



GET ACCESS TO *CMO'S*
SPECIAL REPORTS,
FEATURES, PROFILES



Outdoor Media Association to tackle obesity

Hoping to impact Australia's obesity crisis by limiting the advertising of discretionary food and drink products near schools

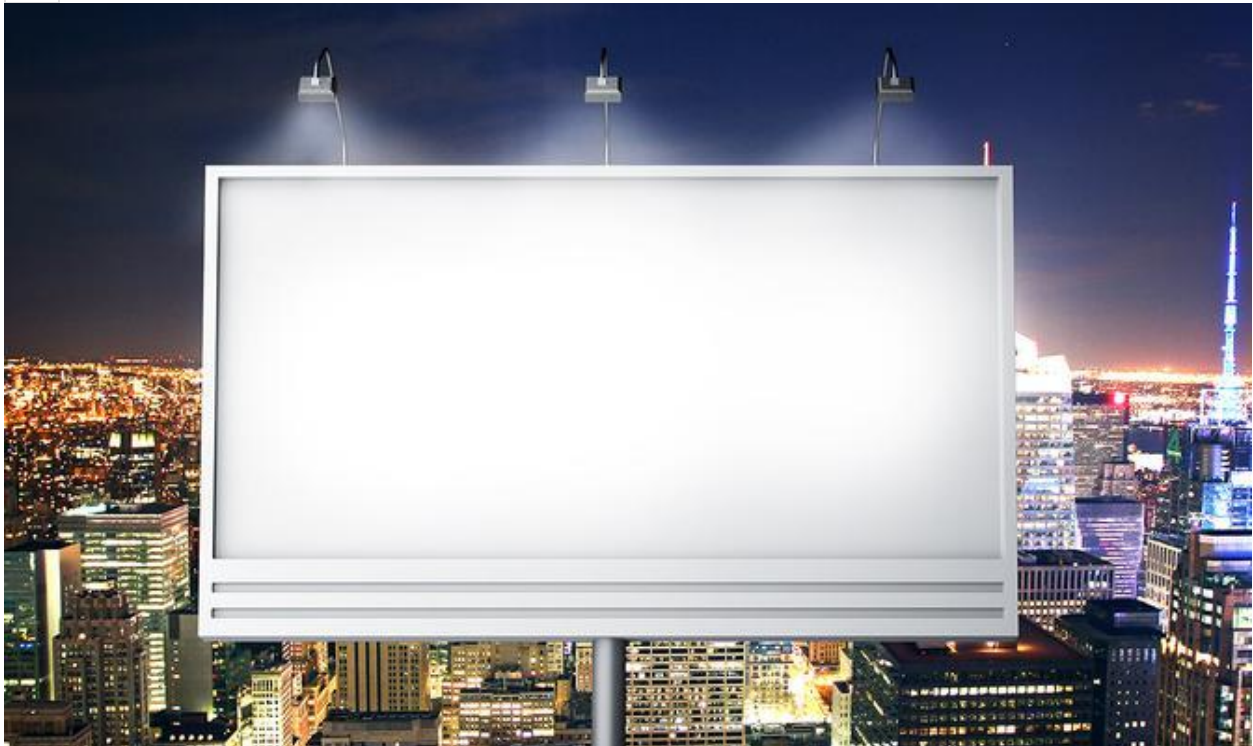
• [VANESSA MITCHELL](#) (CMO)

• 24 FEBRUARY, 2020 09:01

• Share

•
•
•

• [Print](#)



[The Outdoor Media Association \(OMA\)](#) is hoping to impact Australia's obesity crisis by limiting the advertising of discretionary food and drink products near schools.

The world-first health and wellbeing policy has seen the [OOH industry](#) unite with OMA to help Australians make healthy choices. The industry will also donate up to \$3 million each year to promote healthy diets and lifestyle choices on its signs.

The OMA has closely consulted with industry, food groups, advertisers, health promotion experts and government and conducted extensive research on Australian and international best practice to inform the policy, it said.

The policy restricts the advertising of discretionary food and drink products on out-of-home signs within a 150 metre sightline of a school, and aims to meet community expectations and support government efforts to tackle overweight and obesity in Australia.

The policy also includes: Food and drink advertising to be based on Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Health Star Rating system; full creative support from the OOH industry to create efficacious and meaningful campaigns that will reach the targeted audience; compliance monitoring of the national restrictions with annual reports provided to state and federal governments; annual meetings to be held with key industry stakeholders; and health promotion experts to assess the implementation and efficacy of the restrictions and the educational programs.

"The Health and Wellbeing Policy reflects the fact that the out-of-home industry has listened to the community and government and pro-actively introduced a new voluntary self-regulating code to address what has become a critical issue in Australian society," OMA CEO, Charmaine Moldrich, said. "Almost one in four children is overweight or obese and this complex problem requires a comprehensive set of policies and programs to help Australians lead healthier lives.

"We are concurrently placing a strong emphasis on education with \$3 million of advertising available for health promotion campaigns every year.

"The industry is proud to take a leadership position with the world's first industry-backed, national restriction policy for discretionary food on outdoor advertising. As experts in advertising, we want to use the power of out-of-home to make a real difference."

The OMA consulted with the Australian Food & Grocery Council (AFGC), the [Australian Association of National Advertisers \(AANA\)](#), the Cancer Council, Diabetes Australia and the Heart Foundation on the new policy.



READ MORE [Advertising industry code of ethics due for review](#)

Moldrich said while the outdoor industry is small in terms of numbers, it has a large impact in terms of interactions, so it sees it as a responsibility to lead the public health conversation.

"It is a privilege for us to be in the public space and I suppose our radar antenna is quite tuned in to what's going on in terms of prevailing community standards," she told *CMO*.

"The community itself was not asking for this, but it is a health issue in our community and we see it as our corporate social responsibility. Outdoor is a media channel that is quite powerful because we're in

the public space. This is a baby step in terms of the bigger picture, as this issue needs a very systematic, coordinated approach from government, community and business. But we thought, let's lead this in the media field."

The OMA and industry has previously undertaken National Missing Persons Week campaigns with the Federal Police for 12 years. And recently, it had a partnership with Drink Wise, where the messaging was around 'Your children inherit more than your looks'.



READ MORE [Boycott or buycott - how brand purpose can make the difference](#)

"We had 66 per cent of people who have seen the campaign say they changed their behaviour in terms of drinking in front of children," Moldrich said. "So what we're starting to see is some traction from our messaging in the public space, because that's where you get mass audiences now. We know 93 per cent of Australia's population is out and about, so we're getting probably 24 million Australians every two days seeing up to 30 outdoor signs. So we can start to actually make a difference."

Moldrich said the outdoor industry was all on-board, noting the 10 members who sell media space are really aware of the partnership they have with the community.

"They really forward thinking, so this policy follows on from our placement policy, which we put out about 12 years ago, so the industry always puts forward a policy and then puts money into running campaigns to make sure policies are amplified," she said.

Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) CEO, John Broome, said advocating high ethical and professional standards across Australia's marketing community is at the centre of the AANA's work.

"We support the outdoor industry's approach to discretionary food and drink advertising," he said.

With more than a decade's experience in implementing and monitoring targeted geographical 'place-based' policies, the OOH industry has previously met community expectations around the advertising of alcohol, gambling and adult products, ensuring these products are not seen within a 150 metre sightline of schools.

The new policy will come into effect on 1 July 2020.

Follow CMO on Twitter: [@CMOAustralia](#), take part in the CMO conversation on LinkedIn: [CMO ANZ](#), follow our regular updates [via CMO Australia's LinkedIn company page](#), or join us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CMOAustralia>.