

Real Estate and Offshore Betting Ads Dominate ASCI's Half-Yearly Complaints Report 2024-25

- *Key government partnerships drive impact*
- *Average complaint resolution time reduces from 30 to 18 days*
- *Proactive monitoring drives 90% of cases processed*
- *ASCI probes 4,016 complaints; investigates 3,031 ads*
- *53% of non-compliant ads were withdrawn without contest by the advertiser*

Mumbai, November 26, 2024: The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has released its *Half-Yearly Complaints Report 2024-25*, revealing a significant presence of misleading and illegal advertisements in the real estate and offshore betting sectors.

Between April and September 2024, ASCI reviewed 4016 complaints and investigated 3031 ads; 98% of these ads reviewed needed some modification. ASCI's continued vigil on digital platforms saw a total of 2830 ads being processed, representing 93% of the total ads taken up.

Of the ads investigated, 2087 ads were in violation of the law. Of these, 1027 were reported to the Maharashtra Real Estate Regulatory Authority (MahaRERA) under an MoU between ASCI and MahaRERA. A further 890 ads promoting illegal betting were reported to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB), and 156 were escalated to the Ministry of Ayush in violation of the Drugs and Magic Remedies (DMR) Act; 10 ads directly promoting liquor and four other ads regarding deepfakes were reported to MIB.

Of the remaining cases 944 that were formally investigated, 53% of the ads were not contested by the advertiser on receipt of intimation of the complaint from ASCI.

Realty (34%), illegal betting (29%), healthcare (8%), personal care (7%), and food & beverage (6%) featured as the top five categories with the highest code violations.

Key Highlights from the report

- Real estate emerged as the most violative sector, accounting for 34% of cases investigated.
 - 2115 real estate ads were reviewed, with 1027 processed for potential violations of the MahaRERA Act.
 - 99% of the ads processed were in violation of the MahaRERA Act. As per earlier media reports, MahaRERA penalised 628 developers with a penalty totalling ₹88.9 lakhs as a result of the ads identified by ASCI.
 - ASCI's partnership with MahaRERA is creating an impact on real estate advertising, demonstrating the effectiveness of joint efforts of self-regulator and regulator.
- Ads promoting illegal offshore betting continued to be a major concern, accounting for 29% of ads processed.
 - 890 ads were flagged to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) for promoting illegal offshore betting platforms, exploiting digital spaces like fan pages, tickers, and influencers. Several pages were taken down by the platforms after the intervention of the regulator, again highlighting effective coordination between the self-regulator and government regulators.

- Of the 890 ads flagged for illegal betting, 831 were posts from Instagram, which were in the form of tickers and tags displayed on fan and community pages that directed users to offshore betting platforms. In addition, ASCI identified 50 websites/social media pages and 9 influencer posts promoting illegal betting apps and platforms.
- Ads making greenwashing claims:
 - A total of 100 ads were reviewed, of which 99% were identified through ASCI's proactive monitoring. Every single ad required modifications due to misleading green claims.
 - 28% of cases were escalated to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting for non-compliance of the ASCI Code. It may be noted that such ads are also in potential violation of the recent guidelines released by the Central Consumer Protection Authority.
- With more advertisers volunteering to resolve complaints without contest, ASCI reduced its average turnaround time from 30 to 18 days. This has led to improved efficiency and speed, allowing ASCI to focus on higher-order violations.

Manisha Kapoor, CEO of ASCI, remarked, "Our work in partnership with government regulators in sectors such as betting and realty is creating an impact. While there is a long way to go, such partnerships are able to create an impetus for better oversight. Greenwashing is another area where we released guidelines easier in 2024, as this will remain an area of focus for us. With constant progress in reducing our turn-around time for complaint management, ASCI's deep experience and tech-supported efforts are evolving to provide better protection to the consumers of India."

For advertisers, the findings serve as a call to action to prioritize compliance and transparency. For consumers, this report underlines ASCI's role in providing a trusted mechanism to fight objectionable advertising.

[Click Here to Read the Full Report](#)

About the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

The ASCI, established in 1985, is committed to the cause of self-regulation in advertising, ensuring the protection of consumer interests. ASCI seeks to ensure that advertisements conform to its Code for Self-Regulation, which requires advertisements to be legal, decent, honest, and truthful and not hazardous or harmful while observing fairness in competition. ASCI looks into complaints across all media, such as print, TV, radio, hoardings, SMS, emailers, internet/website, product packaging, brochures, promotional material, point of sale material, etc. ASCI has collaboratively worked with various government bodies, including the Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the Ministry of AYUSH, and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB). In August 2023, the ASCI Academy, a flagship program of ASCI, was launched to build the capacity of all stakeholders to create responsible and progressive advertising. ASCI Academy aims to raise standards of advertising content through training, education, outreach, and research on the preventive aspects of advertising self-regulation.

The Advertising Standards Council of India	Avian WE
Manisha Kapoor – CEO & SG, ASCI manisha@ascionline.in	Suman Das Sarma M: +91 98200 51946 sumans@avianwe.com
Hilda Macwan M: +91 966 5050 812 hilda@ascionline.in	Ashna Malpe M: +91 8850213268 ashnam@avianwe.com