

Commercial Approvals

Submission on TCF Mobile Messaging Services Code

Suggest that the rules governing television advertising be consolidated into an 'idiots guide'.

REQUIREMENTS FOR TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS FEATURING CHARGABLE MESSAGING SERVICES

All commercials promoting text messaging services must contain the following:

- Clear price point information. Use of the term 'standard rates' is no longer acceptable.
- Any SMS messaging service described as 'free' must have no associated costs – any messages following the initial message being advertised must also be free.
- A disclaimer for any associated data charges e.g. 'data charges may apply'
- All commercials require directions to the full terms and conditions of the SMS service e.g. 'see website for details'.

In addition all subscription messaging services must meet the following requirements:

- Voiceover must include the words 'subscribe' and/or 'subscription'
- Clear disclosure of message frequency and overall length of subscription e.g. '2 messages per week until 21/9/10'
- Disclaimer must contain details of the 'STOP' command for unsubscribing
- Written confirmation from a Code signatory that the backend mechanics comply with the Code

All disclaimers presented as on-screen text must meet reasonable standards of legibility with regard to font size, style and colour, and duration of message.

We I think it should be explicitly stated that "text cost 20c on Vodafone and Telecom and 9c on 2Degrees" or something like "Text cost no more than 20c/text".

The terms "Standard rates" and "Standard Charges" are ambiguous and don't actually alert the customer to what they are going to be charged. Plus for many (if not most) customers, 20c per text is not 'standard'.