

ASC Circular : **No. 2020-024**

Date : **19 November 2020**

To : **PANA/ 4As/ KBP/ MSAP/ IMMAP /UPMG
Other ASC Clients**

Re : **Modified Guidelines on Digital Posts and E-Commerce**

The ASC Board has approved the following Modified Guidelines on Digital Posts and E-Commerce, as recommended by the ASC Technical Committee, consistent with ASC's mandate of Consumer Protection (RA 7394). Said guidelines will help deliver message clarity and ease of implementation.

The Modified Guidelines on Digital Posts and E-Commerce will be effective 1 December 2020.

For your guidance.

Thank you.


Ms. Maya O. Estrada
Operations Manager


Ms. Digna D. Santos
Executive Director

Noted by:


Mr. Alexander Y. Syfu
President, ASC


Mr. Ike S. Canoy
Chairman, ASC

I. Employee Brand Posts

- a. **Definition** - defined as owned, earned or paid media posted by employees in their personal social media accounts (e.g, FB, IG, Twitter, Viber, etc.) who are employed by the same company manufacturing/ distributing the brand. Posts like these can be complained.
- b. **Who can complain?**
Brand posts must be complained by a legitimate complainant. Legitimate complainants are those coming from persons or groups, organizations, or companies who are directly affected by the ads posted. A formal and written complaint must be filed with the ASC as required by the procedures.
- c. **What can be complained?**
When brand posts with claims are done through a concerted, organized and consistent effort by the company, groups within the company, or employees of the company and the settings of the one posting is public, such posts can be the subject of a complaint to the ASC.

NOTE: When possible, complainant to provide information about the one posting for better appreciation of the complaint.

II. Use of Qualifiers such as “helps”

- a. There is no need for ad claims to include “helps” when the required phrases or notations such as but not limited to "with proper diet and healthy lifestyle" or "with regular use" are already present to clarify the claim.
- b. For claims using adjectives that already communicate the benefit as an add-on, the word “helps” is not needed anymore.

Examples:

- **Enhances** security
- **Adds** energy
- **Boosts** strength
- **Promotes** mental well-being

- c. **However**, for products or services belonging to categories that promise health benefits, there is a **need to qualify claims** with the word “helps” **together with** the phrase “with proper diet and healthy lifestyle/exercise” or a phrase of similar import.

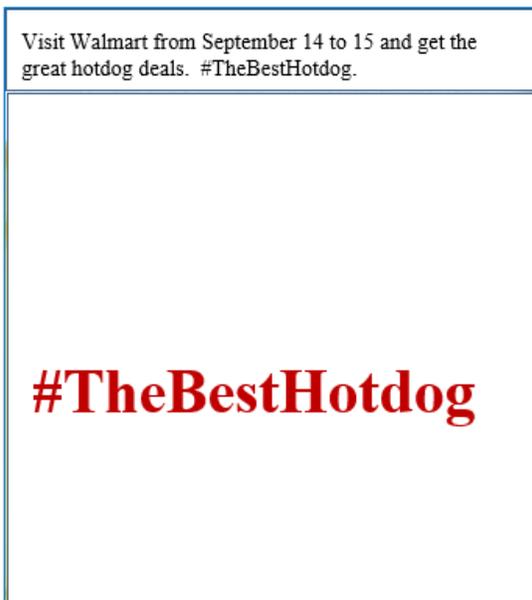
Examples:

- OTC/HR products to include vitamins and minerals
- Food/Health supplements
- Milk products
- Food products, e.g., juices or other beverages that promise immunity benefits

III. Use of Hashtags in Ads

- a. When the hashtags are not branded and are not implemented together with any branded post, brand devices or assets, these do not have to be pre-screened with the ASC.

Examples:



- b. When hashtags contain a must-screen claim (#1/Leadership, Absolute, Comparative, Exclusivity and Superiority), these have to be pre-screened with the ASC.”
- c. When brand ads are submitted to the ASC for screening and these ads include hashtags which also contain product claims, the claims in the hashtags have to be substantiated also.”