or capable of performing installing panels that are ‘relatively easy to install.’ The Panel considered that this sets ‘Ava’ up as the punchline of the joke.

The Panel considered that the camera then pans back to the second man, who tilts his head and comments, ‘Relatively easy I reckon’, which could be seen as a sarcastic jab that reinforces this punchline.

The Panel considered that this depicted an outdated stereotype that women are incapable of certain work, such as construction work. By presenting the only woman shown performing the work as incompetent, and using her failed attempt as the punchline, the ad was likely to elicit ridicule or humiliate women on the basis of gender. The Panel therefore considered that the ad unreasonably and unfairly portrayed women as incompetent.

Panel decision

On this basis, the Panel found that the ad breached section 2.1 of the AANA Code of Ethics.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Panel found that the ad did not breach any other section of the relevant advertising codes.

ACTION

The ad is no longer visible on the advertiser's Instagram page.