



DECEMBER 2017

## Advertising and digital platforms

**Publishers have played, over many years, a significant role in the community. Publishers have and continue to provide platforms for debate by facilitating public discussion on policy issues, providing consumer information and choice, along with promoting and generating innovation.**

**It is the ethical and social responsibility of us all to advocate and reflect prevailing community standards.**

**We believe that with all advertisements, the more pertinent information included in the advertisement, the more likely it is that readers' expectations will be met, and the less likely it is that the advertisement will be subject to any complaint.**

This guide is to assist in managing interaction between readers, regulators and the brand in digital media.

Material on company digital platforms may be considered to be marketing material if its purpose is to direct consumers' attention to a specific product or service.

### Advertising and digital platforms

NewsMediaWorks Advertising Code of Practice defines advertisements as...

- » any material which is published using any medium or any activity which is undertaken by, or on behalf of an advertiser or marketer;
- » any material over which the advertiser or marketer has a reasonable degree of control; and
- » any material that draws the attention of the public in a manner calculated to promote or oppose directly or indirectly a product, service, person, organisation or line of conduct.

The very broad definition of advertising is intended to apply to a wide range of material broadcast and published.

As with other traditional media, any advertising material must comply with Commonwealth, State and Territory law

and it is to be remembered that advertising on these platforms can be the subject of complaint. Regulatory authorities have issued infringement notices for misleading and deceptive conduct in the digital space.

The Advertising Standards Bureau has also considered complaints about activities in media such as SMS Marketing, in-store marketing, advertiser owned Apps and elements of advertiser Facebook pages.

Whilst not all material on digital mediums such as a corporate websites would be considered to be advertising, if a digital medium was promoting the use of the product or service via a competition or even a do-it-yourself project it would then be considered to be an advertisement and would be subject to the same requirements of consumer protection legislation and industry codes. And, just like a corporate's posts which encourage the purchase of a featured product, user generated comments are likely to be considered advertising messages in relation to the featured product and service.

