

CARU® NEWS

Immediate Release

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MGA ENTERTAINMENT PARTICIPATES IN CARU FORUM *CARU Recommends Company Modify Ads for 'Bratz Genie Magic' Doll*

New York, NY – August 11, 2006 – The Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc., has recommended that MGA Entertainment, maker of the “Bratz Genie Magic” doll, modify advertising to clearly disclose that the dolls do not move on their own.

Advertising for the product came to the attention of CARU, the children’s advertising industry’s self-regulatory forum, through CARU’s ongoing monitoring program. The issue presented in this case is whether the advertiser has adequately depicted the method of operation for the *Genie Magic* dolls.

Based on its initial review of the commercial, CARU questioned whether children viewing a commercial that aired on the Bratz Website and on broadcast television during children’s programming “will take away the impression that the dolls can perform the various movements and poses shown without the aid of outside manipulators,” the decision states.

CARU’s *Self-Regulatory Guidelines for Children’s Advertising* note in part that “copy, sound and visual presentations should not mislead children about product or performance characteristics. Such characteristics may include, but are not limited to ... method of operation... .”

During the course of the review, the advertiser questioned whether CARU’s position contradicted an earlier decision on which the company had relied.

CARU stated in the earlier decision that “most young girls (ages six and older) are familiar with the nature of the Bratz dolls and thus would not believe they toy can move on their own.”

However, the earlier decision also noted that hand manipulation was apparent in several shots and recommended that any future ads include an audio disclaimer that the dolls did not move on their own.

In response to the current inquiry, the advertiser provided CARU with seven still shots from the commercial and argued that hands were clearly visible in six of the seven and present in the seventh.

“While the still frames provided by the company better elucidate hands in most (but not all) of the scenes, CARU finds that viewing a commercial in still frames is a distorted depiction of the commercial,” the decision states.

“CARU believes that the most effective and non-misleading method of portraying the dolls’ capabilities is to show children engaged in the play pattern,” the decision states. “CARU encourages toy makers to consider this approach rather than utilize adult hands, often hidden or in a shadow.”

CARU recommended further that the advertiser include a voiceover disclosure that the dolls do not move by themselves.

In its advertiser’s statement, MGA Entertainment took issue with CARU’s decision,

The company noted, however, that the commercial last aired in May and has been removed from the Website. “Should MGA decide to use this commercial in the future, it will take into account CARU’s decision,” the company said.

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The National Advertising Review Council (NARC) was formed in 1971 by the Association of National Advertisers, Inc. (ANA), the American Association of Advertising Agencies, Inc. (AAAA), the American Advertising Federation, Inc. (AAF), and the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB). Its purpose is to foster truth and accuracy in national advertising through voluntary self-regulation. NARC is the body that establishes the policies and procedures for the CBBB’s National Advertising Division (NAD) and Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU), as well as for the National Advertising Review Board (NARB).

NAD and CARU are the investigative arms of the advertising industry’s voluntary self-regulation program. Their casework results from competitive challenges from other advertisers, and also from self-monitoring traditional and new media. The National Advertising Review Board (NARB), the appeals body, is a peer group from which ad-hoc panels are selected to adjudicate those cases that are not resolved at the NAD/CARU level. This unique, self-regulatory system is funded entirely by the business community; CARU is financed by the children’s advertising industry, while NAD/NARC/NARB’s sole source of funding is derived from membership fees paid to the CBBB. For more information about advertising self regulation, please visit www.narcpartners.org.