

COMPLAINT NUMBER	16/431
COMPLAINANT	J. Hale
ADVERTISER	Save My Bacon
ADVERTISEMENT	Save My Bacon, Radio
DATE OF MEETING	14 December 2016
OUTCOME	Settled, Media Error

ADVERTISEMENT

The radio advertisement for Save My Bacon begins with the statement “What you see is what you get”. The advertisement then has a scenario of a man offering to buy a “lovely lady” a drink and a deep male voice answers “yes please”. The narrator reacts with a shocked sound and the advertisement finishes with contact details for the advertiser and the phrase “little loans, no surprises.”

The Chair ruled the complaint was Settled due to a Media Error.

Complainant, J. Hale, said: This ad attempts to say that with their brand "what you see is what you get". It does this by depicting a conversation in a bar between two people. To paraphrase: Person A: Can I buy a lovely lady like yourself a drink? Person B: (Deep, masculine voice) Sure, love. Person A: (Screams in horror) I feel that this ad promotes transphobia and harmful stereotypes about transgender people. It does this by making Person B's gender or appearance the butt of a joke and implying that Person A's reaction is understandable. This interaction is portrayed as undesirable and the opposite of what the customer would experience with Save My Bacon. I think this contravenes the Code for People in Advertising, particularly principles 3 and 4. It could be argued that principle 6 applies (humorous and satirical treatment being permitted within certain criteria), however I believe that transgender people are still a very vulnerable part of society and humour should "punch up" not "punch down". Particularly taking into view issues such as the rate of suicide among young people who are struggling with their gender identity and abuse of transgender people, this ad only strengthens the view in society that it is permissible and acceptable to make transgender people as a source of humour and contempt.

The relevant provisions were Principles 3, 4 and 6 of the Code for People in Advertising.

The Advertiser, Save My Bacon, said: We, Save My Bacon agree that the ad 'promotes transphobia and harmful stereotypes about transgender people'.

We have taken this matter very seriously and have requested and had confirmation from NZME that the ad immediately removed the ad from circulation.

Explanation:

This particular ad, was recorded as part of a number of creative ideas for radio advertising by a third party provider approximately three years ago and has not been approved by Save My Bacon for the current on air advertising schedule.

We can also confirm that this ad has been removed from NZME archives, and will never be referenced or used on air, or across any advertising mediums again.

We have contacted NZME and Mediaworks and discovered that it has mistakenly been put into an on air advertising schedule, by NZME only. It has unfortunately been played on ZM, for a two-day rotation. This particular ad, was mistaken for another ad at NZME, and was put in rotation as an administrative error. We have been assured by NZME that this will not happen again.

In addition to the above we are now also reviewing our own internal process for the approval of ads, to make sure that something like this can't happen again.

Save My Bacon would like to apologise for any offence taken, we regret that our brand has been associated with transphobia, and we fully agree with the complainant's view.

MEDIA RESPONSE: NZME

We acknowledge that the advertisement has played on some of our radio stations recently. It was one of a batch of older advertisements that were played from 2 December until it was taken off air on the 7 December 2016.

We agree that it is not an appropriate ad to play and it will be permanently removed from our archives. It will not play again.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concerns about the likely consumer take-out of the advertisement. The Advertiser confirmed in its response that the advertisement had been immediately removed from circulation and would never be used again. The Advertiser further explained the advertisement had been created some years ago, but was deemed not suitable to play. It had been broadcast following a clerical error by the Media in early December.

The Chair reviewed the detailed response from the Advertiser and noted the Advertiser had instructed the advertisement was to be removed and never played again. Noting the self-regulatory action of the Advertiser, the Chair said it would serve no further purpose to place the matter before the Complaints Board. The Chair ruled that the matter was settled.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **Settled**