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Beware of misleading advertising



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The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has [upheld a complaint](#) about adverts from the retailer Aldi.

Aldi ran a campaign which claimed that consumers could save money by switching from a largely branded shop to shopping in Aldi. One of their TV ads showed a kitchen filled with food and an image saying “Big 4 Supermarkets £98” and another image saying “Aldi £70”. The small print on the screen throughout said “Comparison of Aldi products vs products shown. Other supermarkets may sell ‘own brand’ products at different prices”.

The ASA ruled whilst Aldi might not have intended that the comparison to be of a typical weekly shop but rather the pictured products only, the impression consumers would have is that they would be better off switching to Aldi because the overall message was that the typical shopper would make savings on a typical shop at Aldi. When assessed on that basis, the ad was found to be misleading because there was no evidence to substantiate the level of savings that shoppers could make.

This case is a reminder of a few key points:

1. You should ensure that your marketing team and agencies are well versed in the [relevant advertising code](#);
2. Your advertising must not be misleading, either in the detail or the overall message, especially when making comparisons with competitors;
3. Small print is not always sufficient to override the overall message of an ad;
4. You should always consider the interpretation that the consumer will have when they see your ad as that will be how the ASA will assess your ad if there is a complaint about it;
5. Be aware of the [consequences of breaching the code](#) – as well as PR damage, you may ultimately be referred to Trading Standards or Ofcom.

Our commercial team is ready to advise on any campaigns that you might be thinking about running – please contact [Grant Esterhuizen](#) for further information.