



STAR Members

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By email

Dear Sir or Madam

## YOUR ADVERTISING

### Who we are

As you may be aware, the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) represents marketers, their agencies, the media and other trade and professional organisations of the advertising, sales promotion and direct marketing business. It created and revises The UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (the CAP Code), provides a pre-publication copy advice service and co-ordinates the activities of its members to achieve the highest degree of compliance with the Code. The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the independent body that administers the Code.

### Why we are contacting you

One of the roles of the CAP Compliance team is to communicate ASA decisions that are likely to affect an industry sector as a whole, so that a level playing field is achieved.

The ASA recently upheld complaints against four advertisers regarding the advertising of ticket pricing on websites. Please see the attached adjudications ([AKA Group](#), [Charing Cross Theatre Ltd](#), [Ambassador Theatre Group](#), [The Old Vic](#)).

The ASA found that compulsory fees and charges were not being included up-front in ticket prices. This meant that fees charged on either a per ticket or per booking basis were only made clear later in the buying process. The rulings make clear that advertised prices for theatre tickets must include all compulsory fees and charges in quoted ticket prices and be more up-front about booking fees. This means that consumers will have all the information they need in the first instance to help them make an informed choice and to shop around should they wish to look for a better deal.

As a result of these adjudications, we are writing to advise you of the following principles that marketers should adopt to ensure that your marketing communications comply with the CAP Code.

Chairman James Best Secretary Shahriar Coupal

Advertising Association • Atvod Industry Forum • Cinema Advertising Association • Direct Marketing Association • Direct Selling Association • Incorporated Society of British Advertisers • Institute of Practitioners in Advertising • Institute of Promotional Marketing • Internet Advertising Bureau • Mobile Broadband Group • Mobile Marketing Association • Newspaper Publishers Association • Newspaper Society • Outdoor Media Centre • Professional Publishers Association • Proprietary Association of Great Britain • Royal Mail • Scottish Newspaper Society  
Clearcast • Radio Advertising Clearance Centre  
Committee of Advertising Practice, an unincorporated association.

Legal, decent, honest and truthful

### For booking fees charged per ticket

If a booking fee is compulsory and charged per ticket, this should be made clear when the ticket price is first displayed on the website. For example, if a ticket is priced at £25 with a £2.50 booking fee per ticket then the ticket should be advertised as an inclusive price of £27.50 or £27.50 (£25 ticket + £2.50 online booking fee). The same reasoning applies for tickets offered at a range of prices (i.e. £27.50–£87.50).

### For fees charged per transaction

The first time a ticket price is quoted for a performance on a website, the price needs to be qualified with a reference to the existence and amount of transaction fee if the fee is a one off charge and link this information with an asterisk to information that includes the amount of the fee (i.e. £25 plus transaction fee\*. \*Fee is £3 per transaction), or, if they are variable (i.e. £25 plus transaction fee\*. \*Fees are £3 for delivery by post, £2 by email etc). The same reasoning applies for tickets offered at a range of prices (i.e. £25–£85 plus transaction fee\*. \*Fee is £3 per transaction.)

Regardless if the charge is fixed or variable, the information regarding the amount should be immediately clear, linked by an asterisk and on the same page as the price claim.

If the first time a consumer is given the ticket price is in a hover box over an interactive map of the seating floor plan, then the ticket price needs to be immediately qualified with a reference to the existence and amount of a transaction fee.

(Please note that we are aware that transaction fees are also described as order processing fees etc. The logic above applies to whatever the transaction fee is known as, be it an order processing fee, delivery fee etc)

### Booking Office Collection

Prices exclusive of booking fees can be quoted provided that it is made clear that if these prices are only for customers using a certain payment method (e.g. buying in person at the box office), they are clearly targeted at those customers, and this is made explicitly clear in the advertising (for example, this information could be clarified with a sentence that advises consumers that this price is only available via purchase of the tickets in person at the box office).

### Any other additional fees e.g. delivery, credit card charges, printing costs, admin charges etc

Any additional fees must be disclosed at the outset. If additional costs are compulsory and charged per ticket then these should be included in the ticket price. If these fees are one off charges then the price needs to be immediately qualified with reference to the existence and amount of this charge.

### **What you need to do**

We are keen to ensure you are aware of the adjudications. We are asking for your co-operation in ensuring your marketing communications comply with the CAP Code and the position outlined by the ASA adjudications.

Please note we are communicating this matter to as many advertisers or ticket providers who we are aware of that may adopt this approach. We shall conduct follow up monitoring after approximately three months to ensure that advertisers are adhering to the Code.

Should you have any future copy queries and for further assistance please contact the CAP Copy Advice Team. The CAP Copy Advice website, [www.copyadvice.org.uk](http://www.copyadvice.org.uk) <<http://www.copyadvice.org.uk>> provides a wealth of guidance online, including a searchable database of advice that is regularly updated. The Copy Advice team also provides a free bespoke advice service. Although the advice is not binding on the ASA Council, the team can help if you are in doubt about Code requirements or would like advice on a particular point. You can reach the Copy Advice team by phone on 020 7492 2100. If you want to submit a bespoke copy advice enquiry, please use the online advice request form (you will need to register and sign in to do this, but this is free): <<http://www.copyadvice.org.uk/Ad-Advice/Bespoke-Copy-Advice.aspx>>.

Yours sincerely

**Daniel Ware**

**Compliance Executive**

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We shall use the information you give us, together with other information from or about you, to carry out our compliance role under The UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (The CAP Code). We may contact you to assess the quality of our services or to give you information about our activities, which might interest you. If you do not want to be contacted for that purpose, please let our Data Protection Officer know at the above address or by e-mail at [data.protection@cap.org.uk](mailto:data.protection@cap.org.uk). For further information about our Data Protection Policy please refer to our website [www.cap.org.uk](http://www.cap.org.uk).