

ASCI launches its first ever influencer-led consumer awareness campaign on greenwashing and dark patterns

Mumbai, February 26, 2026: The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has launched its first ever influencer-led campaign to raise awareness about greenwashing and dark patterns, two practices manipulating consumer choice in the digital age. This is part of ASCI Academy's agenda to educate consumers to navigate advertising in a more informed way. In recent times, greenwashing and dark patterns have emerged as key concerns.

The greenwashing campaign will educate consumers to ask critical questions around sustainability claims, the decoding of eco-labels and distinguishing credible commitments from buzzwords. Influencers will also educate viewers about dark patterns, such as basket sneaking, hidden costs or confusing choices that nudge them into taking unintended decisions. The influencers partnering with ASCI are Shraddha Jain (@aiyyoshreddha), Aalekh Kapoor (@aalekhkapoor), Sakchi Jain (@ca.sakchijain), Ashutosh Pratap Singh (@technical_sapien), Pankti Pandey (@zerowasteadda), Vinod Kumar (@techsupreme_), Aisha Ahmed (@aisharahmed) and Sangeeth and Kavya (@lifeonroads_)

Manisha Kapoor, CEO and Secretary General, ASCI, said: "Consumer Education is a key pillar of ASCI Academy. In addition to Ad-Wise, which is our school programme to build advertising literacy amongst a million school students, we are hoping to harness the credibility of voices trusted in the digital sphere to raise awareness around the two misleading practices of greenwashing and dark patterns. We aim to empower consumers to spot red flags and critically question claims they encounter in advertising."

ASCI Academy's recently launched e-learning course titled 'Ethical UI/UX Designs' is another intervention that offers advertisers the tools to eliminate dark patterns. The course covers deceptive tactics, their impact on consumers and compliant alternatives aligned with ASCI codes.

ASCI's studies and guidelines have steadily been spreading stakeholder awareness about misleading practices. For example, the 'Conscious Patterns' report launched in 2024 revealed that 52 out of the 53 top Indian apps use dark patterns like drip pricing and privacy deception, often impairing user autonomy. ASCI's guidelines complement the Ministry of Consumer Affairs' Central Consumer Protection Authority regulations on dark patterns by targeting deceptive advertising-specific design practices. ASCI's guidelines on environmental and green claims, introduced in 2024, have helped remove several misleading environmental claims in advertising. Since the launch of the guidelines, ASCI has processed 236 such cases, all of which required modification.

The various education initiatives are done under the aegis of the ASCI academy, which is supported by Diageo India, Hindustan Unilever Ltd, Mondelez International, Nestle, Cipla Health, Coca-Cola, Colgate, Games 24x7, Pepsico, P&G, Kenvue and Bajaj Auto.

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,

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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.

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