

# Advertising Code of Ethics

## BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. All advertisements must comply with the laws of New Zealand.
2. No advertisement should impair public confidence in advertising.
3. No advertisement should be misleading or deceptive or likely to mislead or deceive the consumer.
4. All advertisements should be prepared with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.
5. All advertisements should respect the principles of free and fair competition generally accepted in business.

## RULES

**1. Identification** - Advertisements should be clearly distinguishable as such, whatever their form and whatever the medium used; when an advertisement appears in a medium which contains news or editorial matter, it must be presented so that it is readily recognised as an advertisement.

**2. Truthful Presentation** - Advertisements should not contain any statement or visual presentation or create an overall impression which directly or by implication, omission, ambiguity or exaggerated claim is misleading or deceptive, is likely to deceive or mislead the consumer, makes false and misleading representation, abuses the trust of the consumer or exploits his/her lack of experience or knowledge. (Obvious hyperbole, identifiable as such, is not considered to be misleading).

**3. Research, Tests and Surveys** - Advertisements should not use tests and surveys, research results or quotations from technical and scientific literature, in a manner which is misleading or deceptive.

**4. Decency** - Advertisements should not contain anything which clearly offends against generally prevailing community standards taking into account the context, medium, audience and product (including services).

**5. Offensiveness** - Advertisements should not contain anything which in the light of generally prevailing community standards is likely to cause serious or widespread offence taking into account the context, medium, audience and product (including services).

**6. Fear** - Advertisements should not exploit the superstitious, nor without justifiable reason, play on fear.

**7. Violence** - Advertisements should not contain anything which lends support to unacceptable violent behaviour.

**8. Denigration** - Advertisements should not denigrate identifiable products or competitors.

**9. Testimonials** - Advertisements should not contain or refer to any personal testimonial unless it is genuine, current, related to the experience of the person giving it and representative of typical and not exceptional cases. The claims in the testimonial should be verifiable.

**10. Privacy** - Unless prior permission has been obtained an advertisement should not portray or refer to any persons, whether in a private or public capacity, or refer to any person's property, in a way likely to convey the impression of a genuine endorsement.

**11. Advocacy Advertising** - Expression of opinion in advocacy advertising is an essential and desirable part of the functioning of a democratic society. Therefore such opinions may be robust. However, opinion should be clearly distinguishable from factual information. The identity of an advertiser in matters of public interest or political issue should be clear.

**12. Safety** - Advertisements should not, unless justifiable on educational or social grounds, contain any visual presentation or any description of dangerous or illegal practices or situations which encourage a disregard for safety.