

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/412
ADVERTISER	Latitude Financial Services
ADVERTISEMENT	Gem Personal Loans Television
DATE OF MEETING	9 August 2021
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The four Latitude Financial Services Gem television advertisements all included images of large red talking lips, with dancing human legs. Some of the talking lips appeared to be male, judging by their voices, leg shape and shoes, and some appeared to be female.

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

Complaint: I wish to complain about the Gem finance ads that have been running for some time on every channel on TV, and at all times. They show a woman's legs with red high heel shoes, topped by large red lips. This is a dancing image, and overtly sexual. Every man knows that a woman's vulva is referred to as 'lips', and this image is degrading to women. The ad has been running for a long time, and I am offended by it every time I see it. It has nothing to do with lending money. I wish I had objected a long time ago, but I thought it so overtly sexual that you would have received many complaints by now, and that something would have changed. I am sorry that this has not happened. I only hope it is that people do not really watch ads, and may be away making coffee!

Please, if you are able, get this company to delete these images from their advertising. I think it is so disgusting that I would never have dealings with a firm that makes me feel so denigrated.

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Rule 1(c);

Principle 1: Social Responsibility: Advertisements must be prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

Rule 1(c) Decency and Offensiveness: Advertisements must not contain anything that is indecent, or exploitative, or degrading, or likely to cause harm, or serious or widespread offence, or give rise to hostility, contempt, abuse or ridicule.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concern the advertisements were degrading to women.

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether the use of large lips with human legs, in this context was likely to cause serious or widespread offence in light of generally prevailing community standards. The Chair said that despite the Complainant's objection to the advertisement, it did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence for most consumers.

The Chair said while there are many different ways the advertisement could be interpreted, she did not think the average consumer would view the advertisements in the way suggested by the Complainant. The Chair said the use of the dancing lips in the advertisements was a light-hearted way of presenting a serious subject.

The Chair said the advertisements had been prepared with the due sense of social responsibility required and were not in breach of Principle 1 or Rule 1(c) 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. Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 calendar days of receipt of this decision.