



Litmus Testing:
2012/2013

April 2013



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Report Prepared For:

Broadcasting Standards Authority

Date: April 2013

Ref No: NZ400437

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Opinion Statement

Nielsen certifies that the information contained in this report has been compiled in accordance with sound market research methods and principles, as well as proprietary methodologies developed by, or for, Nielsen. Nielsen believes that this report represents a fair, accurate and comprehensive analysis of the information collected, with all sampled information subject to normal statistical variance.

Executive Insights

Executive Insights

To gauge the public's current attitudes and to determine whether the public can understand (and accept) the rationale for the BSA's decisions, the BSA commissioned Nielsen to conduct a new round of litmus testing. Four focus groups were conducted in Auckland with members of the public aged 21-65 years. The Children's Interests standard was the focus of discussion. Three of the groups were with parents/caregivers of children aged 2-14 years and one group consisted of participants living in households without children.

Results must be interpreted in the following context:

- Participants were shown clips rather than a whole programme so the context of the clips was limited by the boundaries delineating the beginning and end. BSA decisions have to take into account a number of contextual factors including the programme as a whole.
- When the clips were first shown they provided a useful snapshot of the immediate reaction to the clips. When the participants had more information about what the BSA had to factor into their considerations (i.e. when they were provided with the BSA's reasoning), the results were less clear cut.
- The five decisions chosen for litmus testing were deliberately chosen as some of the more challenging ones. The BSA did not want to test the more straightforward ones to try to get good results.

Evaluation of Board decisions relative to public opinion

When reacting to each clip, prior to seeing a summary of the Board's reasoning in reaching their decision about whether or not to uphold a complaint about that clip, opinion was often at odds with the Board decision as outlined below.

As can be seen, for all clips except the rugby player clip, initial reaction of most participants was in contrast to the Board's actual decision.

Clip	Board Decision	Number who wanted complaint upheld (out of n=24)	Proportion whose initial opinion reflected Board's decision (n=24)
Implied killing of a cat in cartoon programme - Family Guy	Decline	22	8%
Sex scene close to watershed - Underbelly: Razor	Uphold	5	21%
Promo for AO documentary during PGR time - Penis Envy	Decline	13	46%
Rugby player mouthing an obscenity - One News	Decline	3	88%
LMFAO "Shots" music video	Uphold	10	42%

Executive Insights

continued

Board's Decision/Rationale

The table on the following page shows participants' reactions to the summaries provided of the rationale behind the Board's decisions regarding each clip. For all clips, with the exception of the Family Guy clip, the majority of participants were able to follow the Board's rationale and agree with, or at least accept, the decision made.

Clip	Board Decision	% considering Board made good /acceptable decision
Implied killing of a cat in cartoon programme - Family Guy	Decline	42%
Sex scene close to watershed - Underbelly: Razor	Uphold	83%
Promo for AO documentary during PGR time - Penis Envy	Decline	75%
Rugby player mouthing an obscenity - One News	Decline	100%
LMFAO "Shots" music video	Uphold	96%

On the basis of this research, we conclude that most participants follow, and are largely accepting of, the decisions made by the Board, when they consider these decisions in the context of the legal and other guidelines the Board operates within.

However, there is some discrepancy between agreeing with the decisions made and attitudes towards the content itself and this report provides valuable insights into where the public feels the boundaries lie between acceptable and unacceptable content.

When prompted to consider the Children's Interests standard even after knowing the rationale behind the BSA's decision, specific comments regarding the clips were as follows:

- **Family Guy:** Most respondents would have upheld the complaint, and indicated that the BSA had misjudged the severity of the clip and the impact it would have on children. Respondents felt that the programme should have been screened at a later time of at least 8:30pm to prevent exposure of children to adult themes.
- **Underbelly: Razor:** Whilst some felt the programme warranted a later screening time of 9:30pm due to its content, this clip brought to light the 8.30pm watershed issue and the grey area surrounding what 'soon after' this time meant. Most did not find the clip offensive and felt parents had been sufficiently warned of the nature of the content involved.
- **Promo for Penis Envy:** This was a polarising clip and again related to timing, with respondents questioning the need to show promos for AO programmes in PGR

timeslots. Reaction to the clip was largely about it being an uncomfortable topic for parents who might have to discuss it with their children, rather than a harmful one for children.

- **ONE News:** Nearly all participants agreed with the BSA's decision not to uphold the complaint. Viewers felt that the words were used in context and agreed with the BSA's comment that the inaudibility of the words lessened the potential impact on any children watching.
- **LMFAO "Shots" Music Video:** Opinion was split on whether to uphold the complaint in terms of Children's Interests with many saying that they have "seen worse" when it comes to music videos and that they are "all like this". However some respondents were pleased that there was now a stake in the ground regarding acceptability.

General Discussion that may inform the development of codes and/or classification systems

- The Underbelly: Razor clip prompted some participants to voice a request for clarity about the time post the watershed that AO material can be shown. "Soon after" the watershed was felt to be too vague and difficult for Broadcasters to determine.
- The groups also showed some apparent confusion around the PGR rating – in that it doesn't seem to be understood or taken seriously by some. PGR seemed to signal that the programme was 'still ok' for children under 14 to watch unsupervised as most were shown while children were awake and potentially watching television. Many respondents did not watch PGR programmes with their children and/or paid little attention to the ratings of programmes.
- The final point worth noting regards the challenges around promos – in particular the screening of promos for AO programmes in PGR timeslots and how they should be dealt with. Most groups objected to such promos being shown before 8.30pm.

Needs Assessment

Background

As specified in the Broadcasting Standards Authority's (BSA's) Statement of Intent 2011-2014, members of the public must 'litmus test' at least 5 BSA decisions. The purpose of litmus testing is to help ascertain where Board decisions sit relative to public opinion. This contributes to ensuring members have a clear appreciation of the diversity of community views and public attitudes towards these decisions.

The last round of litmus testing was in May 2012. Nielsen ran four focus groups, three with members of the public aged 18-75 and a fourth with recent complainants. At this time, the focus was only on the good taste and decency standard.

This year (2013) the focus for litmus testing was the Children's Interests standard. Therefore, research participants were predominantly parents and caregivers of children from 2-14 years of age. However, one group consisted of respondents without children living in their homes.

Research Objectives

The overall objective is to gauge the public's current attitudes and to determine whether the public can understand (and can accept) the rationale for the BSA's decisions in relation to the Children's Interests standard.

Specific objectives of the research are to:

- Identify each individual's reaction to each clip independently to ascertain whether the objections made by the complainant are spontaneously raised by other members of the public
- Ascertain whether participants would have upheld the complaint (based on initial reaction)
- Examine individual and group response to the Board's actual decision
- Ascertain whether participants agreed with the BSA's decision after they were provided with a summary of the decision.

Research Design

Sample structure

Four focus groups were conducted. All groups were held at the Nielsen Takapuna offices, with 2 groups held in the evening and 2 held during the day. Participants came from a range of Auckland areas, and all participants received a koha of \$70 for attending.

Group	Description of group
Group One:	6 x Participants aged 21-65 years. Parents/Caregivers of children aged 2-6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female x 3 • NZ Euro x 4 • Maori x 1 • Pacific x 1 • Range of Household Income and Employment status
Group Two:	6 x Participants aged 21-65 years Parents/Caregivers of children aged 7-10. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female x 4 • NZ Euro x 2 • Asian x 2 • Pacific x 1 • Maori x 1 • Range of Household Income and Employment status
Group Three:	6 x Participants aged 21-65 years Parents/Caregivers of children aged 11-14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female x 4 • NZ Euro x 4 • Ghanaian x 1 • Asian x 1 • Range of Household Income and Employment status
Group Four:	6 x Participants aged 21-65 years No kids/Empty Nesters or grandkids with no regular contact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female x 4 • NZ Euro x 3 • Indian x 1 • Maori x 1 • Middle Eastern x 1 • Range of Household Income and Employment status

Process

Initially there was a brief warm-up where participants discussed programmes they and their children enjoyed viewing, behaviours and bedtimes for children in their household (if any).

The group was then provided with information about the BSA and its role and the Children's Interests standard was then revealed to the participants (these documents can be found in the Appendix). Participants were also encouraged to consider the need for the BSA to balance freedom of expression with maintaining standards.

Opportunities to ask questions and gain clarification were provided. Questions asked by participants included:

- Did the standards apply just to television programmes or to advertising as well?
- Did the standards apply to pay TV as well as Free to Air?
- Why was 14 years the cut off age for the definition of a child?
- How many people had to make a complaint before it was investigated?

Each clip was then shown, preceded by contextual information regarding viewing time, ratings and any verbal/written warnings shown prior to the programme.

The five clips were:

1. Larsen and TVNZ (2012-055) Rugby Player Mouthing Obscenity
2. Riwai-Couch and TVWorks Ltd (2012-014) Sex Scene Close to Watershed
3. O'Neill and TVWorks Ltd (2011-127) LMFAO "Shots" Music Video
4. Lilley and TVWorks Ltd (2011-078) Implied Killing of Cat in Cartoon Programme
5. Greenwood and SKY (2010-154) Promo for AO Documentary during PGR time

During and after each clip, participants were asked to independently note:

- Any specific issues they personally had with the clip
- What aspects they felt might have triggered the complaint
- Whether they felt most people would feel this way, and if not, why not?
- Whether they felt the BSA should have upheld the complaint

Process
continued

Once this form was completed the respondents each received a written and verbal summary of the actual BSA decision.

Respondents were then asked to write down individually:

- Any thoughts about the BSA's decision
- How they would rate the severity of the clip (where 1 was "Nothing wrong with it" and 5 was "Extremely bad").
- How they would rate the BSA's decision, taking into account the reasoning given by the BSA and the final outcome (1 being "Very Poor" and 5 being "Very Good")

For the first 3 groups the clips were shown in random order, while for the last group the clips were shown in chronological order (in terms of when the complaint was considered by the Board) to ascertain whether respondents felt there had been consistency in decision making over time. Whilst in this instance respondents did not feel that there had been any inconsistencies, it may be worth continuing to test clips in chronological order for any future litmus tests.

The responses to each clip were then discussed as a group. Appendix 3 contains the discussion guide used, as well as the information participants were given about the Children's Interests Standard and programme classifications.

Overview of Findings

Synopsis

- Across the groups we saw a largely consistent point of view, indicating that the age of the child in the household did not influence reaction to the clips.
- The exception to this was the “Penis Envy” clip where there was more discussion in relation to age. Here, some respondents felt that pre-adolescent children may find this clip generated insecurity or curiosity as they are just beginning to learn about sexuality.
- In most of the participants’ households, children under 10 years old were in bed before 8.30pm and so participants felt that the AO material would not be seen by their children anyway. Those with older children indicated that their children might still be in view of the television at this time as they got ready for bed. They therefore welcomed the clear warnings that preceded programmes such as Underbelly: Razor.
- There was no marked difference in responses for parents of boys or girls, nor between mothers or fathers.
- None of the respondents in the groups had ever laid a complaint with the BSA. This was due to several factors including: not knowing how, assuming the process would be too time consuming, and assuming that someone else would make a complaint.
 - *“What’s the process? I think you’ve got to write a letter and I haven’t got time for that.” (Male, European)*
 - *“I think over the years I might have seen something and thought, that’s a bit much or I don’t agree but it’s not enough to want to make me complain as such.” (Female, European)*
- All groups mentioned the role of the parent as final decision maker as to how television is used in their household, but many also mentioned the difficulty in consistently monitoring their child’s viewing. Parents also mentioned that television was only one area of life where children may be exposed to bad language and potentially offensive behaviour.
 - *“They’re going to hear it all and more in school anyhow.” (European, Male)”*
 - *“I think it’s going to get harder and harder with technology – we are going to have to be savvy and one step ahead of them all the time.” (Female, European)*
- Internet and time lapse viewing was mentioned by several group members as becoming increasingly commonplace in their households. This meant that adults often recorded their programmes and viewed them at a time when children were in bed. It also meant that there was less opportunity for children to be exposed to promos as they did not have to view advertising using online or delayed viewing. Some parents also mentioned their children’s preference for computer time rather than television time.
 - *“My kids also at the moment love the computer, I think the computer seems to be on more than the TV, but then I guess it’s still TV in a way as they are watching YouTube clips.” (Female, European)*

Synopsis continued

- Respondents' **initial reaction** to several of the clips (Family Guy, Underbelly: Razor) was in marked contrast to the Board's decision.
- The Family Guy clip was judged to be explicit in its violence toward animals and in direct violation with the Children's Interests standard. Groups did not agree with the Board's justification regarding the length of time the series had been on air.
- The Underbelly: Razor clip raised the issue of the 8.30pm watershed and the ambiguous wording surrounding the standard. Respondents wanted a clear time limit to be adhered to, and suggestions for this ranged from 5 minutes after 8.30pm to 30 minutes.
- In general, violence was deemed to be more harmful to children than sexual references/scenes or bad language.
 - *"To me, violence is far more unacceptable vs. sex and nudity."* (Female, European)
 - *"I see a general trend coming on TV generally and I'm thinking that the BSA would probably like to know this, I see that violence is more accepted as commonplace and without repercussions or consequence... I think that this is specifically due to violence being on TV and then coming through to society."* (Male, European)
- The most consistent response was to the "ONE News Rugby Player Mouthing An Obscenity" clip, where nearly all respondents agreed that it was not a breach.

Clip	Board Decision	Number who wanted complaint upheld (out of n=24)
Family Guy	Decline	22
Underbelly: Razor	Uphold	5
Promo for Penis Envy	Decline	13
ONE News	Decline	3
LMFAO "Shots"	Uphold	10

Synopsis
continued

- The groups reacted positively to the BSA's summary of their rulings. Their feedback indicates that the decisions are seen to be **fair** and to take into consideration all the different factors involved.
 - *"I disagreed with them on every single case bar one, at least I'm consistent! I think it's not easy walking a fine line between what you think people are going to accept, it's going to be hard to get it right all the time." (Male, European)*
 - *"I think it must be really difficult to make decisions on things when everybody is so different." (Female, European)*
- Groups also spoke of the three parties involved in the process: parents, broadcasters and the BSA.
 - *"It's got to be with the parents in the end, but we need the guidelines, broadcasters would just have free reign, they've got to be accountable, eh?" (Multiple respondents)*
 - *"The responsibility is with us as parents but if we don't know it you have to give us warnings." (Male, European)*

Clip One (Family Guy – 2011-078)

Synopsis

"I think this was poor judgement – not just disturbing for kids but disturbing for adults to watch as well" (Female, European)

"The BSA got this totally wrong this time. Children watching this might get nightmares, especially younger ones. Blood splashing and continuing to kill the cat was horrifying to me, a 22-year-old female!" (Female, Middle Eastern)

Lilley and TVWorks Ltd 2011-078: implied killing of cat in cartoon programme

An episode of the cartoon comedy *Family Guy* was broadcast on FOUR at 7.30pm. At the beginning of the episode, a character introduced his friends to his new cat; the scene then implied that the cat was killed with a razor. The complainant argued that the "animal cruelty" depicted in the episode was "totally unacceptable", especially in a PGR programme broadcast at 7.30pm when children were likely to be watching.

The BSA did not uphold the complaint that this breached the children's interests standard.

It considered that the scene was clearly intended to be humorous and a satirical reference to the idea that cats have nine lives. It noted that the actual killing of the cat occurred off-screen and was implied through blood splattering and the sound of the cat squealing, so was not explicit. The BSA felt the scene was highly unrealistic and farcical, largely due to its animated style.

Family Guy was, at the time, in its eighth season on New Zealand television. It was classified PGR and was not necessarily aimed at children. FOUR had screened it in similar timeslots for a number of years, so regular viewers of the programme were familiar with its sometimes challenging content. The pre-broadcast warning that the episode contained material that might not be suitable for younger viewers was adequate to inform viewers of the episode's likely content, and to give parents the opportunity to exercise discretion with regard to their children's viewing.

In contrast to the Authority, **22 of the 24 participants voted to uphold the complaint initially.**

Participants were shocked by the level of violence seen in the clip and felt it was screened too early in the evening.

Severity of the Clip (n= 24)

1 Nothing Wrong With It	2	3	4	5 Really Bad
1	3	7	6	7

Reaction to Board's Decision (n= 24)

1 Very Poor	2	3 Neither Good nor Bad	4	5 Very Good
6	8	6	2	2

After reading a summary of the Board's decision, the balance of opinion remained disagreement with the Board's decision. Participants felt that the programme was a breach of guidelines 9a, 9d and in some cases 9e if they felt the programme could be classed as a child's cartoon.

Main issues regarding the clip

In agreement with the complainant, the main issues participants had regarding the Family Guy clip were:

- Timing of programme and its rating
- Animal cruelty
- BSA's rationale regarding length of time the programme had been on air and the impact of off-screen violence
- General bad taste

1. **Timing of programme and rating:** The main concern was that, despite the warnings, a child could still have easily been exposed to the content – a later timing of the programme was therefore recommended as well as an AO rating and more explicit warnings:

"I don't think Parental Guidance would have helped in this issue simply because once they have seen it – it is too late, the actual horror of what they have seen stays with them, you can't control and guide that." (Male, Indian)

"It's a bit over the top in terms of violence for 7.30pm." (Male, Pacific)

"I didn't like that warning either – what constituted a 'younger viewer'? I've got a 10-year-old who would be very upset by that." (Female, Asian)

"My kids are older now, they watch TV of their own accord, I'm not there to watch each programme and look at the rating so this means they could well have seen that." (Female, European)

2. **The animal cruelty:** Respondents felt that the animal cruelty was explicit rather than implied and were additionally worried about the example that this set for children:

"Kids are so innocent they don't understand the concept of cruelty as humour yet." (Female, Asian)

"My fear isn't so much about my son being upset, I think he would have found it quite funny, but for him to see that as an excuse to behave like that – there are people who do things like that to cats, you read about them." (Female, European)

3. Many respondents also disagreed with the **Board's reasoning regarding the length of time the programme had been on air and the impact of the off-screen violence**

"I don't agree with the logic... I think that programmes probably become more divergent to continue to keep the audiences so you would think it would get worse over the 8 seasons." (Male, European)

"I think to say 'you expect that of Family Guy' is pretty weak – doesn't mean you should monitor it at a different level, should be the same as Shortland Street." (Male, European)

Main issues regarding the clip continued

"Does that mean they can show what they want because it's been on air a long time?" (Female, European)

"I think they got it wrong – the scene was explicit even though it was off screen." (Male, European)

4. **General Bad Taste** : Many respondents expressed disgust at the Family Guy series and indicated that they did not allow their children to view it:

"The entire programme was stupid. I would not want anyone who expected their mind to develop to watch it." (Male, European)

Board's decision to decline complaint: While 8 of the participants who initially thought the complaint should have been upheld were more accepting of the decision once the rationale used by the Board in deciding to decline the complaint was explained, more than half remained of the opinion that the wrong decision had been made as they felt it was **a clear breach of the Children's Interests standard:**

"They are out of touch – a kid is not going to think that killing a cat off screen is highly satirical." (Female, European)

"As adults we were all visibly shocked – so imagine what a little kid would think." (Male, European)

Initial reaction to clip (prior to seeing Board's summary)	Reaction after considering Board summary (did Board make a good decision?)	N= 24
Should uphold complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	8
Should uphold complaint	Board made a poor decision	14
Should decline complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	2
Should decline complaint	Board made a poor decision	-

Clip Two (Underbelly: Razor – 2012-014)

Synopsis

"My issues with this one were around the timing thing really, it doesn't break the rules – how are you supposed to do something with that nebulous rule? It leaves it too open to judgement." (Male, European)

"It's nothing uncommon, what we saw." (Female, Asian)

Riwai-Couch and TVWorks Ltd 2012-014: sex scene close to watershed

An episode of *Underbelly: Razor* included a sex scene, broadcast at 8.42pm, in which a woman was on top of a man in bed; her breasts were briefly visible, and she could be heard moaning. The episode was preceded by a visual and verbal warning.

Taking into account the potential harm to viewers as well as the right to freedom of expression, the BSA upheld the complaint that the broadcast of the sex scene amounted to a breach of the children's interests standard. TVWorks had already acknowledged the breach and apologised to the complainant.

Standard 9, the children's interests standard, requires broadcasters to consider the interests of child viewers during their normally accepted viewing times – usually up to 8.30pm. However, guideline 9b states that when scheduling Adults Only material to commence at 8.30pm, broadcasters should ensure that strong adult material is not shown soon after the watershed.

The scene represented a relatively brief but vigorous sexual encounter, heightened by the soundtrack of rhythmic drums and the woman moaning. The BSA considered this was in a similar vein to complaints previously upheld under guideline 9b. It found that the scene amounted to "strong adult material" broadcast too close to the Adults Only watershed. It was satisfied that the potential harm caused by the broadcast of the sex scene – in terms of Standard 9's objective of protecting children from unsuitable material – outweighed the broadcaster's right to freedom of expression on this occasion.

The BSA did not make any order or impose any penalty on the broadcaster. Given that TVWorks had accepted there was a breach, the decision was considered sufficient to clarify the BSA's expectations surrounding the broadcast of adult content close to 8.30pm.

Popular opinion was that this was not a breach, with only 5 choosing to uphold the complaint initially.

Respondents felt that the content was not offensive in what was clearly labelled and shown in an Adults Only timeslot.

"While I was a little bit uncomfortable, I felt they gave clear warnings. I mean Underbelly: Razor – it's not a kid's programme. For me, it's the parents' responsibility, because it clearly said AO." (Female, Asian)

However many were concerned about the ambiguous nature of the guidelines around watershed viewing and screening objectionable material 'close to' the 8.30pm watershed.

"There's nothing clear. It says 'close', why are the guidelines so wishy washy? It's either 8.30 or it's not. It's unfair." (Male, European)

Severity of the Clip (n= 24)

1 Nothing Wrong With It	2	3	4	5 Really Bad
4	11	5	1	3

Board's decision to uphold complaint – this was a polarising clip with many supporting the Board's decision while at the same time raising concerns with the lack of clarity surrounding the 8.30pm watershed and objectionable material shown 'close to' this time.

"I think it could have gone either way as clear warnings were given and the programme is clearly not intended for children." (Female, European)

"Thoroughly explained although I don't agree with their decision." (Male, European)

1 Very Poor	2	3 Neither Good nor Bad	4	5 Very Good
2	2	9	8	3

Main issues regarding the clip

- No Issue
- 8.30pm Watershed timing

1. **No Issue.** Most respondents claimed not to have a problem with the clip, finding it to be consistent with the genre of the programme and sufficiently labelled.

"I don't think it was wrong at all. If it had been on at 4pm that's a different story but it's adult time and really it's up to the parents whether or not your kids are up watching something after the 8.30pm cut off." (Female, Maori)

"This was an AO show and I don't have a problem with this. I don't agree with the ruling – I wouldn't let my kids watch a show like this whether it was at 8.42 or 9.43." (Female, European)

2. **8.30pm Watershed.** The main issue for respondents was the timing of the piece with the groups divided on how close to 8.30pm the watershed rulings should be.

"I think it was on too early, you can't tell your kids to go to bed exactly at 8.30. I wouldn't have a problem with it after 9." (Male, European)

**Main issues
regarding the
clip** continued

"I think if you are watching the programme from the start it's on after 8.30pm, you have had the warnings and you can tell from the programme's name it's not for kids." (Male, European)

"I think 12 minutes is a long gap in the watershed, it would be a 48 minute show so that is 25% of it gone right there." (Male, European)

Board's decision to uphold complaint: When informed of the Board's decision, most participants were supportive of the decision made but expressed a desire to see the wording of 'close to' the watershed time clarified explicitly. We also saw comments that supported the clarity of the Board's argument without actually agreeing with it.

"I was quite surprised actually, I think going by the letter of the rules that it shouldn't be upheld – the rules need to be clearer." (Male, European)

"They basically upheld it because of the watershed time, and what is the watershed time?" (Male, Maori)

"Thoroughly explained although I don't agree with their decision." (Male, European)

"I gave it a 4 in the context of defining the watershed as being too early." (Male, Maori)

Initial reaction to clip (prior to seeing Board's summary)	Reaction after considering Board summary (did Board make a good decision?)	N= 24
Should uphold complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	4
Should uphold complaint	Board made a poor decision	1
Should decline complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	16
Should decline complaint	Board made a poor decision	3

Clip Three (Promo for Penis Envy – 2010-154)

Synopsis

"I agreed that it went over the heads of kids really, I don't think they would have their attention focused on it." (Male, European)

"I think it just promotes a discussion that you don't want to have." (Female, Asian)

Greenwood and SKY 2010-154: promo for AO documentary during PGR time

A promo for an Adults Only documentary, *Penis Envy*, was broadcast at 8.10pm during the television programme *Stephen Fry in America* which was rated PGR. The promo opened with brief images of unidentified males walking down the street, focusing on their groin area; it also showed naked men with their buttocks and genitalia blurred, and included penis enlargement surgery and penis enlargement devices.

The BSA did not uphold the complaint that this breached the children's interests standard.

While the promo contained sexual themes and dialogue, the actual images were subtle, fleeting and relatively discreet. The nudity was blurred and, in the BSA's view, the nature of the images depicting penis enlargement surgery and various devices would have gone over the heads of younger viewers. Children would not have been disturbed or alarmed by the promo, especially when viewing *Stephen Fry in America* with adult supervision, in keeping with its PGR rating.

Of the **24 participants**, **13 wanted to uphold the complaint**, with the majority upholding the complaint due to the time the clip was aired and the fact that it was an AO programme advertised in PGR viewing time.

In summary, the participants saw that the clip itself was unlikely to cause harm to a child, but was in fact more likely to cause curiosity which made parents uncomfortable.

Severity of the Clip (n= 24)

1 Nothing Wrong With It	2	3	4	5 Really Bad
6	6	7	4	1

Synopsis continued

Board's Decision (n= 24)

"I agree with the ruling as a whole, it's pretty harmless." (Female, Asian)

1 Very Poor	2	3 Neither Good nor Bad	4	5 Very Good
1	5	7	7	4

Main issues regarding the clip

- No issue personally
 - Exposure to Adult Themes/Timing of Promo
1. **No issue:** Many respondents had no issue with the promo themselves but admitted to being uncomfortable about children seeing it.

"I personally don't have an issue but obviously if a kid watched it, it brings up concepts kids don't really need to think about." (Female, European)

"Yeah I thought it was probably too early to be showing that but if I think about it and if my son was watching it, I wouldn't mind, he's 10. People do worry about the size of their penises I think, it's just an aspect of life." (Female, Asian)
 2. **Exposure to Adult Themes/Timing of Promo:** The most consistent theme discussed was exposure of children to adult themes and the timing of the promo, with some parents stating that it was an 'assumption' that parents would be watching PGR programmes with their children. It would appear from the comments made in the groups that there are many households where the PGR guidelines are not strongly adhered to and children are watching unaccompanied. There was also some discussion about the wording of warnings that accompany some PGR/AO programmes with some parents looking for more clarity.

"Sometimes it says 'may contain' which makes you more inclined to ignore it. Telling us it 'does contain' stuff makes it sound like you need to do more." (Female, European)

"Even if you were watching a PGR programme with your kids you can't control what promos are on during that time." (Female, European)

*"The penis enlargement story would **not** have gone over the heads of younger viewers – if something is blurred they get curious." (Female, Asian)*

"It's harmless, but I don't like the time it was shown." (Male, European)

"I think the ruling was incorrect – nudity would catch a child's attention and would have triggered curiosity of what they saw. It's an adult theme, insensitive material and interview dialogue." (Female, Pacific)

**Main issues
regarding the
clip** continued

"My only thing is that it could have been on a bit later but I don't think it was damaging to kids." (Female, Asian)

Board's decision to decline complaint

When provided with a summary of the Board's decision, 18 of the 24 participants were supportive or at least accepting of the decision made. Those who felt that the complaint should be upheld largely did so due to the time the promo aired.

"I think they should only show AO promos after 8.30." (Male, Indian)

Some disagreed with the BSA's ruling that it would have gone over the heads of younger viewers.

"I think that is slightly outdated, some kids would have definitely understood what was going on and that might have caused a worry for them." (Female, European)

"I think it might have gone over the heads of younger children but not older, I feel it was in bad taste and disturbing for older children. Kids are sexually savvy now in a way that we weren't." (Male, European)

"It's not harmful, a bit disturbing but probably more disturbing for the parents really!" (Multiple respondents Group 2)

Initial reaction to clip (prior to seeing Board's summary)	Reaction after considering Board summary (did Board make a good decision?)	N= 24
Should uphold complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	7
Should uphold complaint	Board made a poor decision	6
Should decline complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	11
Should decline complaint	Board made a poor decision	-

Clip Four (ONE News – 2012-055)

Synopsis

"It's rugby, it's freedom of speech, it's a game." (Multiple respondents)

Larsen and TVNZ 2012-055: rugby player mouthing obscenity

A *One News* item broadcast at 6pm included footage of a rugby player mouthing an obscenity.

Taking into account the right to freedom of expression, the BSA did not uphold the complaint that this breached the children's interests standard.

The BSA disagreed with TVNZ that only adults capable of lip-reading would have understood the exact words spoken, but it was satisfied that the language used by the sports player would have bypassed most children – they would need to be actively watching the news to understand what was said. The potential harm to children in overhearing such language on the television and adopting it was also reduced because of the phrase being inaudible. In any case, the BSA noted that news programmes are not targeted at younger viewers and are not likely to appeal to them.

Of the five clips, this was the least controversial, with only **3 of the 24 participants wanting to uphold** the complaint.

Severity of the Clip (n= 24)

1 Nothing Wrong With It	2	3	4	5 Really Bad
12	11	1		

Participants agreed with the Board's decision to **not** uphold the complaint.

Respondents in the main felt that the clip would have gone over the heads of most children who would not be actively involved in watching the sports news.

For many the clip was contextual and expressed the player's disappointment; in fact, many found it humorous.

"In the context of the Blues' season it was not inappropriate or out of context." (Male, European)

Synopsis continued

The fact that the obscenity was not audible was the key factor in respondents deciding not to uphold the complaint although respondents did not agree with the broadcaster's argument that only adults would be able to understand it.

"Yeah I mean he didn't really say it..." (Female, European)

Board's Decision

1 Very Poor	2	3 Neither Good nor Bad	4	5 Very Good
		3	12	9

Main issues regarding the clip

- No issue
 - Salacious editing
 - News as reality
 - Violence more upsetting than language
1. **No issue.** Nearly all respondents had no issue with the clip.

"It captured the passion of the losing team." (Male, Indian)

"I agree with the Board's rationale, I don't have an issue here." (Male, European)
 2. **Salacious Editing** – Some respondents found that the addition of the clip was gratuitous.

"Definitely not necessary to put that in, I don't know why they did." (Female, European)

"Probably not necessary to show it, if it wasn't important to show that it seems like a lot of hassle." (Male, European)

"It's part of sports but probably no good to show it to younger children." (Female, Asian)
 3. **News as reality.** Some respondents felt that as it depicted reality, the news was therefore more entitled to depict action as it happens.

"Rugby is a tough sport, they are a pile of ruffians really, it's all in character and context." (Female, European)

"I'd actually love my kids to watch the news." (Female, European)

"It's a reflection of what we see and experience every day." (Male, Indian)
 4. **Worse content readily available during the news hour** – Some respondents felt that the violence and death seen on the news was potentially more harmful

to children.

"There's more harmful viewing on the news than a sports clip of a player swearing." (Male, European)

"I wouldn't put the news on around my young kids, every second story is a bomb here or something." (Female, Pacific)

"I would have thought the foul play was what was complained about – violent." (Male, European)

Board's decision to decline

All respondents felt that the Board had made the right decision for the right reasons.

"I agree with the BSA. In comparison to some things we see and hear it was minimised because it was mouthed." (Female, European)

"Agree completely – freedom of expression!" (Female, European)

Initial reaction to clip (prior to seeing Board's summary)	Reaction after considering Board summary (did Board make a good decision?)	N= 24
Should uphold complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	3
Should uphold complaint	Board made a poor decision	-
Should decline complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	21
Should decline complaint	Board made a poor decision	-

Clip Five (LMFAO Video Hits “Shots” – 2011-127)

Synopsis

“I didn’t feel that strongly about it because there is so much explicit material out there when it comes to music videos. I don’t like the idea that drinking irresponsibly is cool, I didn’t think it was that bad or severe nevertheless when I read the decision I agree that they made the right one.” (Female, European)

“It’s implying that with alcohol girls will do sexually explicit things.” (Female, European)

O’Neill and TVWorks Ltd 2011-127: LMFAO “Shots” music video

C4 broadcast a programme called *LMFAO Video Hits* at 7pm, which included the music video for LMFAO’s song “Shots”. A complaint was made that the video promoted liquor and contained coarse and sexually explicit language.

Given the dominance of liquor promotion in the video and the sexual messages conveyed, and the screening of the video during children’s viewing times, the BSA upheld the complaint under the children’s interests standard (as well as the liquor promotion standard). The BSA was satisfied that the song depicted adult themes suited to a mature audience and not suitable for child viewers.

The BSA acknowledged the importance of freedom of expression, and also noted the dominance of the music video genre, which is a staple part of young people’s entertainment and is readily available on the internet. But it considered that the broadcast of this video at 7pm went too far, glamorising excessive drinking and alcohol-fuelled sexual behaviour in young people.

Though *LMFAO Video Hits* was rated PGR, no warning was given at the beginning and therefore parents had no opportunity to exercise discretion with regard to their children’s viewing.

TVWorks also accepted that the content of this particular music video was “toward the limit of what is acceptable for a PGR programme”.

The BSA did not make any order or impose any penalty on the broadcaster, as TVWorks said that the decision had drawn “a clear line in the sand” in relation to music videos with a drinking theme, and staff had been reminded to exercise greater caution in classifying them in future. The video had been reclassified Adults Only and therefore would not be screened in a PGR timeslot again.

Synopsis

continued

A total of **10 of the 24 participants** indicated initially that they would have upheld the complaint.

Half of the respondents saw nothing wrong with the clip and saw it as typical of the genre of music videos. A general sense of being desensitised by the salacious nature of many music videos was expressed by participants in all groups.

"Music Videos – it's a total lottery whatever comes up next, half of them have a half-naked woman hanging off a guy, implied things like that." (Female, Middle Eastern)

Others were concerned with the excessive drinking and the implied sexual behaviour resulting from this at a time when young viewers would be watching.

Severity of the Clip (n= 24)

1 Nothing Wrong With It	2	3	4	5 Really Bad
1	7	7	5	4

Board's Decision

Although the Liquor Promotion standard was not discussed in this round of research, respondents were pleased that the ruling had placed a stake in the ground regarding this and the general standard of music videos.

Board's Decision to Uphold

1 Very Poor	2	3 Neither Good nor Bad	4	5 Very Good
	1	7	8	8

"It's really good that the BSA is concerned about the liquor usage and language." (Female, Asian)

"It's a well-reasoned decision and it's good that it helps lay down standards." (Male, European)

"I think the BSA is somewhat right there, but it wasn't that harmful for kids, because these types of things are easily seen anywhere." (Male, Indian)

Main issues regarding the clip

Opinion was divided, with a range of comments elicited by the clip.

- No issue
- Encouraging excessive drinking
- Language used in the clip and objectification of women
- General bad taste
- Limits

Main issues regarding the clip continued

1. **No issue** - A number of participants didn't really feel there was an issue or that the clip was significantly worse from any others shown on C4.

"I thought it's what you would do at a pool party I guess." (Female, Pacific)

"You see a lot of drinking and girls but you look at any artist on music TV at any time and they are all like that." (Male, European)

"It's a very typical video." (Male, European)
2. **Encouraging Excessive Drinking.** Although the liquor promotion standard was not discussed, many respondents were pleased that the Board's decision took this into account.

"I mean the first line is 'All you alcoholics...'" (Male, European)

"Binge drinking is glorified, encouraging younger viewers." (Male, European)
3. **Language used in the clip and Objectification of Women.** Some respondents mentioned the scantily clad females and the depiction of sexual favours as a result of getting women drunk.

"What do I think triggered the complaint? Everything. Drinking, lyrics, women in bikinis, sexual connotations..." (Male, Maori)

"A BJ as a reward?" (Male, European)
4. **General Bad Taste.** Some respondents remarked on the general bad taste of music videos and the adult content often depicted.

"Music videos in general have crossed the line, haven't they? A lot of them are like soft porn." (Male European)

"It was just too in your face encouraging everyone to drink." (Female, Pacific)

"I thought it was loud and vulgar and advertises liquor, it's just crude, crude scenes." (Female, European)

"Teenagers, 14-year-olds, I think they would watch that and understand it. Kids today I think they would find that cool, I don't think it's a good influence at all." (Female, Pacific)
5. **Board's Decision to uphold.** While some respondents felt that this clip was not the worst of the genre (mainly but not exclusively, those in their early 20s who had watched a lot of music videos), others were pleased that it had been used as an example of where to draw the line:

"I'm surprised, it's a good thing they're concerned about the language and alcohol, but compared to the decisions they have given for the other things it's like, hello." (Female, European)

**Main issues
regarding the
clip** continued

"I thought it was a good ruling, I think it was well noted that it glamorised drinking." (Male, European)

"I thought it was harsh and that the drinking wasn't as bad as they said." (Female, Middle Eastern)

Initial reaction to clip (prior to seeing Board's summary)	Reaction after considering Board summary (did Board make a good decision?)	N= 24
Should uphold complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	10
Should uphold complaint	Board made a poor decision	-
Should decline complaint	Board did not make a bad decision (thought decision was good or had no strong views either way)	13
Should decline complaint	Board made a poor decision	1

Summary and points for consideration

Summary

In summary there was mixed reaction to the Board's decisions. The two most polarising reactions were to **Underbelly: Razor** and **Family Guy**.

In the case of the **Underbelly: Razor** clip respondents called for more clarity regarding the ambiguous term in the Standards of showing objectionable material "soon after" the 8.30pm watershed. Many commented that this was unfair on broadcasters to have to determine and would prefer an exact time limit. It should therefore be considered whether the wording of this standard needs to be reviewed.

Respondents' view of the **Family Guy** clip was in stark contrast to the Board's ruling. The majority of participants found the clip offensive and violent even for adults and were adamant that a) children would either find the clip humorous and a poor example of good behaviour and animal treatment or b) that it was a direct breach of guidelines 9d and 9e.

With regard to the **LMFAO "Shots"** music video, many respondents who were au fait with music videos, felt that there was "nothing wrong" with the music video and although they did not object to the ruling, they found the content to be "no different" from other music videos screened on music television. Older viewers and those who were not familiar with the genre were more likely to find the content, and indeed the music, objectionable.

The **ONE News** clip of the rugby player mouthing an obscenity was widely regarded as non-problematic by respondents who felt that the comment was made in the context of a live rugby game where it was an acceptable expression of the frustration shown by the player. The fact that it was inaudible was the most compelling point in its favour.

The **Penis Envy Promo** raised the issue of broadcasting promos for AO programmes during PGR viewing time. Whilst most did not feel that it would be particularly alarming to children, some parents and participants felt that this was not content that was suitable for viewing by children and was definitely Adults Only. The BSA guidelines in its Responsible Programming standard explicitly allow the broadcast of AO promos outside of AO time. However the research suggests first, the public is not aware of this, and second, many viewers would prefer AO promos to be restricted to after 8.30pm. It is therefore recommended that the Board reconsider its guidelines for AO promos broadcast before 8.30pm.

Recommendation

Nielsen recommends that the discussion guide flow be replicated again for any future litmus testing as it provided good individual responses as well as group discussion.

Appendix I – Discussion Guide and Standards

- 1. Research Introduction (2 Min)** Greetings, and brief explanation of topic – understanding broadcasting standards regarding television. Gut feeling, fun, philosophical discussion, no right or wrong – important to accept that other people have different opinions from yourself

- Confidentiality, explanation and consent to record audio, video
- Introduce clients, timing, amenities
- Thank people for their participation

2. TELEVISION/RADIO AND ME (5-10 MIN) – (WRITE DOWN THEN DISCUSS AS A GROUP)

- What are the reasons we watch TV? What are we looking for (relaxation, to be informed, entertainment etc). Who do we usually watch it with, when and what are we also doing at the time?
- What kind of programmes/channels do you tend to watch/listen to, and why?
- Which, if any, do you avoid and why?

For Parental Groups

- What kinds of programmes do your kids like to watch?
- When are they on?
- Family viewing? What and when?
- In what ways, if any, do you restrict your children's viewing?
- Have you heard of any standards that broadcasters must apply around children's TV viewing – if so can you tell me what you know?

3. BROADCASTING STANDARDS - General discussion (5-10 Min)

Now I am just going to give you a little bit of background about standards in broadcasting. *All to have a copy – interviewer to read out*

Broadcasters in New Zealand have a code of practice and are responsible for maintaining a number of **standards** in their programmes. These standards cover areas such as good taste and decency, privacy of individuals, and balance and fairness in factual programmes such as documentaries. There is also a standard for protecting children's interests. This standard says broadcasters need to consider the interests of child viewers during children's normally accepted viewing times. This is the standard that we will be focusing on today.

The Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) ensures broadcasters fulfil their obligations to maintain standards as agreed under their code of practice. It also provides the public with a free, independent complaints service if someone feels a standard has been breached.

At the same time, we need to bear in mind that New Zealand is a modern democratic society where freedom of speech is protected by law under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.

Broadcasters therefore are constantly mindful of getting the balance right between protecting everyone's right to freedom of expression while at the same time maintaining standards expected of

broadcasting. And when the BSA is considering the complaints made to it, it also needs to justly balance these two concepts.

WRITE UP MAINTAINING STANDARDS/FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

- Has anyone ever made a complaint, or gone to their website to get information?
 - If so, what were your impressions of the process?
 - If not, why not? Is it that they've never found anything offensive, or is the process difficult?

4. BROADCASTING STANDARDS – CHILDREN'S INTERESTS (15 min)

As we mentioned earlier, broadcasting standards cover a number of different issues concerning what we watch on TV or listen to on the radio. In our discussion today, we'll be covering just one of the standards – the children's interests standard.

What I will show you now is the children's interests standard as it is written in the broadcasters code of practice

Each Participant to get a copy of the standard and Moderator to read out

- What do you understand by this standard? *Probe on ease of understanding, use of language, amount of information, are there any questions?*

5. INDIVIDUAL JUDGEMENTS (60 min)

For the rest of our discussion tonight, I am going to show you clips of shows that people have made complaints to the BSA about. Some of the complaints were upheld (which means that the BSA agreed with the complainant and took action) and some were not upheld (which means the BSA did not agree that there had been a breach of the children's interests standard).

There will be 5 clips that we will show you one at a time. As we go through, I'd like you to jot down your gut feelings and thoughts. Please don't discuss them at this stage. *Hand out sheet 1*

- Think about who you might be watching it with, and at what time

*Show each of the five clips (rotated order) and leave time for them to write down their thoughts on each. Provide information regarding channel, programme, time and rating
Hand out sheets 2-6 with the following questions*

- Write down what thoughts you have about this broadcast
- What aspects do you think triggered the complaint?
- What is your personal view on the clip – do you feel OK about it airing on this channel at this time and why/why not?

Have a look at the specific guidelines in the children's interests standard. Think about the need for the BSA to support the right of the broadcasters to free speech while making sure they uphold agreed standards. Do you think the BSA would have upheld this complaint – that is, ruled that it breached the children's interests standard?

Then give each person a copy of the decision summary to read individually

Here we have a summary of the final decision made by the BSA in regard to the complaint.

Can you please take a few minutes to read it individually and write your comments on it.

- What are your thoughts?
- Now that you have read the decision made by the BSA and how they came to that decision, do you agree with the decision that they made?

(Then discuss as a group)

So, what was everyone's thoughts for clip 1?

- Who agreed with the BSA's decision? Why/why not?
- Regardless of whether or not this clip breached the children's interests standard, what were the group's thoughts on this clip being broadcast on this channel at this time?
- Would your views have been different if it was a different channel or a different time of day?

Repeat for Clips 2-5

We're nearing the end of our discussion now. To wrap up, thinking about the decisions made by the BSA, and the way they were communicated, what is the one thing you'd like to say to them?

- The standard around children's interests itself – does it go far enough? Is there anything missing?
- Where is the line between parental responsibility and broadcaster responsibility?

Thanks and Koha

FREE-TO-AIR TELEVISION CLASSIFICATIONS

Free-to-air television broadcasters (TV you get for free) in New Zealand are required to ensure that programmes are appropriately classified (ie. rated). They must use one of the agreed classification symbols (set out below) and must display this at the beginning of each programme and after each ad break. They must also consider using a warning if the programme content may offend or disturb a number of people. If a programme is classified as anything other than G (General) there are restrictions on what time it can be shown.

For the purposes of these classifications a **child** means a boy or girl under the age of 14 years.

G

GENERAL Programmes which exclude material likely to be unsuitable for children. Programmes may not necessarily be designed for child viewers but should not contain material likely to alarm or distress them. *G programmes may be screened at any time.*

PGR

PARENTAL GUIDANCE RECOMMENDED Programmes containing material more suited for mature audiences but **not necessarily unsuitable for child viewers when subject to the guidance of a parent or an adult.** *PGR programmes may be screened between 9am and 4pm, and after 7pm until 6am.*

A0

ADULTS ONLY Programmes containing adult themes and directed primarily at mature audiences. *A0 programmes may be screened between midday and 3pm on weekdays (except during school and public holidays as designated by the Ministry of Education) and after 8.30pm until 5am.*

**A0
9.30PM**

ADULTS ONLY 9.30PM-5AM Programmes containing stronger material or special elements which fall outside the A0 classification. These programmes may contain a greater degree of sexual activity, potentially offensive language, realistic violence, sexual violence, or horrific encounters.

UNCLASSIFIED PROGRAMMING

News and Current Affairs

News and current affairs programmes are not required to be classified. However, broadcasters must be mindful that young people may be watching during children's ordinary viewing hours and should give consideration to including warnings where appropriate.

Sports and Live Programmes

Sports and live programmes are not classified but broadcasters must take all reasonable steps to ensure the programme conforms to the timeslot in which it is being shown.

If you have any other questions about classifications or warnings used on free-to-air television see www.bsa.govt.nz or call the BSA at 0800 366 996.



 Broadcasting Standards Authority

 Te Mana Whanonga Kaipāho

STANDARD 9 – Children's Interests

During children's normally accepted viewing times (see Appendix 1), broadcasters should consider the interests of child viewers.

Guidelines

- 9a** Broadcasters should be mindful of the effect any programme or promo may have on children during their normally accepted viewing times – usually up to 8.30pm – and avoid screening material that would disturb or alarm them.
- 9b** When scheduling AO material to commence at 8.30pm, broadcasters should ensure that strong adult material is not shown soon after the watershed.
- 9c** Broadcasters should have regard to the fact that children tend to:
- stay up later than usual on Friday and Saturday nights and during school and public holidays; and
 - watch television through to midday on Saturday and Sunday mornings, and during school and public holidays.
- Accordingly, special attention should be given to providing appropriate warnings during these periods.
- 9d** Programmes containing disturbing social and domestic friction or sequences in which people – especially children – or animals may be humiliated or badly treated, should be handled with care and sensitivity:
- all gratuitous material of this nature should be avoided and any scenes shown must pass the test of relevancy within the context of the programme. If thought likely to disturb children, the programme should be scheduled later in the evening.
- 9e** Children's cartoons should avoid gratuitous violence – especially violence involving humans or human-like creatures – unless it would be clear to the child viewer that the themes are fanciful or farcical.

Appendix II – Nielsen Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance

Nielsen is committed to the principles of Total Quality Management, and in 1995 achieved certification under the International Standards Organisation ISO 9001 code.

The company maintains rigorous standards of quality control in all areas of operation. We believe no other commercial research organisation in New Zealand can provide clients with the level of confidence in survey data that we are able to. Furthermore, Nielsen is routinely and regularly subjected to **independent external auditing** of all aspects of its survey operations.

ISO 9001

Nielsen is committed to the principles of Total Quality Management, and in 1995 achieved certification under the International Standards Organisation ISO 9001 code. In March 2007 Nielsen also adopted the standards specified in AS20252.

In terms of this project, all processes involved are covered by our ISO 9001 procedures. As part of these procedures, all stages of this research project (including all inputs/ outputs) are to be approved by the Project Leader.

Code of Ethics

All research conducted by Nielsen conforms with the Code of Professional Behaviour of the Market Research Society of New Zealand.

Appendix III – Company Information

Company Profile Nielsen Corporation is the world's leading provider of market research, information and analysis to the consumer products and service industries. More than 9,000 clients in over 90 countries rely on Nielsen's dedicated professionals to measure competitive marketplace dynamics, to understand consumer attitudes and behaviour, and to develop advanced analytical insights that generate increased sales and profits.

The company provides four principal market research services:

Retail measurement

Includes continuous tracking of consumer purchases at the point of sale through scanning technology and in-store audits. Nielsen delivers detailed information on actual purchases, market shares, distribution, pricing and merchandising and promotional activities.

Consumer panel research

Includes detailed information on purchases made by household members, as well as their retail shopping patterns and demographic profiles.

Consumer Research

Includes quantitative and qualitative studies that generate information and insights into consumers' attitudes and purchasing behaviour, customer satisfaction, brand awareness and advertising effectiveness.

Media measurement

Includes information on international television and radio audience ratings, advertising expenditure measurement and print readership measurement that serves as the essential currency for negotiating advertising placement and rates. In addition, Nielsen markets a broad range of advanced software and modeling & analytical services. These products help clients integrate large volumes of information, evaluate it, make judgements about their growth opportunities and plan future marketing and sales campaigns.

As the industry leader, we constantly work to set the highest standards in the quality and value of our services, and the passion and integrity of our people bring to helping clients succeed.

Our professionals worldwide are committed to giving each of our clients the exact blend of information and service they need to create competitive advantage: The right information, covering the right markets, with the most valuable information management tools, all supported by the expertise and professionalism of the best market research teams in the industry.