

DEUTSCHER WERBERAT

GERMAN ADVERTISING STANDARDS COUNCIL RULES ON ADVERTISING AND ITS APPRAISAL

(October 2007)

The work of the German Advertising Standards Council, which is part of the voluntary self-regulation system for advertising in Germany, serves to maintain and strengthen consumer confidence in advertising. It also documents for society and policymakers that the advertising industry accepts and acts upon its social responsibility.

Advertising in Germany is subject not only to state legislation but to voluntary standards agreed by the advertising industry. Given the numerous existing and emerging possibilities for advertising and the diverse and constantly changing circumstances of everyday life, it is not always possible to address violations of these rules by issuing special codes of conduct for each and every eventuality.

Advertising must uphold generally accepted social values and prevailing notions of decency and morals. At all times, it must be based on the principles of fair competition and responsibility towards society. In particular:

- Consumer trust must not be abused and inexperience or lack of knowledge not exploited.
- Children and juveniles must not be subjected to physical or psychological harm.
- Discrimination in whatever form – on grounds of race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, disability or sexual preference, or by reducing an individual to a mere sexual object – should be neither fostered nor silently tolerated
- Violent, aggressive or antisocial behaviour should be neither fostered nor silently tolerated
- Fear should not be instilled nor unhappiness or suffering instrumentalised
- Behaviour that threatens consumers' safety and security should be neither fostered nor silently tolerated

When evaluating advertising, the German Advertising Standards Council takes into account:

The notion of a reasonably well informed and rational consumer who is among the groups addressed by the advertisement in question

The tone and variety of issues covered in media editorial content as an expression of social reality

The nature of the medium used to disseminate the advertisement

The situation in which the consumer is confronted with the advertisement

