

CARU® NEWS

Immediate Release

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CARU EXAMINES CONAIR ‘QUICK GEMS’ PROMOTION *CARU Finds Conair Can Substantiate ‘Free Product,’ ‘Special Offer’ Claims*

New York, NY – March 20, 2006 – The Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc., has determined that promotional advertising for Conair Corporation’s “Quick Gems” hair product complies with CARU’s Self-Regulatory Guidelines for Children’s Advertising.

Broadcast advertising for the product came to the attention of CARU, the children’s advertising industry’s self-regulatory forum, through routine monitoring of advertising directed to children. The television commercial, which aired during children’s programming, featured the following voiceover:

“Hey, Moms: Quick Gems won’t pull or tangle hair and your sparkly girl will love them so call or go online to *order right now* for *just* \$24.99 and during this special TV offer you’ll get a second set of 36 reusable gems, a comb and a carrying pouch, free.”

An announcer then says, “call 1-800-354-3800. Don’t delay, call now.”

CARU questioned whether the commercial created a sense of urgency for children to purchase the product by employing such language as “order right now” and “don’t delay, call now,” and whether the language, “special TV offer” and “just \$24.99,” minimized the price of the goods, contrary to the *Guidelines*. CARU questioned also whether the advertisement’s claims of a “special TV offer” and “free” product were accurate.

Conair, at the outset of the CARU inquiry, said the commercial at issue had been discontinued prior to CARU’s inquiry and replaced with one that did not contain “call to action” language (e.g., “order right now” or “call now”) and the price minimizing language (“just \$24.99”), but did claim a “special TV offer” and “free” products.

CARU’s inquiry centered on whether the commercial’s representations of “free” products and a “special TV offer” are accurate.

The company noted that the suggested retail price for the Quick Gems hair-decoration tool and 30 gems, is \$24.99. The television offer includes these items with the addition of 36 extra gems, a comb, and a carrying pouch. The advertiser stated that because the television commercial offered additional product at the same cost of the recommended retail price, the claims of a “special offer” and “free product” are true and accurate.

Following its review, CARU determined that claims of a “special TV offer” and the offer for “free” products contained in the television commercial for Quick Gems are substantiated.

Conair, in its advertiser's statement, said the company "appreciates and supports CARU's mission to protect children, and was pleased to participate in the self-regulatory process. Conair is satisfied with the outcome of the inquiry, and will strive to continue to create advertising for our products that is truthful, accurate and in compliance with the CARU *Guidelines*."

For a copy of the decision or for press inquiries, please contact Linda Bean, Director of Communications, 212-705-0129.

CARU's inquiry was conducted under *NAD/CARU/NARB Procedures for the Voluntary Self-Regulation of National Advertising*. Details of the initial inquiry, CARU's decision, and the advertiser's response will be included in the next *NAD/CARU Case Report*.

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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) and the Electronic Retailing Self-Regulation Program (ERSP).

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. ERSP's funding is derived from membership in the Electronic Retailing Association. For more information about advertising self regulation, please visit www.narcpartners.org.