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NAD Recommends P&G Modify, Discontinue Certain Claims for Olay Ultra Moisture Bar Following Unilever Challenge

New York, NY – May 8, 2015 – The National Advertising Division has recommended that the Procter & Gamble Company modify or discontinue consumer preference claims conveyed in certain print advertising for the company’s Olay Ultra Moisture Beauty Bar. The claims at issue were challenged by Unilever United States, Inc., the maker of Dove white beauty bar.

NAD is an investigative unit of the advertising industry’s system of self-regulation. It is administered by the Council of Better Business Bureaus.

Unilever challenged express claims that included:

- *“Even Dove bar users prefer Olay Ultra Moisture bar versus Dove white bar. Make the switch to Olay”*

- *“More women prefer Olay Ultra Moisture versus the leading white bar”*
- *“... Olay Ultra Moisture delivers deep moisturizers to the skin while helping to wash away dry surface cells. It’s specially formulated with a creamy, luxurious lather, for soft smooth skin. Even Dove bar users prefer Olay Ultra Moisture bar vs. Dove white bar. Your sweat sessions have paid off. Now it’s time to raise the beauty bar.”*

NAD examined whether the advertising at issue implied that Dove users prefer Olay Bar over Dove Bar on all attributes, including mildness, moisturization, later and fragrance. NAD also reviewed whether the advertising implied that the Olay Bar leaves skin softer, smoother, and more moisturized than Dove Bar or that the Dove product does not provide benefits or is detrimental to one’s skin.

The challenger contended that the advertising campaign encourages Dove Bar users to “make the switch” to the Olay product with express and implied claims that the Olay Bar is both preferred over – and better for one’s skin – than the Dove Bar.

The advertiser asserted that its “Raise the Bar” advertisement was carefully composed to avoid an inference of unsupported comparative claims and was very measured in its creation with clear contextualization: (1) there is no image of the Dove product, logo, or packaging, (2) the preference claim is not in the headline but, rather, appears within the body copy; and (3) the monadic claims that “It’s [Olay] specifically formulated with a creamy, luxurious lather for soft, smooth skin” appears in the first paragraph of the body copy whereas the consumer preference claim is in a separate paragraph.

As a preliminary matter, NAD noted that P&G took necessary action in permanently discontinuing from its social-media channels its “Break the Habit” video and claims that likened the use of Dove White Bar to a “bad habit, as well as claims that characterized Dove as “regular soap.”

Turning to P&G’s print advertising, NAD concluded that the advertiser’s preference claims in the context in which they appeared in the “Raise the Bar” and “Body of Work” advertisements, conveyed a superior performance message that the evidence did not support.

Following its review of the evidence in the record, including a consumer-perception study entered by the challenger and a consumer preference study offered by the advertiser, NAD recommended that the advertiser discontinue its claim that, “Even Dove bar users prefer Olay Ultra Moisture bar versus Dove white bar.”

NAD further recommended that P&G modify the claim “More women prefer Olay Ultra Moisture versus the leading white bar” to include the qualifying language “among those who expressed a preference.”

P&G, in its advertiser’s statement, said the company will take NAD’s recommendations into account in future advertising.

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