

# Press Release



## More than two-thirds of India's Top Digital Stars In Violation of Influencer Disclosure Guidelines: ASCI Report

- Study of "Top 100 Digital Stars", 69% non-compliant with ASCI and CCPA guidelines
- 110 Million+ followers exposed to undisclosed brand promotions on account of top influencers
- Fashion, Telecom, and Personal Care among top non-compliant sectors
- 93% overall compliance achieved post-ASCI Intervention, 7% escalated to regulator

**Mumbai, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025:** The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has released the Top Influencer Compliance Scorecard, revealing that 69% of India's Top 100 Digital Stars failed to meet Guidelines for influencers on social media. Prominent and hard-to-miss disclosures are mandated in the case of any material connection, not only as per ASCI's [Guidelines for Influencers Advertising in Digital Media](#) but also the Central Consumer Protection Authority's (CCPA) Guidelines.

The study analyzed brand-promotion posts by influencers featuring in [Forbes India's Top 100 Digital Stars 2024](#) across Instagram and YouTube between September and November 2024. With a combined reach of over 110 million, these influencers set industry trends and are role models for other influencers. However, the findings highlight worrying gaps in advertising transparency, raising concerns about the non-compliant practices in influencer campaigns. The results call for urgent action from advertisers, agencies, and influencers to align with compliance requirements in order to avoid regulatory consequences. It is worth noting that the CCPA guidelines specifically mention that failure to disclose material connection in the manner prescribed can invite strict penalties under the law.

### Key Highlights of the Report:

- Of the 100 posts scrutinised, 29% carried adequate disclosures; 2% cases were dismissed as influencers were able to provide evidence of no material connection. In 69% of cases, non-disclosure violations were confirmed.
- 56.8% of the violations pertained to absence of the disclosure label, and 43.2% cases pertained to disclosures being buried in hashtags and not being prominently displayed as required by ASCI and CCPA guidelines.
- In 59 out of the 69 cases, non-compliant influencers agreed to correct their posts without contest, 4 cases agreed to correct after jury recommendations, and 5 (7%) cases were escalated to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) for non-compliance. In one case, compliance confirmation is awaited.
- Fashion & Lifestyle (27.5%), Telecom Products (21.7%), and Personal Care (13%) sectors emerged as the top three violators and accounted for 62% of the violations
- Overall, 93% of investigated influencers complied with ASCI recommendations after intervention.

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**Manisha Kapoor, CEO & Secretary-General, ASCI, said,** *"The results of our exercise show that even top influencers have a disappointing rate of adherence to the principles of transparency and audience trust. There is an urgent need for agencies, influencers, and brands to take note of this and course-correct. With influencer advertising attracting mainstream advertising budgets, it is concerning to note the failure of this ecosystem to get its act together in building a mindset of responsibility and compliance. Brands working with influencers should be careful to select those who respect the law and their audiences. Likewise, influencers who value their own reputations need to push back against brands that ask them to flout the law. We hope this report serves as a wake-up call for influencers, talent agencies, and brands."*

The report also lists resources that can help influencers get better acquainted with the guidelines and laws to maintain ethical advertising practices.

ASCI has been working extensively in the area of influencer advertising and has processed over 6000 cases since the launch of its influencer guidelines in 2021. ASCI recently released an advisory asking influencers on the LinkedIn platform to ensure adherence to its guidelines and the law.

The report is available for download on the ASCI website: [CLICK HERE](#)

## ABOUT 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, the 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.

<b>The Advertising Standards Council of India</b>	<b>Avian WE</b>
Manisha Kapoor, CEO & SG, ASCI <a href="mailto:manisha@ascionline.in">manisha@ascionline.in</a>	Suman Das Sarma   M: +91 98200 51946 <a href="mailto:sumans@avianwe.com">sumans@avianwe.com</a>
Hilda Macwan   M: +91 966 5050 812	Kavita Nagavekar   M: +91 96191 38779

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[hilda@ascionline.in](mailto:hilda@ascionline.in)

[kavitan@avianwe.com](mailto:kavitan@avianwe.com)