



Advertising Standards Canada
Les normes canadiennes de la publicité

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Advertising Standards Canada Releases *ASC Research: Consumer Perspectives on Advertising 2016*

(Toronto – May 5, 2016) Canadians continue to have a favourable impression of advertising, a majority find advertising helpful and most receive at least some value from ads. However, when considering advertisement content and levels of acceptability, Canadians continue to find negative, unfair and demeaning portrayals to be almost universally unacceptable and a majority of are ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ likely to stop buying from a particular company because of such portrayals. These are some of the findings in [ASC Research: Consumer Perspectives on Advertising 2016](#).

To help shed light on how Canadians perceive the advertising they see, hear and read every day, ASC commissioned The Gandalf Group to research Canadians’ perceptions of advertising through an online survey of 1,564 Canadians. This research put a particular focus on consumer perceptions of sexism in advertising.

Report highlights include:

- Canadians find certain advertising content to be almost universally unacceptable, including demeaning portrayals of persons with disabilities, animal abuse, racism, and depictions of bullying – even when intended as humour.
- By a large margin, Canadians believe women are treated more unfairly than men in advertising. 47% believe that women are treated ‘somewhat’ or ‘very unfairly’ in Canadian advertising, while only 31% believe the same about men.
- Canadians believe that sexism toward women is more prevalent in advertising than sexism toward men. 63% believe that at least some Canadian advertising is sexist toward women, while only 40% believe that at least some is sexist toward men.
- While Canadians hold the company placing the ad most at blame for sexist ads (31%), they also apportion some blame to society at large (26%) and to advertising agencies (25%).
- There are economic consequences to sexist advertising. Most respondents (67%) report they are less likely to buy a product from the company running a sexist ad.

“Canadian consumers continue to voice their displeasure with their wallets when ads are unacceptable to them. As well, the fact that Canadians perceive that women are treated more unfairly than men in advertising should send a clear message to advertisers,” said Linda J. Nagel, President and CEO, Advertising Standards Canada. “The good news is that many Canadians believe the situation is improving and that advertisements are becoming less sexist rather than more,” said David Herle, Principal Partner, The Gandalf Group.

About ASC

Advertising Standards Canada (ASC) is the national, independent advertising industry self-regulatory body committed to creating and maintaining community confidence in advertising. ASC members – leading advertisers, advertising agencies, media and suppliers to the advertising industry – are committed to supporting responsible and effective advertising self-regulation. A not-for-profit organization, ASC administers the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards, the principal instrument of advertising self-regulation in Canada, and a national mechanism for accepting and responding to consumers’ complaints about advertising.



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