

CARU[®] NEWS

Immediate Release

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CARU REVIEWS ADVERTISING FOR LEGOS BIONICLES *CARU Recommends LSI Include 'Real Play' Sequences in Future Advertising*

New York, NY – February 15, 2006 – The Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc., has recommended that LEGO Systems Inc. (LSI) modify advertising for its BIONICLE Inika toys, which feature computer-generated fantasy sequences, to include real-life features of the BIONICLE figures.

Television advertising for the toys came to the attention of the Children’s Advertising Review Unit (“CARU”) through its routine monitoring. The advertising aired on Cartoon Network during children’s programming.

The commercials featured various Inika figures engaged in fantasy play through computer generated imagery (“CGI”). In the advertisement in question, the computer generated version of the “Jaller” figure knocked down swinging lights with his sword, causing sparks to fly as he deftly jumped and maneuvered around the menacing flying fixtures. At the end of the commercial, there was an image of the figure, but no actual product shot clearly displaying the real life features of the item.

CARU was concerned that because the advertisement only shows fantasy footage, without any depiction of the toy or real play, the advertising could be misleading to children about the product’s performance and capabilities.

At the outset of CARU’s inquiry, the advertiser noted that the commercial intended to advertise the BIONICLE.com Website and mistakenly aired without the voiceover directing viewers to the site.

CARU had previously advised this advertiser that when an advertisement promotes a Website that doesn’t sell the toy figures depicted, it can be in an all-CGI format since it is intended to promote the Website, not the toy. In this case, CARU noted, the Website offers product for sale and advertising for the site should demonstrate the real-life capabilities of the toys sold.

CARU determined that the commercial, as run, was an advertisement for the product.

Given that this commercial was determined to be an ad for the product, CARU finds it to be in violation of the Guidelines. When advertising products, commercials have to clearly display the real life features of the products so that children comprehend the product’s method of operation and performance.

LSI, in its advertiser's statement, said the company "believes that the ad, had it contained the proper tag line, was consistent with CARU's guidelines at the time that it aired. LSI appreciates the clarification provided by CARU in its decision here and will keep that information in mind for future advertisements. LSI understands CARU's concerns and remains strongly committed to responsible marketing of the LEGO brand and the company's BIONICLE products. LSI does not intend to appeal CARU's decision."

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).

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.