

ASA rules against Sunlight

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) of South Africa this week upheld a complaint by Bliss Chemicals, manufacturers of MAQ washing powder, regarding two claims on the packaging of Unilever product Sunlight Washing Powder.

In its ruling, the ASA directorate noted that while any washing powder may contribute to fabric softening, evidence and research put forward did not substantiate Unilever's claim that Sunlight be considered a two-in-one product, saying there was no clear evidence of true fabric softening properties.

It also commented on the claim that Sunlight Washing Powder's formulation comprises "pure and natural ingredients", noting that Unilever was unable to provide independent verification of this claim stated as fact on its packaging.

Unilever was ordered to withdraw, with immediate effect, all claims questioned until such a time that the washing powder brand is able to provide adequate substantiation.

According to a pleased Jacqueline Jacobs, GM marketing at Bliss Chemicals, it is the responsibility of manufacturers to provide factual and substantiated information on its packaging. She believes that the ruling shows a robust regulatory process that continues to protect the consumer's interests.

"Consumers invest a significant amount of trust in a brand," she says, "and making unsubstantiated claims betrays this confidence, tarnishing not only a particular brand but casting doubt on the integrity of an entire category."