



Self-Regulation Guidelines on Advertising Online Gaming

Context

At present, there are no specific regulations to regulate the advertising activities of gaming operators/companies. It is therefore imperative that online gaming operators/companies adopt strict principles of self-regulation to ensure that their advertisements are socially responsible and protect users from being exploited. This is an internal document for the interim, and more detailed and nuanced guidelines will be framed at a later stage with inputs from all stakeholders. This document is meant to be a self-regulated guideline, and signatories are expected to comply and act responsibly within the generally accepted norms of industry.

Guidelines

1 Must ensure that marketing communications do not mislead consumers

- 1.1** Advertisements should not be offensive to the generally accepted standards of public indecency
- 1.2** The advertisements should never target minors or induce them to indulge in gaming in any manner whatsoever directly or indirectly
- 1.3** There should not be publishing/distributing/aiding news or information that would aid or facilitate betting and gambling in any way
- 1.4** Gaming companies should not use any phrase or phrases that misrepresent the likelihood of winning in any manner whatsoever
- 1.5** The advertisements should not present gaming as an income opportunity or an alternative employment option

2 Incentives: Must ensure that all significant conditions which apply to the marketing incentives are provided transparently and prominently to consumers

3 Qualification: Advertisements of gaming products or services, including games of chance or any games that do not qualify as Games of Skill are prohibited except as may be legally permitted or which may have approval from a reputable law firm that qualifies and authorize a game as a Game of Skill

4 Mass Media Advertising (All ATL like TV, OOH, Print, etc): There should be no mention of cash/gross winnings/gross prize money/etc (including referral bonus, cash bonus, etc) in any mass media advertising

5 Competition: No competition or ads hijacking on placement like any other brand's own keywords on Google results or direct / in-direct attempts to show any other brand in a

negative light in any kind of promotions. Avoiding the usage of blackhat techniques that undermine Google's algorithm and/or be disruptive to another brand

- 6 Messaging:** When messaging includes winning/mention of money (on BTL like digital platforms), it is important to avoid misleading claims. Eg. Operators should say Rs.x Lakhs in Winnings, not Win Rs.x Lakhs if x is the total prize pool available
- 7 Correct Terminology:** No ads to include words like betting, gambling, chance, luck, wager, etc. and also not use phrases similar to "try your luck", "get lucky", "Chance to Win", "Anyone can win", "You can win big", which compromise skill element. There should be no linkage with gambling, betting, wagering, lottery, etc. Ads should always promote words like skill, intelligence, IQ, research, etc
- 8 Industry Data, Brand Positioning, Use of Disclaimers, Competition Referencing:** Follow ASCI guidelines
- 9 Penalty Clause:** Violation may be reported to the gaming council and the council may consider taking appropriate action basis the magnitude of the offense
- 10 Lockdown related Marketing:** During the time in which complete/partial lockdown is in force, there should be no mention of the words lockdown, coronavirus, pandemic, etc. in any ad campaigns. Direct or indirect linkage or mention of tapping frustration, depression, or boredom of the public in lockdown to play online games/gaming should be avoided.