

ASAI GUIDANCE NOTE

This Guidance Note is to be read in conjunction with the Code Standards for Advertising, Promotional and Direct Marketing and is intended to provide interpretation assistance to the industry and consumers on the rule at 7.6(c) of the Code.

7.6 states

7.6 Marketing communications should not be directed at children or in any way encourage them to start drinking. Accordingly,

- (c) Marketing Communications should not use or refer to identifiable heroes or heroines of the young. See Guidance Notes at www.asai.ie.

Heroes/Heroines of the Young

- a. 7.6(c) is included within the overarching requirement that marketing communications and promotions for alcohol should not be directed at children.
- b. In order to minimise the appeal of alcohol products to children, heroes/heroines that children may wish to emulate or that have strong appeal should not be included in marketing communications for alcohol.
- c. To be considered to have strong appeal under the Code, the hero/heroine must have more than recognition alone, it would be an individual or group that children would aspire to be or to connect with.
- d. In sporting circles, a number of teams in particular have been identified as heroes/heroines of the young. They include, by way of example, the Irish National Rugby and Soccer Teams, the provincial rugby teams, GAA provincial and county teams. This identification applies to the teams and individuals that are current team members. Other representative sports teams may also be heroes of the young.
- e. Not all sports teams or sports people would be considered heroes of the young. Sports that are less appealing to young people would fit into this category. It is important to take into account the age range of children which provide the key measurement – up to 18 years. Most retired sports people would not meet the threshold with regard to a level of appeal and hero status. However, recent retirements and those still in the public arena - such as in punditry or managerial roles - are assessed on the length of time since retirement and their appeal/stature pre and post-retirement.
- f. Events and tournaments are also not considered as heroes of the young, although teams / participants in them may be.
- g. Celebrities, TV and film stars and musicians with strong appeal to a younger demographic could be heroes of the young. In making this assessment, considerations should be given to the ratings of the shows/films they have appeared in, and the target audience for the shows/films and for a singer or band's music.

- h. Presenters or others currently or recently associated with children's programming will be considered to be heroes/heroines of the young.
- I Note: Heroes/heroines of the young can include fictitious or animated personalities.
- j. Note, where the teams / individuals / groups pro-actively connect with under 18's through children's merchandise, special training sessions for children to attend, and other initiatives with a youth focus – then the likelihood of an issue re heroes of the young is increased.

Sponsorship and Events

Context

The same prohibition on the use of heroes/heroines of the young will not apply to marketing communications for sponsorship and events. However the following guidance will be applied.

- k. Alcohol companies can sponsor teams / events / individuals and activities provided that sponsorship complies with the Code of Practice for Sponsorships by Alcohol Drinks Companies.
- l. Teams and individuals who may otherwise be considered heroes of the young and prevented from being included in alcohol advertisements, may be included in sponsorship advertisements as long as the requirements set out below are met.
- m. It is helpful if a clear sponsorship association is made in sponsorship advertising (e.g. proud sponsor of x).
- n. The primary focus of a sponsorship advertisement should be on the activity (e.g. Homegrown Music Festival).
- o. The Sponsor's name / brand name / and or logo should be mentioned only briefly and in a subordinate way to the event. Generally, it should comprise no more than 15% of the available advertising space / time.
- p. As it may not always be possible to apply a proportion of space rule as described above, consideration will be given to the overall look and feel of the material and whether the advertisement is promoting the event or product. This is most likely to apply where a sponsor has naming rights to an event, including the use of the brand in an event or activity name (e.g. Brand X Rugby Competition).
- q. There can be no product or product taglines in sponsorship / event marketing communications; such elements will result in the advertising being categorised as alcohol marketing communications.