

ASCI Releases Guidelines for Responsible Labelling of Synthetically Generated Content in Advertising

- As AI takes centrestage in advertising, guidelines focus on consumer impact rather than on the technology
- Guidelines emphasise transparency where synthetic content materially influences consumer understanding or decision-making
- Will take effect three months from date of publication

Mumbai, September 29, 2026: The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) today released its Guidelines for Responsible Labelling of Synthetically Generated Content in Advertising, setting out when advertisers need to disclose the use of synthetically generated content (SGC) and what uses are not allowed. The guidelines follow stakeholder consultations on the draft guidelines released in May.

As brands increasingly use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create and enhance advertising content, the guidelines focus on how such content can affect consumers. SGC can be misleading or harmful when it creates unrealistic expectations, takes advantage of vulnerable populations, shows unsafe situations, uses a person's likeness without their consent, or presents false or misleading information. All advertisements using SGC must comply with the ASCI Code.

The guidelines will come into effect three months from the date of publication. The guidelines set out four key areas to help advertisers determine when disclosure is required and what uses of SGC are not permissible:

1. Prohibited Content: Advertisements that are illegal, infringe on rights, contain misleading claims or violate the ASCI Code remain prohibited, irrespective of whether an AI label is used. This includes:

- Fabricating endorsements or testimonials
- Exaggerating product results or features in misleading ways through synthetic representations
- Representing non-existent locations or settings as real such as to mislead consumers
- Using unauthorised copyrighted work
- Using deepfakes or an individual's likeness without consent

2. Mandatory Labelling Required: Labelling is mandatory where SGC materially influences consumer decisions and the absence of disclosure could mislead consumers. This includes:

- Use of synthetically generated influencers and ambassadors
- Replication of a real person's likeness or voice with consent for personalised messaging
- Fabricated events or settings that may affect consumers' understanding of the advertised product or service
- Demonstrations regarding products that do not currently exist
- SGC-generated sound effects that are highly relevant to a product's core features such as headphones
- Paid or sponsored AI-generated product suggestions, which must specifically be labelled "Sponsored by [Brand]"

3. No Labelling Required: Disclosure is not required where SGC has no material impact on a consumer's ability to make an informed choice. This includes:

- Routine editing, such as colour correction, light adjustment, noise reduction and minor blemish removal
- Decorative or ambient elements
- Obvious fantastical effects
- Administrative and text-based uses, such as generating advertising copy
- Accessibility applications, including subtitles, translations and accurate audio descriptions

4. Disclosure Labels and Execution: Where disclosure is required, brands may use labels such as "Audio/Video created using AI" or "Audio/Video enhanced using AI", including labels provided by advertising platforms. Brands may also use alternative labels that accurately inform consumers about the nature of the synthetic content. Disclosures should follow the ASCI Code's guidelines on disclaimers, wherever applicable.

Manisha Kapoor, Secretary General and CEO, ASCI, said: "The use of AI in advertising is evolving rapidly, and our approach must evolve with it while keeping the consumer at the centre. These guidelines provide for practical transparency requirements, when a consumer's understanding of an advertisement may be adversely impacted without an AI label. Importantly, it clarifies where the mere use of an AI label may not make an otherwise misleading advertisement acceptable. The responsibility remains with advertisers to ensure that the end communication is honest, transparent and compliant with the ASCI Code."

All SGC-based advertisements will continue to be assessed against the ASCI Code in its entirety.

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 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 programme 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.

The Advertising Standards Council of India	AVIAN We.
Ashraf Engineer ashraf@ascionline.in	Stuti Agnihotri stutia@avianwe.com
	Tirsha Roychoudhary tirshar@avianwe.com