

Digital media account for 97% of violations in ASCI's Half-Yearly Complaints Report (2025-26)

- Offshore/Illegal betting, personal care, healthcare, food and education emerged as the top sectors breaching ASCI's guidelines, accounting for 90% of violations recorded
- Self-regulation, tighter surveillance deliver faster ad clean-up – average resolution time was 17 days
- ASCI reviewed 6,841 complaints and investigated 6,117 ads; 98% required modification
- Top influencers continue to be major violators

Mumbai, November 11, 2025: The Advertising Standards Council of India's (ASCI's) Half-Yearly Complaints Report (2025–26) shows that digital media continue to dominate advertising violations, accounting for 97% of the total.

Between April and September 2025, ASCI reviewed 6,841 complaints and investigated 6,117 advertisements. Of these, 98% required modification. There was a sharp 70% rise in complaints and a 102% surge in ads processed over the same period last year – the outcome of ASCI's intensified surveillance, consumer vigilance and collaboration with regulators such as the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Illegal betting (4,575 ads and 3 others reported as surrogates), personal care (367), healthcare (332), food and beverage (211), and education (71) emerged as the top five violative sectors. Together, they accounted for nearly 90% of cases processed.

Highlights from the report

- **Offshore/Illegal betting remains India's most violative category**
 - Of the 4,575 ads flagged, 99% were identified through ASCI's proactive surveillance. These were shared with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre for takedown.
 - These ads, often disguised as gaming promotions or influencer collaborations, continue to reach consumers through digital media despite being legally prohibited.
- **Digital media dominates**
 - 97% of the total violations originated on digital platforms, led by Meta (78.9%), websites (13.7%), Google (4.6%) and property portals (3%).
 - Traditional media, such as TV and print, accounted for less than 3% of cases.
 - The findings reinforce ASCI's continued focus on digital transparency and accountability.
- **Influencers under sharper scrutiny**
 - ASCI investigated 1,173 influencer advertisements, with 98% requiring modification.
 - Nearly 59% promoted products that are disallowed by law.
 - 76% of India's top digital stars, as per the Forbes list, were found in violation of the disclosure norms required by ASCI and the Central Consumer Protection Authority. This sets a poor standard for authenticity and honesty in influencer advertising.
 - On the positive side, voluntary compliance among influencers hit 90%. This shows that, when violations are spotted, influencers are willing to correct them. However, many still count on their violations not being spotted at all. The violations mainly included failing to disclose paid collaborations
- **Rise in uncontested cases drives effective resolution, voluntary compliance**
 - 62% of ads in this half-yearly period found to be violative were withdrawn or modified without contest after ASCI's intimation vs 59% in 2024-25 (overall FY)

- Overall voluntary compliance rates rose to 88% in this half-yearly period vs 83% in 2024-25 (overall FY).
- Average complaint resolution time was 17 days.

- **Sectoral trends show persistent challenges**

- **Personal Care:** Of the 367 ads under scrutiny, 64% of ad decisions were uncontested; skincare led the category's violations
- **Healthcare:** Of the 332 ads under scrutiny, 82% of cases scrutinised violated the Drugs and Magic Remedies Act (1954).
- **Food and Beverage:** Of the 211 ads under scrutiny, 61% of violations involved misleading health or nutrition claims.
- **Education:** Of the 71 ads under scrutiny, 45% percent of ads found to be violative were withdrawn voluntarily after ASCI's intervention.

ASCI's enhanced monitoring systems, as well as working with digital platforms and regulators, have significantly bolstered early detection and reporting of violations. The rise in consumer complaints from 306 in 2024 to 405 in 2025 in the same half-yearly period also points to public awareness of responsible advertising and greater trust in self-regulation.

Manisha Kapoor, CEO and Secretary General, ASCI, said: *"The widespread exposure to betting ads despite the ban, as well as the disappointing standards set by top influencers, are some challenges that have come to the fore in our recent work. Consumer trust can be fragile in the digital age, and such practices create problems for the industry at large. ASCI is however, pleased to note a strong increase in uncontested cases, as well as in rates of voluntary compliance, underscoring its growing role as the first line of defence. For repeat and wilful violators, stringent action by regulators would set a strong deterrent and help protect consumer interests. We continue sharing information and data with the statutory regulators for action within the legal framework, and collaborate and cooperate with all stakeholders to build a strong advertising regulatory framework for consumer protection."*

For advertisers, the findings are a reminder to strengthen compliance and continue with due diligence, especially in sensitive and regulated sectors such as gaming, healthcare and personal care. For consumers, the report reinforces ASCI's role as a trusted, accessible platform for addressing objectionable or misleading advertising.

Please find the report here: [Link](#)

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 Real Estate Regulatory Authority of Maharashtra as well as Telangana, 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.

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