

<b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b>	21/009
<b>ADVERTISER</b>	Harvey Norman NZ
<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	Harvey Norman, Television
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	26 January 2021
<b>OUTCOME</b>	No Grounds to Proceed

**Advertisement:** The Harvey Norman television advertisement promotes various gift ideas for Christmas. The advertisement states that customers can get 60 months interest free storewide as well as bonus gift cards up to the value of \$500 depending on purchases made.

**The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.**

**Complaint:** Hi there, I would like to complain about the Harvey Norman "60 months interest free" advert and promotion of the gift card as I think it's misleading. I have seen this on television and many other places. My complaint is in regard to the TV advert, it is in very small print that in order to get the "up to \$500 gift card" you need to spend \$10,000, which is such an unrealistic spending amount for most Kiwis. The fact that \$500 gift card is very bold makes it seem to the average person that they could be eligible for this. But actually, they would need to spend \$10,000 or more. - a totally unrealistic amount. I have noticed the digital adverts and on their website make it clearer that you only get the \$500 gift card when you spend \$10,000. But on the television advert I saw, it's not very clear. I think to the average Kiwi seeing this advert on TV, they would assume it's relatively easy to get the \$500 gift card.

My second point is that I personally think that the marketing of interest free is extremely irresponsible given Kiwis high interest debt levels and I think this should not be encouraged. In fact, this promotion offer of the "up to \$500 gift card" means someone would need to put \$10,000 on interest free lending. No one should ever put this much electronics spend on high-interest lending! Yes, i know there are finance terms but these are not usually that responsible either, so I do not think Harvey Norman should be relying on these lending terms to be covered. Then the lending period lapses and vulnerable people get into serious debt. Thanks very much for reading my feedback.

**The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 2, Rule 2(b);**

**Principle 2: Truthful Presentation:** Advertisements must be truthful, balanced and not misleading.

**Rule 2(b) Truthful Presentation:** Advertisements must not mislead or be likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge. This includes by implication, inaccuracy, ambiguity, exaggeration, unrealistic claim, omission, false representation or otherwise. Obvious hyperbole identifiable as such is not considered to be misleading.

**The Chair** noted the Complainant's concern the advertisement is misleading in its promotion of the gift card and is irresponsibly promoting interest free credit.

The Chair said the likely consumer takeout of the offer of “a bonus gift card up to the value of \$500” would be that there was a range of gift card values. She said this is reinforced by the various bonus cards being shown on the screen for a reasonable length of time twice during the advertisement. The Chair said that given the high value items available at this retailer it was quite possible for a consumer to spend \$10,000 and earn a \$500 bonus gift card.

With regards to the interest free offer, the Chair said the terms and conditions were clearly set out and lending criteria would apply.

The Chair said the advertisement was not likely to mislead or confuse consumers given that the terms and conditions are readily available. Neither did the advertisement reach the threshold to be socially irresponsible. It therefore did not breach Principle 2 or Rule 2(b) of the Advertising Standards Code.

The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

**Chair’s Ruling: Complaint No Grounds to Proceed**

**APPEAL INFORMATION**

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website [www.asa.co.nz](http://www.asa.co.nz). Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 calendar days of receipt of this decision.