

Advertising Standards Authority

Annual Report 1997

RE IEW







- 2 Chairman's introduction
- 4 1997 Review
 - Celebrating 35 years of self-regulation
 - Stamp it out
 - Fat or fiction
 - A question of taste
 - Computer games
 - Applying the brakes
- 12 Case study on flight prices
- 14 Complaints
- 16 Complaints procedure
- 18 ASA Council and Directors
- 20 Lord McGregor of Durriss
- 21 Research
 - Asthma alleviation
 - Anyone for lottery tickets
 - A slim but healthy improvement
 - The claim is in the name
- 24 CAP Chairman's report
- 26 CAP Copy Advice
 - Consistent advice
 - A helping hand
 - The price of vanity
 - The indication of flight prices
 - Cosmetic surgery
 - Alerting the industry
 - New media friendly
- 29 ASA Worldwide
- 32 Financial report and update
- 34 About the Advertising Standards Authority
- 35 About the Committee of Advertising Practice
- 36 Team managers

On course with the ASA: The Authority's 1997 consumer conference in Doncaster gave people from Yorkshire a chance to voice their views

Chairman's introduction

Rt Hon Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank



Unlike Athena who sprang fully-armed from the head of Zeus, the ASA is the product of thirty-five years of mature evolution. The pioneers who had the vision and strength to launch the Authority would recognise that it has developed in a straight line and wholly fulfilled their expectations. But it has been an eventful journey with some anxious moments on the way.

In 1974, when the ASA was only a little over ten years old, an incoming Labour Government expressed its concern about a voluntary Code of Advertising Practice. Picking up the message, the Director of Fair Trading criticised what he called the 'post-event' role of the Authority and claimed that the vast majority of the public did not even know that the ASA existed. He warned the industry that a statutory system of advertising control might be on its way.

The arrival of a new Labour Government in May 1997 produced no such threats or homilies. On the contrary, the ASA is now seen as a model for self-regulation. But a salutary reminder is still there. The ASA and the industry must always work hard if self-regulation is to continue to command the trust and confidence of the Government of the day.

The 'post-event' role of the ASA is what still attracts most attention. It means dealing with 10,000 to 12,000 complaints a year about 8,000 advertisements. But Copy Advice – part of the industry's pre-emptive measures – has grown in importance. It is far better for advertisers to check their copy in advance than wait for complaints and a possible adverse adjudication by the Authority.

I welcome the extent to which particular sectors respond to rulings by the ASA Council and adopt an acceptable industry-wide policy. The discussions with the travel industry and the airlines that led to a Helpnote on flight prices is a good example of this. The financial services sector is another which offers potential for review: fierce competition for the savings of the public has led to more complaints reaching Council than hitherto.

But the key to successful self-regulation can never be simply the vigilance and efficiency of the ASA in dealing with complaints. At its heart, it is a matter for the advertising industry and its leaders. It is they who set the tone and push the frontiers forward. If they were regularly to overstep the mark set by their own Codes, the whole voluntary process would unravel.

The truth is that a relatively narrow band separates acceptable self-regulation from a renewed demand for statutory control. If the advertising of cars or cosmetics, holiday travel or financial services – or any other advertising in sensitive public areas – was seen to get out

of hand, then we would hear again from Westminster the call for legislation.

Current legislation is already treating potential problems for self-regulation although of a rather different kind. A new Competition Act and a Human Rights Act will be on the statute book in 1998. We shall need to give careful attention to the implications of these and any new balance that is struck between the rights of advertisers and the rights of the public.

The process of keeping in touch with public opinion on advertising was taken forward by our third consumer conference, this year in Doncaster. It was attended by over 100 people of all ages and from diverse backgrounds. Once again, it provided for Council members and the Secretariat a useful benchmark for attitudes towards different kinds of advertising.

I am immensely grateful to the Director-General, Matti Alderson, her Directors and the Secretariat for their hard work, commitment and skill in keeping up with the day-to-day demands made upon them and moving the Authority forward. The arrival of complaints and the process of investigation is relentless but recommendations to the Council must always be carefully considered and firmly based on the Codes. Every adjudication reached by Council could be the subject of judicial review. Twice in 1997 companies sought judicial review of the way we had reached decisions, although in both cases the judge found in the Authority's favour.

Patricia Mackesy and Sylvia Heal retired from Council during the year after notable periods of service. Diane Yeo joined us and Lizzie Marsden was appointed a new member from January 1998. All five 'independent' members who have joined the Council during the last three years have done so as the result of selection following public advertisement.

As always, I am grateful to Brian Nicholson, Chairman of ASBOF which funds the Authority, and delighted that his long and distinguished service to advertising and the newspaper industry was recognised in the 1998 New Year Honours. And also to John Robinson, ASBOF's Secretary, for his patient and understanding support.

William Rogers

1997 Review

"I believe that the ASA has earned its reputation as an effective regulator and the highest standards of advertising today show just how hard the industry and the ASA have worked together, in the interests of the public ... A self-regulatory system that works well benefits consumers and competition alike but I am convinced that the ASA and the advertising industry will continue to work hard to deserve the trust and confidence of the public and the Government."

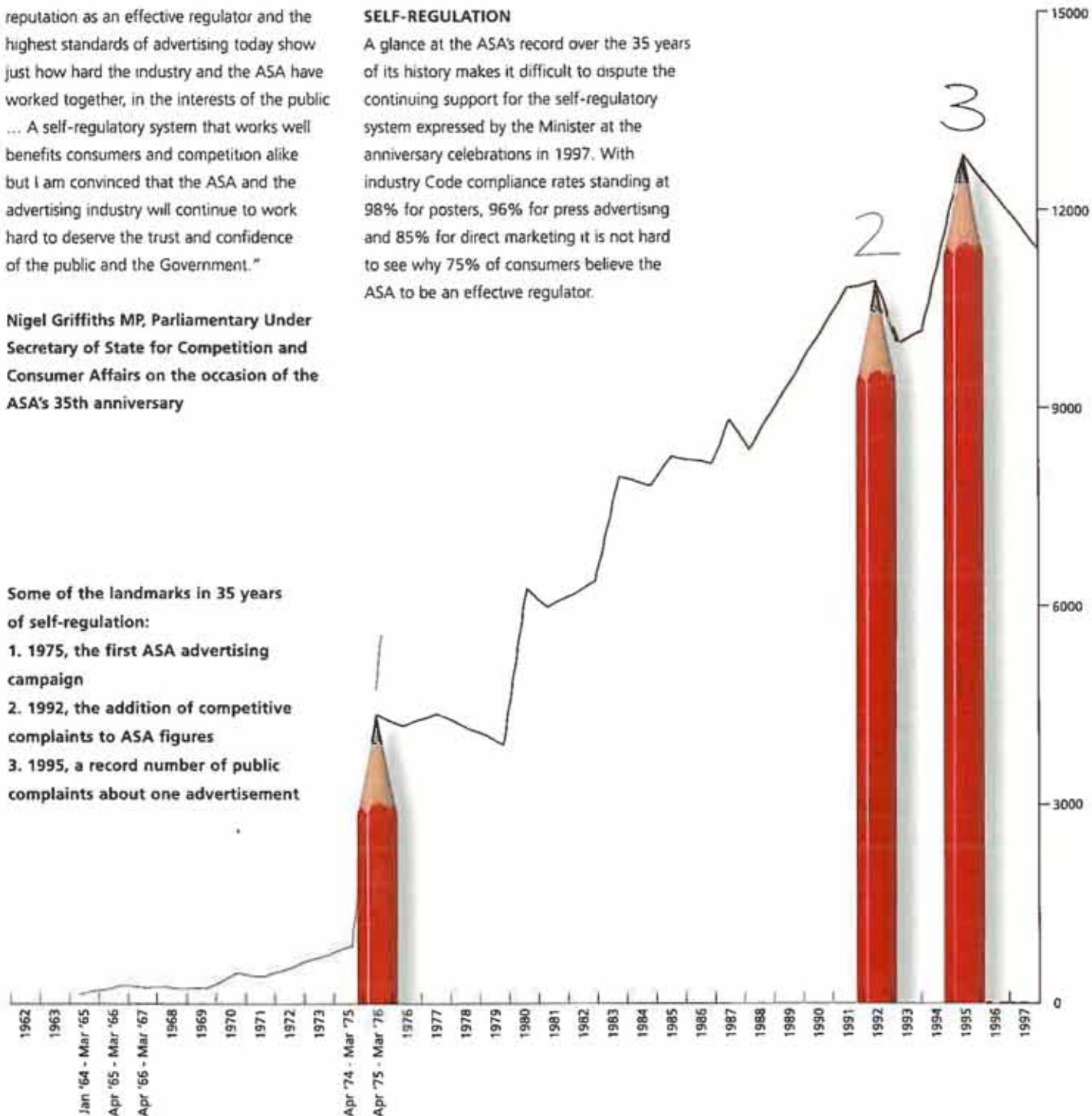
Nigel Griffiths MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Competition and Consumer Affairs on the occasion of the ASA's 35th anniversary

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF SELF-REGULATION

A glance at the ASA's record over the 35 years of its history makes it difficult to dispute the continuing support for the self-regulatory system expressed by the Minister at the anniversary celebrations in 1997. With industry Code compliance rates standing at 98% for posters, 96% for press advertising and 85% for direct marketing it is not hard to see why 75% of consumers believe the ASA to be an effective regulator.

Some of the landmarks in 35 years of self-regulation:

1. 1975, the first ASA advertising campaign
2. 1992, the addition of competitive complaints to ASA figures
3. 1995, a record number of public complaints about one advertisement



In this review section we take a look at some of the events and issues that arose in 1997. These help to illustrate how the ASA earns the trust of consumers by protecting their interests and working with the industry to promote the highest standards of advertising.

'STAMP IT OUT'

In 1974, Shirley Williams, who was Minister of Consumer Affairs, commented that "Self-regulation is only as good as its awareness". The ASA's first advertising campaign in 1975 heralded an increase in complaints about advertisements from 500 to 4,000 in the space of just twelve months. In the 1970s and 1980s the ASA advertisements encouraged the public to complain, but the new 'Stamp it Out' campaign, launched to co-incide with the ASA's 35th anniversary in August 1997, continues the theme of the 1994 advertisements by focusing on the Authority's role in monitoring advertisements: the ASA takes action to protect the interests of the public whether or not a complaint has been received.

Just as space for the 1975 ASA campaign was donated by the media, the current campaign relies on the generosity of publishers and poster contractors and their willingness to demonstrate support for the ASA and the self-regulatory system.

Levels of consumer awareness of the ASA stood at 72% in 1997 and the new campaign is not expected to generate a sudden surge of complaints. Indeed the 'Stamp it Out' campaign coincides with a welcome fall in complaints. But the ASA will continue to advertise itself to the public to help build on its reputation as one of the best known and most effective regulators.



The ASA's new advertising campaign coincided with a welcome fall in complaints in 1997



The ASA deals with a diverse range of issues, from cars to cellulite and matters of taste to the advertising of flight prices

FAT OR FICTION

In June 1997, the ASA challenged a number of advertisers of so-called 'anti-cellulite' creams to prove their claims. These companies were warned that the ASA had yet to see acceptable trials showing that creams alone could reduce, shape or remove cellulite. The story received extensive national press, radio and television coverage.

Such advertisements tend to appear early in the year, with New Year's resolutions, or at the beginning of the summer, when people are contemplating their swimwear and wondering how they can quickly dispense with any lingering untuned flesh. Typical claims are that the creams will 'smooth' or 'contour' orange-peel thighs. Sadly, like fat in other areas of the body, the only proven way to combat cellulite is through diet and exercise. Although the

massaging effect of using a cream might help all this hard work, it is highly debatable that the cream, as opposed to the massaging, has an effect on fatty tissues.

The ASA urged publishers to be vigilant and to refuse space to those advertisements promising an end to the sunbathers' nightmare

A QUESTION OF TASTE

The concept of decency has altered dramatically since the ASA was established 35 years ago. Since the late 1980s, the portrayal of women in advertisements has sparked passionate debate. A development of the trend surfaced in 1997 with four advertisements being called into question because of the way they portrayed men. Although none was considered to break the Codes, the ASA cautioned advertisers to be wary of being overzealous in their efforts to

jump on the 'girl power' bandwagon. Light-hearted mocking may be well understood and appreciated, but condoning or encouraging violence, whatever the victim's sex, are unacceptable under the Codes.

Complaints of offence fall

In line with the 11% reduction in complaints overall, complaints about offensive advertising in 1997 fell 42%: down from 3,443 to 1,993 complaints. Thirty-eight advertisements were withdrawn for causing serious or widespread offence compared with eighty-eight advertisements in 1996.

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY JUNE 11 1997

HOME NEWS II

Women told to be wary of miracle cures for cellulite

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY JUNE 11 1997
By Carol Hetherington
A woman's cellulite is a common sight, but it is not always understood. The condition, which causes the skin to appear lumpy and dimpled, is caused by a combination of factors, including genetics, hormones and diet. It is most common on the thighs and buttocks. The condition is not dangerous, but it can be embarrassing. The only way to get rid of it is by losing weight and exercising. There are many creams and lotions on the market that claim to get rid of cellulite, but none have been proven to work. The only way to get rid of cellulite is by losing weight and exercising.



The solution is simple: eat less, exercise more

Dr Thomas Scamford
The solution is simple: eat less, exercise more. This is the message from Dr Thomas Scamford, a medical professional, regarding cellulite. He states that cellulite is caused by a combination of factors, including genetics, hormones, and diet. The only way to get rid of cellulite is by losing weight and exercising. There are many creams and lotions on the market that claim to get rid of cellulite, but none have been proven to work. The only way to get rid of cellulite is by losing weight and exercising.

One of 3,000 news stories in 1997: The ASA's much-publicised warning on anti-cellulite products was also welcomed by the medical profession



Battle of the sexes or harmless slapstick?
Girl power provoked a significant number of complaints to the ASA during 1997

The portrayal of women shows an improvement

Complaints about the portrayal of women almost halved: down from 846 complaints to 433 – a very welcome fall. Seven advertisements were withdrawn for their sexist or offensive depiction of women compared to seventeen in 1996.

Violence tempered

1996 had also seen a large number of people voicing their concern to the ASA about violent imagery in advertising. This halved in 1997: down from twenty-three to eleven advertisements withdrawn for appearing to encourage or condone violent or anti-social behaviour.

Questions of taste are necessarily subjective and the relatively low level of complaints overall is encouraging. The ASA will continue

to balance the views of those who advocate the strongest form of censorship with those who feel that anything goes.

COMPUTER GAMES

As self-regulation has proved time and again, companies are never more committed to the success of a code of practice than when they write it themselves. The computer games industry put this to the test in 1997.

Computer games give enormous pleasure to many people, but the same could not have been said for some of the industry's advertising. Towards the end of 1996, a steady flow of complaints to the ASA about the use of violent or sexist imagery in computer games advertisements made it clear that something needed to be done. The ASA criticised several such advertisements

publicly and was pleased to see that the companies responded positively. Through its trade association, the games industry drew up a code to complement the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion and to address ASA and public concern

As a result of the industry's new rules, the picture in 1997 was rosier: six advertisements were criticised by the ASA in 1997 compared with fifteen during 1996.



One of the few computer games advertisements which went too far in 1997

PLAY



The joint efforts of the industry and the ASA ensured that the majority of computer games advertisers played by the rules during 1997.

Car advertisements should reflect the way that motorists are expected to drive: with due care and attention

APPLYING THE BRAKES

After the long recession, the buoyancy of the economy during 1997 no doubt contributed to an increased interest in motoring. In the wake of this interest, there was an unwelcome return to the glamorisation of speed in car advertisements during the year by some companies.

More complaints were made about speed in car advertisements in 1997 than during 1995 and 1996: sixty complaints were made about twenty-six advertisements. The ASA applied the brakes to nine advertisements that showed a tendency to focus on the speed or acceleration of the car in an unacceptable way

The automotive industry reinforced its commitment to self-regulation in 1995 when specific rules on motoring were written into the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion. The rules acknowledge concerns expressed in the UK and elsewhere in Europe about the use of excessive speed or aggressive driving to sell cars.

The ASA hopes the problems, though small in number, that resurfaced in 1997 were just a temporary blip in an otherwise improving record of tempering speed claims. Ultimately, car advertisements should reflect the way that motorists are expected to drive: with due care and attention.



One of nine car advertisements criticised by the ASA during 1997 for their undue or irresponsible emphasis on speed



1997 saw a blip in an otherwise improving record of tempering speed claims

The ASA works with the industry to protect the public and promote fair competition

CASE STUDY ON FLIGHT PRICES

In 1998 you might think that flight prices have suddenly increased. This is not because the cost of tickets has gone up but is the result of an increase in Air Passenger Duty. And an ASA ruling during 1997 has made a significant change to the way in which flight prices are advertised in the UK.

Investigation

For many years, most flight fares were advertised exclusive of duties and included only a footnote about supplementary taxes. However, complaints from the Air Transport Users Council, and a doubling by the Government of Air Passenger Duty in November 1997 prompted the ASA to examine whether or not this practice was continuing to work in the best interests of consumers.

Findings

The ASA's investigations revealed that some flights were advertised at such low prices that consumers were having to pay up to a half

more than the headline price because of compulsory taxes. For example, a family of four could expect to pay over £44 per person in taxes, adding £176 to the advertised cost of return flights to America.

As well as omitting information about the full price consumers had to pay, this practice by the airlines implied that their prices were more competitive than those of some of the travel companies who already included the cost of taxes in their advertised prices. At best, the situation was confusing for consumers. At worst it was downright misleading and created unfair competition within the holiday and travel industry.

Consultation

During its investigations, the ASA consulted widely with travel industry representatives including the airline trade bodies, the Association of British Travel Agents, the Association of Independent Tour Operators, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Local Authorities Co-ordinating Body on Food

and Trading Standards. The travel trade press debated the issue at length, acknowledging the significance of the ASA's investigation and speculating on the likely ruling and its impact.

Ruling

After much careful consideration, the ASA Council concluded that it was no longer acceptable for flight prices to be quoted exclusive of compulsory taxes and other charges paid by consumers at the point of purchase. In future, the advertised price would have to reflect the amount paid by consumers.

Help and advice for the industry

Once the ruling had been made, the ASA's announcement achieved widespread publicity. No changes were needed to the Codes but CAP's Copy Advice team updated the industry's Helpnote on flight prices and offered free pre-publication advice to the airlines to ensure a smooth and speedy transition to the new ruling. As the year drew to a close, advertisements prepared for 1998 were changed to include compulsory charges

ASA tightens rules

Air fare ads to include tax extras

AIRFARE ADS MUST now include compulsory taxes and other charges paid by consumers at the point of purchase, the Advertising Standards Authority has ruled. The ruling, which came into effect on 1 October, means that airlines must now quote the full price of a flight, including all taxes and charges, in their advertisements. This is to ensure that consumers are not misled by low headline prices that do not reflect the actual cost of the flight. The ASA's investigation found that many airlines were quoting prices that were significantly lower than the actual cost of the flight, due to the omission of compulsory taxes and other charges. The ASA ruled that this practice was misleading and unfair to consumers. Airlines must now quote the full price of a flight, including all taxes and charges, in their advertisements. This is to ensure that consumers are not misled by low headline prices that do not reflect the actual cost of the flight.



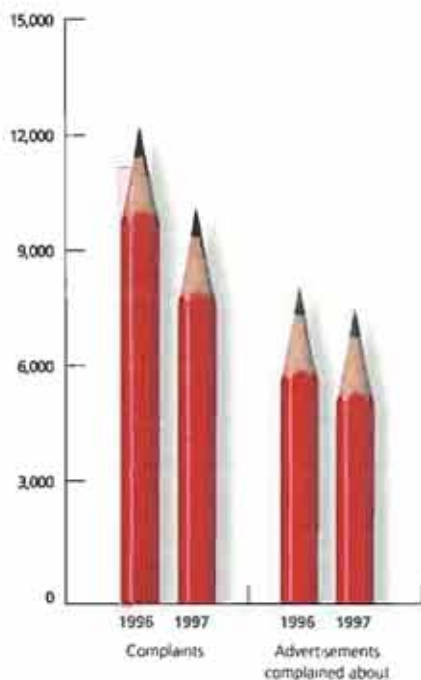
The ASA made headlines with its landmark ruling on the advertising of flight prices



Up, up and away: the new ruling on the advertising of flight prices took off at the beginning of 1998

Complaints

TOTAL NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS

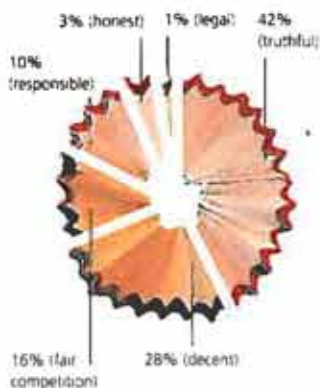


1997 COMPLAINTS FIGURES

	1997		1996	
	Complaints	Advertisements complained about	Complaints	Advertisements complained about
Investigated complaints				
Upheld	1,048	512	2,159	728
Not upheld	718	181	1,241	295
Under consideration	604	261		
Resolved informally	954	788	1,199	1,092
Total investigated	3,324	1,742	4,599	2,115
Not investigated complaints				
No case to answer	2,514		2,751	
Complaint withdrawn	694		691	
Outside remit	1,459		1,504	
Not justified	1,522		1,825	
Total not investigated	6,189		6,923	
Mail order	884		412	
Database	281		273	
Total	10,678	8,291	12,055	8,408

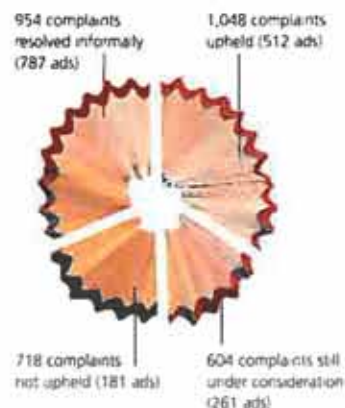
NB: 1997 figures include 1,199 competitive complaints relating to 1,115 advertisements. These compare with 1,332 competitive complaints in 1996. Not investigated complaints are recorded without duplicates.

BROAD AREAS OF COMPLAINT



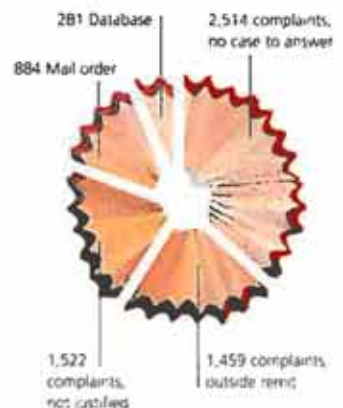
INVESTIGATED COMPLAINTS

Total: 3,324



COMPLAINTS NOT INVESTIGATED

Total: 6,189



10,678 complaints were made in 1997 relating to 8,291 advertisements. Following investigation 512 were withdrawn

COMPLAINTS FALL 11%

1997 sees a welcome fall in the overall number of complaints: down 11% from 12,055 in 1996 to 10,678. The number of advertisements complained about has also fallen fractionally: down 1% from 8,408 to 8,291. Following investigation, 512 advertisements were withdrawn, compared to 728 in 1996: a fall of 30%.

POSTER IMPROVEMENTS

Also very welcome is the drop in the number of complaints about outdoor posters: down 57% from 2,449 in 1996 to 1,050 in 1997. Despite the high Code compliance rate of 98% in poster advertising, the industry has had to work hard to prevent the exploitation of their media. In previous years a handful of campaigns have attracted large numbers of complaints and calls for restraint in the use of this powerful medium. New initiatives announced in 1998 will further strengthen the deterrents and sanctions available to keep standards high.

DIRECT MARKETING

Some 3 billion items of direct mail were distributed in 1997 compared with 2.8 billion items in 1996. It is a tribute to the direct marketing industry and their commitment to self-regulation that the levels of complaint remain low: 1,433 complaints were received in 1997 compared with 1,162 in 1996. As well as helping to resolve complaints, the direct marketing business has continued to liaise closely with the ASA to help find solutions to prevent the few less reputable companies from misleading consumers and discrediting the reputation of the UK industry.

MAIL ORDER

Mail order advertising is the only area of complaints to have shown a notable increase. An increasingly popular way to shop, the ASA has attracted significant publicity during the year with advice to help consumers on how to armchair shop by the post. This press coverage may well have contributed to the doubling of complaints: up from 412 complaints in 1996 to 884 in 1997. In the vast majority of cases the ASA successfully obtained the goods or a refund for the complainant. The exceptions were those companies that had ceased trading.

Details of taste and decency complaints appear in the Review section (see page 6 & 8).

CINEMA

The 56 complaints received against a commercial by the Gun Control Network account for most of the five fold increase in complaints about cinema advertisements; up from 33 complaints in 1996 to 177. Historically, cinema is a medium that causes few problems for the ASA because of the care taken by the cinema advertising companies to pre-check commercials.

Media type	1997	1996
National press	2,632	2,607
Magazines	1,579	1,903
Direct marketing	1,433	1,162
Posters	1,050	2,449
Regional press	856	1,050
Catalogue	471	148
Leaflets	394	407
Brochures	363	300
Cinema	177	33
Circulars	123	179
On pack	104	136
Directories	103	138
Point of sale	102	171
Inserts	68	74
Fax	45	4
Transport	36	62
Internet & electronic	32	11
Video	4	4
Others	95	1

Some complaints relate to advertisements appearing in more than one medium

Top ten complaints: Of the 3,324 complaints investigated by the ASA in 1997, 510 related to 10 advertisements. Four of these were found to break the Codes

Advertisements	No.	Results
1 Gun Control Network	94	Not upheld
2 Lee Apparel	89	Not upheld
3 Vegetarian Society	65	Upheld
4 Gun Control Network	56	Not upheld
5 Stateside Laboratories	47	Upheld
6 Peugeot	46	Not upheld
7 Gossard	36	Not upheld
8 French Connection	27	Upheld
9 Morris International	26	Upheld
10 QMS (UK)	24	Not upheld

See attached booklet for these adjudications.

Complaints procedure

One of the ASA's tasks is to investigate complaints that advertisements break the rules in the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion. The procedure has been tested by the courts and is designed to balance speed

and fairness. The investigation is carried out by members of the Secretariat before an adjudication is made by the ASA Council. A simplified version of the complaints procedure is outlined below.

1

Complaint received

ASA sends an acknowledgment card and assesses the complaint

2

Decision

Case needs investigating or complainant advised that there is no case to answer under the Codes

3

Investigation

ASA asks advertiser to comment on the complaint and supply evidence for any disputed claims

4

Considering the complaint

Advertisement assessed in the light of advertiser's response

Complainant notified of action taken

Draft adjudication sent to ASA Council

5

Decision

ASA Council adjudication

6

Taking action

Advertiser and complainant notified of ruling

Where complaint is upheld, ASA asks for the advertisement to be amended or withdrawn

7

Publication of ruling

ASA publish outcome of the investigation in the Monthly Report which is circulated to journalists and the industry

8

Final check

ASA checks that the advertisement has been changed

WR  TE

One letter is all it takes for the ASA to launch an investigation

ASA Council and Directors

1997 ASA COUNCIL MEMBERS

The ASA Council decides whether or not an advertisement breaks the Codes. The majority of members have to be free of advertising interests and the Chairman advertises for new lay members to reflect a diversity of background and experience.

Rt Hon Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank (Bill Rodgers)

Lord Rodgers was MP for Stockton-on-Tees from 1962–1983. Elected a Labour MP, he became one of the SDP's founding 'Gang of Four' in 1981. Lord Rodgers became a Privy Councillor in 1975 and was made a Life Peer in 1992. From 1987–1994 he was Director General of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In 1997, Lord Rodgers was elected Leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords. Appointed ASA Chairman in January 1995.

Jane Anderson

Jane Anderson is currently joint Head of Personnel in the Lord Chancellor's Department. She worked first for the British Council in Venezuela from 1976–1978. On returning to London, she joined the BBC, working there until 1990 when she left to become a civil servant, initially in the Home Office and then in the Department for Education and Employment. Appointed to ASA Council in January 1995.

Richard Bradley

Richard Bradley is a Director of L'Oreal UK Limited and Chairman of its Pension Fund. He is also Chairman of the Cosmetics Industry cancer charity (Look Good... Feel Better) and its Educational Trust. He is an appeal patron of the charity 'FRAME'. Appointed to ASA Council in May 1993.

Hugh Burkitt

Hugh Burkitt is Chairman of Court Burkitt & Company. He was co-founder and the first

President of Alto, a federation of European advertising agencies set up in 1991. He is a council member of the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising and the Advertising Association. Appointed to ASA Council in June 1995.

Sylvia Heal (not shown – retired 1997)

Sylvia Heal is a National Officer for Carers National Association. Appointed as a JP in Surrey in 1973, she was Deputy Chair of Chertsey Division Domestic Panel. She was elected as the Labour MP for Halesowen in 1997. Appointed to ASA Council in 1992.

Sheila Iffat Hewitt

Sheila Iffat Hewitt is Chairman of Surrey Heartlands NHS Trust. A member of the Immigration Appeals Tribunal and the London Rent Tribunal, she also serves as a Magistrate in Surrey. Appointed to ASA Council in July 1991.

Patricia Mackesy (not shown – retired 1997)

Patricia Mackesy was formerly Chairman of Oxford Magistrates' bench and of Camden Juvenile Court. She was also Deputy Chairman of North Westminster Court and a member of the Home Office Magistrates' Committee. Appointed to ASA Council in 1990.

Ian Markham

Ian Markham is Professor of Theology and Public Life at Liverpool Hope University College. He has published on the area of Christian ethics and culture. Appointed to ASA Council in June 1993.

Peter Mitchell

Peter Mitchell is a Director of Capital Radio plc and Chairman of Mountain View Group Ltd., a communications company. He retired from Guinness plc in 1997 where he was Director of Strategic Affairs. Appointed to ASA Council in June 1995.

Catherine Peckham

Catherine Peckham is Professor of Paediatric Epidemiology at the Institute of Child Health and Hon. Consultant at Great Ormond Street Hospital, London. She has written extensively on health issues relating to pregnancy and childhood. Appointed to ASA Council in May 1993.

Harry Rich

Harry Rich is Managing Director of Tandem (UK) Limited and is a business consultant. He trained as a solicitor and was Managing Director of a Midlands electrical distributor and Chairman of New Moon Publications plc. He has been active in the Board of Deputies of British Jews and in organisations campaigning for Soviet Jews. Appointed to ASA Council in January 1997.

Len Sanderson

Len Sanderson is Managing Director of Sales at the Telegraph Group Limited and is a member of its main board. Appointed to ASA Council in June 1994.

Norman Tutt

Norman Tutt is Director of Social Information Systems Limited. He was Principal Social Work Services Officer at the DHSS until 1979 when he became Professor of Applied Social Studies at the University of Lancaster. From 1988–1992 he was Director of Social Services at Leeds City Council. Appointed to ASA Council in January 1995.

Diane Yeo

Diane Yeo began her career in BBC Radio. After working for several children's charities she became the first Director of the Institute of Charity Fundraising Managers and then a Charity Commissioner. She is now Chief Executive of Sargent Cancer Care for Children. Appointed to ASA Council in June 1997.



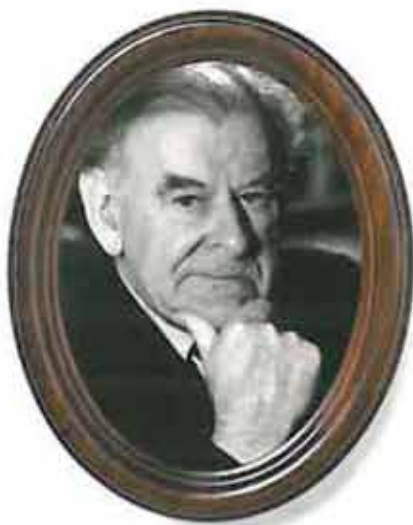
The Council from left to right: Len Sanderson, Catherine Peckham, Harry Rich, Ian Markham, Richard Bradley, Diane Yeo, Norman Tutt, Peter Mitchell, Jane Anderson, Hugh Burkitt, Sheila Iffat Hewitt, Rt Hon Lord Rodgers



The Directors from left to right: Phil Griffiths Director of Finance and Support Services, Matti Alderson Director General, Caroline Crawford Director of Communications, Roger Wisbey Director of Investigations and Copy Advice

Lord McGregor of Durris

ASA Chairman 1980 to 1990



"I approach the work of the ASA in its early maturity in the light of two convictions: first that an independent press is one of the indispensable bases of democracy and, second, that the larger the lay element in the administration of justice, the sounder will be the national foundations of law and order. At first sight, these beliefs may not seem immediately relevant to the concerns of an Authority that exists to deal with complaints from the public about the contents of advertisements; to maintain and promote proper standards in advertising; and to be responsible for the British Code of Advertising Practice. Nevertheless, it is not hard to show that they do bear directly upon the conditions of today. Without advertising, there could not be a free press independent of Government."

Lord McGregor, 1989

It seems appropriate in an Annual Report that marks 35 years of effective self-regulation that we should pay tribute to Lord McGregor who was ASA Chairman for ten of those years.

Those ten years were critical in the development of the self-regulatory system and Lord McGregor's guiding hand helped the ASA through many controversies and issues.

During that time the direct marketing industry embraced self-regulation and Lord McGregor's personal intervention and diplomacy ensured that proper sanctions were provided to back up the new area of rules. The inclusion of database management rules into the Codes and the addition of the Direct Marketing Association and the Royal Mail into membership of the Committee of Advertising Practice further strengthened the self-regulatory system.

Political advertising, the portrayal of women in advertisements and other taste and decency issues, new editions of the Advertising and Sales Promotions Codes, were all presided over by Lord McGregor during his chairmanship. Those ten years saw another kind of growth in the self-regulatory system, that of its reputation and influence.

Lord McGregor is best remembered as a firm supporter of freedom of speech and he believed passionately in self-regulation of advertising as part of that concept. When he spoke on behalf of the Authority, his theme would often be the ethics of commercial freedom of expression or the undesirability of censorship.

Of course, he brought his vast knowledge and experience to bear on these themes. He was a social historian and a respected scholar and teacher, notably Professor of Social Institutions at London University but he also held posts at the Universities of Hull, Manchester and Oxford. He was author or co-author of several major public reports on subjects such as one-parent families and divorce.

Made a life peer by James Callaghan in 1978, Lord McGregor moved from the Labour to the Social Democrat benches in 1981, and later became a Liberal Democrat. Before coming to the ASA, he had chaired the Royal Commission on the Press and on his retirement from the Authority he became the first Chairman of the newly established Press Complaints Commission, where he strove to restore the credibility of press self-regulation.

All of us at the ASA are greatly saddened by his death. He was as dynamic and enthusiastic as ever when he joined the celebrations for the ASA's 35th anniversary in July. We will remember him with respect and affection.

Lord McGregor of Durris
Born 1921, died 1997

Research

As well as investigating complaints, the ASA checks over one thousand advertisements a week to keep a constant watch on standards of advertising and the industry's compliance with the Codes. Action is taken to correct advertisements that break the Codes and these spot checks, together with surveys on subjects of concern to the public, the industry and the ASA, help to identify areas where the industry needs further guidance to improve Code compliance.

ASTHMA ALLEVIATION

Sometimes, industry wide concerns are brought to the ASA's attention by other organisations. There was one such instance in 1997 for advertisements offering products that claimed to relieve the symptoms of asthma and other allergies. Products ranged from beds and vacuum cleaners to air filters.

The Authority was advised that over three million people in the UK suffer from asthma. To them, buying a device that will benefit their health is a welcome prospect. However,

asthma and other allergies affect people in different ways: they are caused by different allergens, tolerance levels vary among sufferers and many people cannot identify the specific triggers for their problem.

During investigation by the Research team it became clear that advertisements making general "catch-all" claims were misleading and therefore unacceptable. For example, it proved insufficient for advertisers to base their asthma alleviation claims solely on the product's ability to reduce dust. The ASA concluded that if advertisers wish to make health benefit claims, they must be able to provide evidence showing that their product has undergone clinical trials conducted on people.

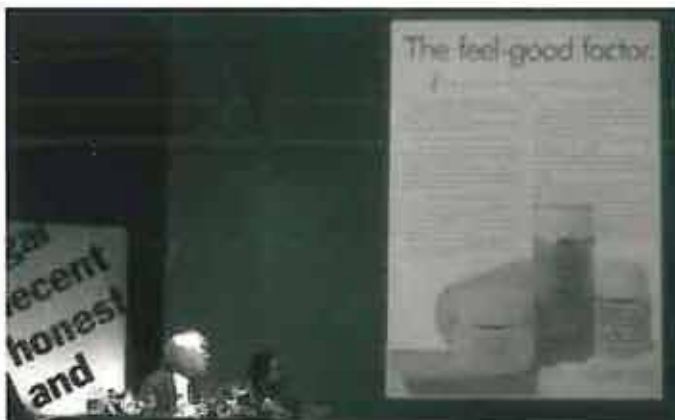
ANYONE FOR LOTTERY TICKETS?

Enticed with promises of "A huge £800 million prize pool... the best odds of winning and the best cash prize jackpot payout of them all", many consumers have responded to overseas mailings inviting them to enter foreign

lotteries. Entry fees range between £5 to £468 for a ticket. However, the ASA has yet to see evidence that some of these lotteries exist. Consumers who realise they have been conned into parting with their money have found it difficult to get refunds from companies based in countries as far afield as Hong Kong and Canada.

In its determination to curtail these misleading mailings, the ASA's Research team has worked closely with the European Advertising Standards Alliance and the UK direct marketing industry as well as overseas enforcement bodies like the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The number of complaints to the ASA about these lotteries has fallen but consumers still need to be vigilant. Such lotteries may well be illegal and consumers would be well advised to be wary of companies asking them to send money abroad.



Keeping the industry in shape:
Drawing on ASA research findings, ASA speakers alert health and beauty advertisers to potential pitfalls at one of 60 events held during the year

A SLIM BUT HEALTHY IMPROVEMENT

Advertisements for a wide range of products and services offering the appearance of eternal youth, energy and vitality have been kept under scrutiny in 1997. Although the first survey of the year was disappointing, a second check some months later showed a 7% improvement.

The check on health, beauty, slimming and nutrition claims in the first half of the year revealed an 80% compliance rate; no improvement on the 1996 surveys. Although 80% might seem respectably high it is disappointing when compared with the overall level of 96% Code compliance in press advertising.

Advertisements for vitamin supplements made up the largest proportion of the sample and also contained the highest number of unacceptable claims. Advertisements for skin treatments included anti-ageing creams, anti-cellulite creams or electronic devices to firm and tone the skin. Where the claims

overstated the likely effect of the product the companies were asked to provide the ASA with evidence to back up their assertions. Advertisers were then given advice on any changes necessary to bring them into line with the rules

In August, a second survey was carried out to check that the earlier advice given had been followed. The findings of this research were more encouraging; the compliance level had risen to 87% – a third fewer breaches than were found in the earlier sample. The ASA hopes to see a continued improvement in this sector during the coming year and the Research team will be monitoring progress closely.

THE CLAIM IS IN THE NAME

The check on advertisements for slimming products in the new year, also revealed a number of companies advertising pills containing an ingredient called chitosan. The ASA has not yet seen convincing evidence that chitosan has any effect on the user's

weight and advertisers are therefore not able to market the pills as a slimming product. Many of the advertisements gave no more information than the product name and details of its availability. However, even when there were no claims made for the products, in some instances the names themselves implied a slimming effect in a way that caused a problem under the Codes.

Following advice from the industry's General Media Review Panel and careful consideration by the ASA Council, the companies were asked to make it clear in their advertisements if their product had not been proven to have any slimming effect.



Fat Beater: product names in advertisements that give an unproven impression of a slimming effect need to be qualified

L O O K S

Keeping up appearances? The health and beauty sector showed a small improvement in Code compliance over the year

CAP Chairman's report

David Clayton-Smith, Marketing Director, Do It All Ltd



When I took over the chairmanship of the Committee of Advertising Practice at the end of 1996, I took on two major challenges for myself and the Committee: firstly to review the structure and operation of the self-regulatory system, CAP itself, and secondly to update the hugely successful 1995 edition of the Codes. Good progress on both tasks has been made during 1997. After a comprehensive review, a new edition of the Codes should be available this autumn, and the executive working group that has been considering the structure and role of CAP is due to make its recommendations to the Committee in the latter part of 1998.

At the end of his term of office, Martin Runnacles, my predecessor, commented on the high quality of debate and discussion by the ASA Council when they consider advertisements under the Codes. The CAP Chairman is invited to attend all the ASA Council meetings as an observer and I too have been constantly impressed by the depth of debate and the care taken each month by the Council to make sure that consumers' interests are protected. The judgements they make protect the reputation and credibility of advertising and keep Code compliance at a level that law enforcement bodies would envy. My thanks to the Council members and the ASA Chairman, Lord Rodgers, for their outstanding service to the self-regulatory system and, by extension, the industry as a whole.

CODES REVIEW

The review of the Codes during the year has presented the Code Review Working Group with some interesting and sensitive subjects to discuss.

The Royal Family

The tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, and calls for greater protection of the privacy of members of the Royal Family, meant that the Working Group reined back from proposing that the strict rules in the Codes should be relaxed. In their discussions on the Group's proposed changes to the Codes, the Committee must take account of both prevailing public attitudes and industry practice. The Committee will also want to canvass views including those of the Lord Chamberlain.

Party political advertising

The other potentially sensitive area being debated by CAP is how the Codes apply to party political advertising. Party political advertisements have always been exempt from having to be true and accurate but the rules on taste and decency, privacy and comparisons do apply to them. This presents the ASA Council with the very awkward job of judging subjective advertisements in the full glare of media scrutiny, sometimes at politically sensitive times. During 1997, the Code Review Working Group, chaired by John Hooper of the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers, wrote to the main political parties presenting them with two options: to opt in wholeheartedly to the self-regulatory system or to place themselves entirely outside the Codes. The total inclusion of party political advertisements into the Codes may

present the ASA with special difficulties. But if the parties do decide to follow the principles that all their advertisements should be legal, decent, honest and truthful they may well also need to agree to submit their proposed campaigns to the CAP Copy Advice team prior to publication to limit the likelihood of ASA adjudications in the heat of an election campaign.

Health and beauty

Health and beauty advertising has continued to tax the minds of CAP and ASA. During the year a working group was set up under the chairmanship of Sheila Kelly, of the Proprietary Association of Great Britain, to review the rules in this area and feed back their proposals to the Codes review.

The task of updating these and the other Code sections under review are scheduled to be completed by the autumn.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

In the development of the Codes the industry has always sought to balance its right to commercial freedom of expression with the responsibilities it has to respect public opinion and be legal, decent, honest and truthful. The Government is committed to incorporating the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law and this could have the effect of encouraging a small minority of advertisers to challenge the authority of the ASA in asking for offensive or misleading advertisements to be withdrawn. Indeed, during 1996 one advertiser sought in court to invoke Article 10 of the Convention in a judicial review. Mr Justice Ognall ruled that the ASA did not, in the particular circumstances, have to apply

the Article and his judgement went in favour of the Authority's adjudication. As with many other organisations, ASA and CAP are now looking carefully at how the self-regulatory system might be affected by the new legislation. I believe that the industry will continue to exercise free speech by balancing its interests with those of the general public.

REVIEW PANELS

Much of the work of CAP is conducted by its two standing Review Panels; one on Sales Promotion and Direct Response and the other on General Media. I am indebted to their chairmen, Peter Le Conte and Andrew Robertson respectively, the Panels' practitioner members and the ASA Council representatives, who have so willingly given a great deal of their time to resolve so many thorny issues.

Through all the work undertaken both by the industry itself and by the Secretariat on behalf of CAP, the self-regulatory system continues to flourish. I am grateful to the CAP Secretary, Matt Alderson, and her dedicated team and to Martin Runnacles, now serving as Vice-Chairman, for their support, advice and wise counsel during the year.



CAP Copy Advice

Expanded to cope with the ever-increasing number of enquiries, the Committee of Advertising Practice's Copy Advice team continues to pre-empt problems by helping those who create, commission and publish advertisements to check them against the Codes before they appear. The team fielded over 4,000 written and nearly 7,500 telephone requests for advice in the course of their busiest ever year.

The year-on-year increase in requests for pre-publication advice, combined with the high levels of Code compliance revealed in ASA research, demonstrates the care that the advertising industry takes to make sure that non-broadcast advertising is legal, decent, honest and truthful.

While advertisers and agencies know that a 'cleared' advertisement is not 'approved', and therefore can never be guaranteed immunity against future ASA Council decisions, they

welcome the reassurance that pre-publication advice gives them. Proving, if proof were needed, that it is not in their commercial best interests to mislead or offend consumers.

CONSISTENT ADVICE

The job of the team is to check advertisements against the requirements of the Codes and the rulings of the ASA Council. Easy enough if there is a similar case on a particular subject, but a little more difficult if the advertisement is, to all intents and purposes, unique. To help it, the team has access to the vast number of adjudications on the ASA/CAP database. When an enquiry is received the database is checked to make sure that the advice given is consistent with any other similar cases. Much of the work of the team is devoted to helping the industry develop level playing fields in which all can compete on a fair and honest basis: consistency is often the key to this goal. However, at the core of all ASA Council decisions, and at the heart of the

Codes, is the principle that common sense prevails and the team endeavours to reflect this in all the advice they give.

A HELPING HAND


But it is not just the day-to-day advice that occupies the Copy Advice team. In an effort to shed light on some of the more complex areas in advertising, the team has produced and issued a number of Helpnotes during the year. These guidelines cover a range of subjects from the way flight prices are described to compulsory holiday insurance, vanity publishing and cosmetic surgery.

The price of vanity

The ASA and CAP have long had problems with some publishing companies who, because of their insistence that authors pay them to have their work published, have earned the sobriquet 'vanity publishers'. Regrettably, the claims made by many of these advertisers are seldom true.



Get them young: Stevie Spring, Managing Partner at Young and Rubicam, joins the 1997 ASA workshops for the agencies' new graduate intake

F  **ME**

Vanity publishers were refused advertising space during 1997 until their advertisements had been checked by CAP's Copy Advice team

A determined effort was clearly needed to protect prospective authors from the more dubious marketing activities of irresponsible vanity publishers, while allowing responsible companies the opportunity to promote their services. A Helpline was produced by the Copy Advice team and CAP took the unusual step of asking media to turn away any advertising by vanity publishers unless it had been checked first to ensure compliance with the Helpline. Requests for advice from vanity publishers poured in and, with the help of the advertisement directors in the national and regional press, by the end of the year there had been a significant improvement in this area.

The indication of flight prices

Helpline notes are kept up to date and the one on flight prices was updated in line with the ASA's ruling that all charges paid when customers buy their tickets should now be included in the advertised prices.

Cosmetic surgery advice

The Copy Advice team has also been instrumental in helping the CAP Health and Beauty Working Group in its deliberations during the year. This ad hoc group, consisting of representatives from the health, beauty and cosmetics industries, was set up to review the rules that apply to them in the Codes. One of the issues raised by the Working Group was the need for guidance on advertisements for cosmetic surgery. The Helpline on Cosmetic Surgery was duly issued in November and it included advice on all the problems in this area of advertising: the qualifications of surgeons, claims about various procedures and statements about the clinics themselves. The Helpline is designed to reduce the number of problems with advertisements of this type.

Alerting the industry

In September, the team issued advice to the industry through an Ad Alert warning

publishers to be on the look out for advertisements offering apparently legal drugs that claimed drug-induced herbal highs. The enforcement unit of the Medicines Control Agency (MCA) at the Department of Health had expressed concern that some herbal ingredients might have dangerous side-effects and might even, in some cases, prove fatal. The CAP Ad Alert warned the advertising industry that these products should not be marketed without the necessary authorisation of the MCA.

New media friendly

As CAP looks at developing the self-regulatory framework for internet advertising, the Copy Advice team are investigating how practical and useful the industry would find it to access the advice service by e-mail. As the year ends, plans are also well advanced for the CAP website, providing easier access to all the Helpline notes issued by the team.



From original concept to final artwork: CAP's Copy Advice team helps advertisers get some of the most distressing messages across in a way that does not conflict with the industry's Codes

ASA Worldwide

As we approach the Millennium advertising regulation is increasingly set to become a global concern. The latest forms of international commercial communication, via satellite broadcasting and the Internet, have little respect for national or geographical boundaries and present a new challenge for existing advertising control mechanisms.

Fortunately the self-regulatory system supervised by the ASA is characterised by adaptability, and has also developed an enviable reputation within the international community. With 35 years experience of effective self-regulation under its belt, the UK system is now recognised as a model for new and emerging advertising control schemes, and the Authority is regularly asked to share its knowledge and experience with countries across the globe. In 1997 international representatives and government delegations visited the ASA from Malaysia, China, India, and Japan.

Several Eastern European countries also sent industry and consumer protection officials who are keen to establish advertising self-regulation in their developing market economies.

Although electronic commerce is still in its infancy, the Authority's positive experience in dealing with UK advertisers using the Internet was useful during its participation this year in an International Chamber of Commerce Working Group aimed at producing guidelines for advertising and marketing on the Internet. These are due for release in 1998.

THE ASA IN EUROPE

In the early 1990's the ASA helped to set up the European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) and today remains closely involved with its work. Since then the EASA has grown considerably in both size and stature and now comprises twenty-six members drawn from

advertising self-regulatory bodies across Europe and beyond. Its aims remain: to promote self-regulation in Europe; to coordinate an effective cross-border complaints system; and to provide information and research on self-regulation in Europe. In 1997 the Alliance continued to gain the recognition and momentum needed to undertake a range of important initiatives.

In February 1997 both the ASA and the EASA bade farewell to Christopher Ogden who had fulfilled the roles of Deputy Director General at the ASA and Chairman of the Alliance with great energy and determination. Before his departure, Christopher oversaw the production of the 'EASA Guide to Self-Regulation', a booklet that is now in general use in countries establishing their own self-regulatory systems. Since the mid-1990's it has become clear that the philosophy of self-regulation is no longer merely a Western European phenomenon,



Cross border offence:

This advertisement, stopped by the ASA in 1996, was withdrawn by the German authorities in 1997 after an Austrian consumer used the cross border complaints mechanism to object to its appearance in a German magazine

and both the ASA and EASA have played a key role in supporting the establishment of such systems in the newly emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, including Hungary, Slovenia, the Czech and Slovak Republics and recently in Poland. Support, encouragement and advice are also being offered to Russia, Kazakhstan, Croatia and Lithuania, where nascent self-regulatory systems are also developing.

The ASA and the EASA continue to maintain close links with the Commission but, as a measure of their heightened stature within the European Union institutions, both organisations were consulted by the European Parliament in 1997 on issues as diverse as car advertising and road safety, and the EC Green Paper on Commercial Communications. In February the ASA Director General, Matti Alderson, was appointed Vice Chairman of the EASA. Her wide experience was put to

good use throughout the year, especially in June when she joined other industry spokesmen in giving an influential and well received presentation at the European Parliamentary hearing on the portrayal of women in advertising.

Meanwhile the EASA cross border complaints system was mentioned in several EU initiatives. The system has been in operation for five years, allowing consumers in member countries to complain about misleading or offensive advertisements distributed in one country yet published in another. Thirty-one cases were investigated and resolved by Alliance members during 1997, three of which were handled by the ASA.

The busy EASA office in Brussels, under the able direction of Dr Oliver Gray and with the help of Kasia Scoggins, dealt with over 500 information requests from a wide variety of

sources. In addition they completed discussion papers on issues as diverse as pan-European advertising campaigns, claims in product names, and convergence, mutual recognition and the country of origin principle. The EASA also released an updated version of the famous 1992 'Blue Book'. The new 124 page edition provides easily accessible, comprehensive and accurate information on self-regulatory systems in twenty European countries.

As the year drew to a close an EASA working group chaired by the ASA's Director of Communications, Caroline Crawford, was set up to examine how the cross border complaints procedure could be extended to cover complaints about Internet advertisements. The ASA's experience in handling thirty-two complaints in 1997 about Internet and other electronic media is being put to good use in these discussions.



Even online UK advertisements do not escape ASA scrutiny: the ASA's experience is helping the EASA to develop the cross border complaints system for Internet advertising

GLOBAL

The ASA is a key player in the ever expanding global regulatory network

Financial report and update

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1997

	1997	1996
	£	£
Income		
Cash received from the Advertising Standards Board of Finance Ltd	3,464,666	3,283,649
Interest receivable	46,531	54,336
Total	3,511,197	3,337,985
Expenditure		
Salaries and staff costs	1,710,077	1,632,837
Rent and accommodation costs	242,465	247,961
Travel, subsistence and entertaining	55,183	59,695
Consultancy and professional fees	95,430	202,123
Council honoraria and expenses	83,305	85,767
Depreciation	131,700	133,291
Telephone, postage, printing, stationery and other general expenses	339,582	374,052
Advertising and promotion	260,250	213,782
Direct marketing	578,420	398,283
Total	3,496,412	3,347,791
Excess (shortfall) of income over expenditure	14,785	(9,806)

YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 1996

Last year's financial statement predicted expenditure of £3,347,791 and anticipated a pre-tax loss of approximately £10,000. Audited figures for 1996 confirm actual expenditure of £3,347,791 and a pre-tax loss of £9,806; the loss after tax was £13,159. Details of expenditure for 1996 are shown on the facing page.

YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 1997

At the time of preparing this Report, audited income and expenditure figures for 1997 are not available. Provisional indications can, however, be given and these are in the following paragraphs. Finalised accounts will be presented to the Council of the Authority at its Annual General Meeting in May 1998 and will be lodged subsequently with Companies House in the normal way.

INCOME

Compared with 1996, income received from the Advertising Standards Board of Finance Ltd rose by £181,017 (5.51%) to £3,464,666. Interest received fell by £7,805 but produced additional income of £46,531. The total income for 1997 was £3,511,197 – up 5.19% on 1996.

EXPENDITURE

Expenditure in 1997 rose by £148,621 (4.44%) to £3,496,412 compared with 1996.

Significant increases in expenditure were in advertising and promotion costs, which rose by 21.7% as a result of the new 'Withdrawn ... we're here to stamp it out' advertising campaign, and direct marketing which rose by 45.2% due to the planned second phase of upgrading the Information Technology system by rewriting the databases. All increases in expenditure were planned and were well within budgetary provisions.

The significant decrease in expenditure was in consultancy and professional fees which fell by 52.3% because of reduced legal fees. Continued economy measures enabled other office and general expenses to be held at levels similar to 1995 and 1996.

PROFIT/LOSS

We anticipate that the final accounts for 1997 will show a pre-tax profit of about £14,750 and a profit of £4,250 after tax.

About the Advertising Standards Authority

The Advertising Standards Authority promotes and enforces the highest standards in non-broadcast advertisements in the UK. It acts independently of both the Government and the advertising industry.

The Authority operates in the public interest and in co-operation with the whole of the advertising industry by ensuring that everyone who commissions, prepares, places and publishes advertisements observes the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion.

The Codes require that advertisements and sales promotions should be:

- legal, decent, honest and truthful
- prepared with a sense of responsibility to consumers and to society
- in line with the principles of fair competition generally accepted in business.

If an advertisement or promotion breaks the Codes, advertisers are asked to amend or withdraw it. If they choose not to comply, a number of deterrents and sanctions are available.

ADVERSE PUBLICITY

The ASA's Monthly Reports contain details of complaint adjudications, including the name of the advertiser, agency and the media involved.

The reports are circulated to journalists, Government agencies, the advertising industry, consumer bodies and the public. Published cases receive extensive media coverage and are also available through a fully searchable database on the ASA's website.

REFUSAL OF ADVERTISING SPACE

Media can be asked to enforce their standard terms of business that require compliance with the Codes. They may decide to refuse further space to advertisers until the advertisement has been amended.

REMOVAL OF TRADE INCENTIVES

Both advertisers and their agencies may jeopardise their membership of trade or professional organisations. This could result in the loss of financial and other trading benefits.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Ultimately, the ASA can refer a misleading advertisement to the Office of Fair Trading. The OFT can obtain an injunction in court to prevent advertisers from using the same or similar claims in future advertisements.

COMPLAINTS

All complaints must be in writing and should be accompanied, wherever possible by a copy of the advertisement and as much relevant information as possible. Complaints should be addressed to:

The Advertising Standards Authority
2 Torrington Place
London WC1E 7HW

For further information, telephone the ASA enquiry desk on 0171 580 5555. The enquiry desk is open from 9.00am to 5.30pm on weekdays.

About the Committee of Advertising Practice

The Committee of Advertising Practice is the self-regulatory body that writes and enforces the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion. CAP is made up of 21 trade and professional bodies representing the advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing and media businesses.

As part of their commitment to the Codes and the ASA, CAP provides a free and confidential pre-publication Copy Advice service to help advertisers, agencies, publishers and others to check advertisements in advance of publication. This service and the industry's support for the system of self-regulation help to maintain the highest standards of non-broadcast advertising, to the benefit of both consumers and the industry.

The organisations that make up CAP support the ASA by providing the sanctions outlined on the facing page. Each of them requires their respective members to abide by the Codes and the ASA's adjudications as a condition of membership or as part of a contractual agreement. It is this support that achieves compliance rates of 98% for posters, 96% for press and 85% for direct mail.

Team managers

1997 ASA/CAP STAFF

The ASA Council and CAP are served by a Secretariat of 60 people who carry out the day to day running of the office.

Head of Strategic Affairs

Grahame Fowler

Head of Investigations

Mark Whitbread

Operations Managers

Ailsa Chater

Joanne Poots

Suzanne Wright (not shown)

Complaints Managers

Niamh McGuinness

Claire Serle

Research Manager

Dominic Kellett-Bowman

Information Manager

Linda Wheeler

Copy Advice Manager

Guy Parker

Systems Manager

Laura Fishman

External Affairs Manager

Chris Reed

Office Manager

Richard Aubigne



From left to right: Grahame Fowler, Richard Aubigne, Laura Fishman, Dominic Kellett-Bowman, Guy Parker, Joanne Poots, Ailsa Chater



From left to right: Mark Whitbread, Niamh McGuinness, Claire Serle, Linda Wheeler, Chris Reed

