

Environmental claims in travel agent ads



ASA Snapshot Report
December 2025

What are ASA Snapshot Reports?

ASA Snapshot Reports provide a quick, data-driven view of how effectively the advertising rules are being followed across specific sectors.

They use insights from our AI-based Active Ad Monitoring system to measure compliance levels, highlight good practice, and identify emerging risks.

Overview

This Snapshot Report examines environmental claims in online, paid-for ads, from major UK travel agents between August 2024 and June 2025.

The monitoring assessed how well these ads, which appeared on social media, in paid search results, and paid ads on websites, stuck to the advertising rules on environmental claims.

With people increasingly focussed on how environmentally friendly the products or services they're buying are, ensuring that sustainability claims are clear and accurate is essential to ensure people are not misled – especially in higher emission sectors like travel.

Findings

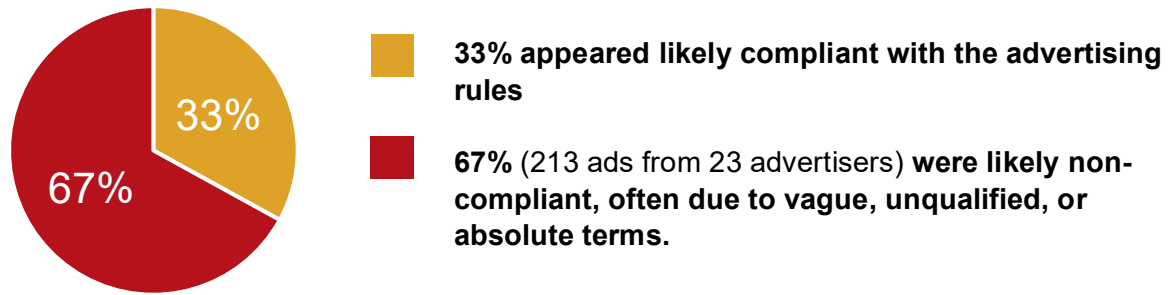
The ASA reviewed 362,000 unique paid-for online travel sector ads between August 2024 and June 2025.

Prevalence of environmental claims:

Only 319 unique ads (<1%) included any environmental claims. This means that over 99% of travel agent ads contained no environmental content.

Compliance levels:

Of the 319 unique ads that did include environmental claims:



Common non-compliant claims:

Claims which were unlikely to be compliant, included:

- Absolute claims such as 'eco-friendly', or 'green'

And, claims lacking context or qualification, such as:

- Claims related to sustainability and sustainable business practices
- Sector-specific claims related to alternative fuels such as liquefied natural gas (LNG) in cruise ships
- Comparative claims such as 'a greener way to travel', 'less carbon than flying'
- Claims in product names, such as 'eco resort' and 'eco lodge'
- Broad claims such as 'carbon conscious'

Conclusion

Informative and accurate environmental claims help consumers make better, more responsible choices. They also highlight the steps organisations are taking to reduce their impact, an important part of moving toward a low-carbon future. At the present time, very few travel agent ads make environmental claims, suggesting a missed opportunity and potential advertiser uncertainty about how to go about making green claims. Of those that do make environmental claims, a large proportion risk misleading people. Overall, the picture we found demonstrates the need for continued regulatory action to educate the industry and protect consumers, and that is what we will be focussing on.

How did we carry out this monitoring?



Using our Active Ad Monitoring system (see diagram below), we identified a selection of companies offering services that allow consumers to search for and purchase flights, hotels, cruises, holiday transport, and/or flight package deals combining some or all of those from third-party suppliers. Our focus was on those with the largest UK market share, covering agents across general, cruise, and rail travel.



We reviewed ads from these companies served to UK users across online search, display, and social media platforms.



Using sector-specific and environmental keywords such as “green”, “planet”, and “eco”, we used tech to assess whether the ads contained environmental sustainability claims.



We referred these ads to our experts to assess compliance with the Environmental Claims section of the advertising rules, including:

11.1 – The basis of environmental claims must be clear. Unqualified claims could mislead if they omit material information.

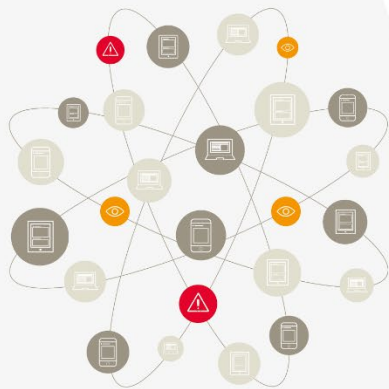
11.2 – The meaning of all terms used in marketing communications must be clear to consumers.

11.3 – Absolute claims must be supported by strong evidence. Comparative claims such as “greener” or “friendlier” may be justified if the advertised product provides a total environmental benefit over previous or competitor products and the basis of comparison is clear.



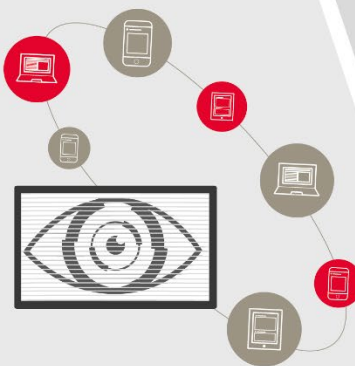
We contacted advertisers and took action where ads were judged likely to be non-compliant

How the Active Ad Monitoring system works



1 Capturing ads at scale

The system captures ads across online – social media, search and display – using a mix of public and non-public data as well as our own monitoring tools.



2 AI-based filtering

Machine learning helps us spot ads relating to issues we're monitoring and highlight where there are potential problems.



3 Expert review

Our experts are able to focus their attention on ads identified by the monitoring system as most likely to break the rules and where we need to take action.