

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

21 March 2025

ASAS sees threefold jump in feedback on telco ads in 2024

The Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS), an advisory council of the Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE), received 53 pieces of feedback on telecommunications advertisements in 2024, making it the industry whose advertisements were the most-complained-about last year. It contributed to a 39% increase in the overall number of advertisement feedback to ASAS.

A breakdown of the overall feedback that ASAS received in 2024

ASAS received 432 pieces of feedback in 2024, an increase of more than 39% from the 309 received in 2023. After the telecommunications industry, the most-complained-about advertisements were those involving food and beverages*, restaurants*, electrical and electronics, and entertainment, in that order. Please see **Annex A** for the 2024 feedback statistics.

Details of telco advertisement feedback

The feedback on telecommunications advertisements in 2024 was more than three times what ASAS received in 2023 (17). They involved advertisements for mobile plans, subscription television and broadband services that telecommunications companies (“telcos”) offered, with traditional and virtual operators alike implicated.

Multiple consumer feedback that one telco’s brand campaign was unacceptable contributed the most to the increase. The complainants objected to the video on social media of a mother who does not admonish her child for watching a racy scene. The ASAS Council did not find the advertisement in breach of the Singapore Code of Advertising Practice (SCAP) but informed the

telco to take the feedback into consideration and implement measures to ensure advertisements of such nature are not accessible to children.

However, ASAS also saw increases in feedback to review claims that were potentially misleading, with the top concerns being:

- Claims about promotions for sign-ups, such as the number of months of free or discounted services in the contract, or the conditions of mobile phone trade-in offers; and
- Claims about the services that the telco offered, such as the availability of broadband of the advertised speed, or whether an overseas mobile roaming benefit was free and activated automatically.

Advice for advertisers

To build and sustain a trusted advertising environment in Singapore, the General Principles of the Singapore Code of Advertising Practice (SCAP) state that advertisements should not mislead consumers into believing anything that is not true, whether through ambiguity, exaggeration, inaccuracy, omission or other ways (under Clause 5 on “Truthful Presentation”).

ASAS’s advice to advertisers is that where terms and conditions apply, they should be accessible to consumers and the advertisement should direct consumers where to find them. However, the most salient conditions that would affect the consumer’s understanding of the offer and its limitations must be stated clearly in the advertisement copy. For example, if a free service or a discount does not last the full length of the contract, the number of months should be stated within or next to the claim.

Advertisers who have questions about whether their advertisement complies with the SCAP may also consider engaging ASAS’s advertising advice service. The advertising copy should be submitted early to give the ASAS Council enough time to review it. More details are available on the ASAS website at <https://asas.org.sg/advertising-advice>.

For consumers looking at advertisements for mobile and broadband plans, they may look up the terms and conditions and frequently asked questions to see if their understanding of the promotion as advertised is reflected in them. They may flag advertisements that are potentially misleading to ASAS.

Mr Bryan Tan, Chairman of ASAS said, “ASAS will engage the telco industry and its stakeholders to promote ethical advertising practices, encourage greater transparency to consumers and foster a trusted, level playing field among businesses.”

Ensuring effective advertising self-regulation

Consumers who encounter advertisements with misleading or unsubstantiated claims and other objectionable content can lodge their feedback on the ASAS website (asas.org.sg/feedback/online-complaint) and provide the following information for ASAS's follow-up:

- A clear copy of the full advertisement;
- The URL where it can be accessed, or else the details of where they accessed or received it offline; and
- The elements or statements in the advertisement that they object to and the reasons for their objections.

Where the advertisement is found to have breached the SCAP, ASAS is empowered to inform the advertiser to revise or cease the misleading claim.

It takes the effort of all stakeholders to ensure a fair, ethical and sustainable market. ASAS will continue to keep abreast of developments and engage the authorities, the industry and consumers to uphold community standards in the advertising industry.

Bryan Tan
Chairman
Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS)

For media queries, please contact:

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The Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS):

The Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS) is an Advisory Council to the Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE). It was set up in 1976 to promote ethical advertising in Singapore and is the self-regulatory body of the advertising industry. The ASAS Council comprises representatives from advertisers, advertising agencies, government agencies, media owners and other supporting organisations. CASE provides secretarial support for ASAS.

For more information on ASAS, please visit: www.asas.org.sg or follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/asasorgsg.

The Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE)

The Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation that is committed to protecting consumers' interest through information and education, and promoting an environment of fair and ethical trade practices. One of their key achievements is in lobbying for Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act (CPFTA), which came into effect on March 1, 2004.

For more information, please visit the CASE website at www.case.org.sg or follow us on: Facebook: www.facebook.com/casesg

Annex A: Feedback received in 2024

The feedback includes requests for advertising advice and complaints that are consumer-to-business, government-to-business, or business-to-business in nature.

Year	Total Feedback Received
2023	309
2024	432

Top 5 industries for feedback in 2024. The feedback includes requests for advertising advice and complaints that are consumer-to-business, government-to-business, or business-to-business in nature.

No.	Industry	2023 Feedback	% of 2023 Feedback	Industry	2024 Feedback	% of 2024 Feedback
1	Food & Beverages*	40	12.9%	Telecommunications	53	12.2%
2	Restaurants*	33	10.6%	Food & Beverages*	38	8.7%
3	Electrical & Electronics	22	7.1%	Restaurants*	37	8.5%
4	Beauty	19	6.1%	Electrical & Electronics	32	7.4%
5	Health	18	5.8%	Entertainment	27	5.8%

** "Food & Beverages" refers to packaged food and beverage products and food delivery services, while "Restaurants" refers to dining establishments that are not hawker stalls*