[GB] Advertising Standards Authority enforces new ad rule

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Generally, under Section Four of the Broadcast Code of Advertising Practice, advertisements must not be harmful or offensive. Advertisements must take account of generally accepted standards in order to minimise the risk of causing harm or serious or widespread offence. The context in which an advertisement is likely to be broadcast must be taken into account in order to avoid unsuitable scheduling.

The newly-added rule states that “Advertisements must not include gender stereotypes that are likely to cause harm, or serious or widespread offence”.

During August, the Advertising Standards Authority issued three adjudications concerning this rule.

One concerned a television ad and video-on-demand ad for the soft cheese, Philadelphia; another involved atelevision ad for the Volkswagen eGolf car. A third involved five complainants, who believed that an ad for Buxton Water perpetuated harmful gender stereotypes by contrasting the men and the woman undertaking activities that they considered were stereotypically associated with each gender; this complaint was not upheld.

The first two cases ended in the finding of a breach of the rule, and the companies in question were ordered as follows:

Mondalez
The ad must not appear again in its current form. The manufacturers of Philadelphia, Mondelez Ltd, were instructed to ensure that their advertising did not perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes. (Such stereotyping included suggesting that stereotypical roles or characteristics are always uniquely associated with one gender.)

Volkswagen Group UK
The ad must not appear again in the form complained about. The Volkswagen Group UK Ltd was told to ensure that their advertising did not present gender stereotypes in a way that was likely to cause harm, including by directly contrasting male and female roles and characteristics in a manner that implied

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they were uniquely associated with one gender.

ASA BCAP Rule 4.14

https://www.asa.org.uk/type/broadcast/code_section/04.html

What do the recent ASA rulings on gender stereotyping mean for your ads?

https://www.clearcast.co.uk/blog/what-do-the-recent-asa-rulings-on-gender-stereotyping-mean-for-your-ads/

ASA Ruling on Volkswagen Group UK Ltd

https://www.asa.org.uk/rulings/volkswagen-group-uk-ltd-g19-1023922.html

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