[FR] CSA Charges France Télévisions with Allowing Excessive Air-time for the Promotion of Works by their Presenters

IRIS 2013-10:1/22

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On 9 October 2013, the audiovisual regulatory authority (Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel - CSA) announced that it had served an official warning on France Télévisions for having promoted books by the companies' presenters on a number of occasions during the summer. As the CSA pointed out, while it was possible to invite celebrities to present the goods or services they have been involved in, care needed to be taken to ensure that it did not become surreptitious advertising, which is prohibited by Article 9 of the Decree of 27 March 1992. The warning comes in response to the presentation on 14 July 2013 on France 2, during the broadcast of the programme Stade 2, of a book by one of the channel's star sport journalists. The journalist, commenting during the broadcast on the end of the day's stage in the Tour de France cycle race, had been invited to talk about his book. The cover of the book was displayed on air a number of times, and the cost and the name of the editor were also mentioned. The CSA found that these elements sufficed to establish that the work had had the benefit of excessive promotion, in disregard of Article 9 of the Decree. Its sanction follows on from an earlier case of excessive promotion of the book, as a result of which France Télévisions had received a warning; the book had already been promoted on the 1 pm newscast on Sunday, 30 June 2013, when the newscaster, after questioning the author-journalist about the day's stage in the cycle race, had referred to the publication of the book. He had presented it with much praise, showing the cover and a number of archive images illustrating examples taken from the book. Similarly, the presentation a week later, during the 8 pm newscast, of a recently published book by a humourist and journalist employed by the channel had also attracted a warning from the CSA. In the course of an interview, the author-presenter had been invited to talk about his career. The cover of the book had then been shown on the screen four times, and detailed information regarding the title, the editor, and its date of publication had been given. Given the tone used, the level of detail, and the repetition of the presentation of the works in all these sequences, the CSA found that the tolerable limits of promotion had been exceeded, tipping over into surreptitious advertising.

CSA, Assemblée plénière du 18 septembre 2013

http://csa.fr/Espace-juridique/Decisions-du-CSA/Presentation-d-ouvrages-d-

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animateurs-France-Televisions-mise-en-demeure-et-mise-en-garde

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