

R3 sale: Africa Padel faces scrutiny over third anniversary promotion

By  Karabo Ledwaba

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The Directorate of the Advertising Regulatory Board (ARB) recently issued a ruling concerning a complaint lodged against sports retailer Africa Padel's third-anniversary sale promotion. The complaint raised concerns about the misleading nature of the advertising, particularly regarding the availability of items at the advertised price.



Source: www.unsplash.com

Upon thorough examination of the evidence and arguments presented, the ARB concluded that Africa Padel's advertising was indeed misleading. Despite the company's claims of selling items at the advertised price to a limited number of customers, the promotion failed to disclose adequately the scarcity of the discounted items.

Furthermore, the Directorate noted that the items were not easily accessible on the landing page of the website, indicating a possible intention to drive traffic rather than facilitate sales of the discounted items.



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The advertiser said this in its defence:

- Products were available for purchase at the advertised price of R3 each during the specified sale period, supported by proof of purchases made at 2:13am, 2:15am, and 2:19am on Sunday, 3 March 2024.
- The promised R3 per item products were available for purchase but not prominently featured on the front page of the website, requiring customers to navigate to find the discounted items.
- An email from Shopify alerted the advertiser to a technical issue with Payfast, resulting in overselling of products due to communication issues between platforms. To address this, the advertiser promptly removed the R3 products from the website to mitigate overselling.
- A "Birthday Sale is Live" post made at 8am on Sunday aimed to reaffirm the ongoing sale but was later removed due to customer backlash. Updates were provided via WhatsApp groups and social media to inform customers of stock

availability.

- The sale aimed to reward loyal customers by offering specially selected items at R3 in celebration of the advertiser's third birthday, expressing gratitude for continued support.
- Despite challenges, the recent sale generated over R40,000 in sales value over two days, with 14 customers receiving items at the discounted price, reflecting the advertiser's commitment to rewarding loyalty.

However the ARB ruled that Africa Padel's advertising contravened Clause 4.2.1 of Section II and Clause 16 of Section III of the Code of Advertising Practice. Although the promotion has ended, the Advertiser has been instructed to consider this ruling when preparing future promotions of a similar nature.

"The Directorate is therefore of the opinion that, based on the Advertiser's own submissions, and the copies of the records supplied by the Advertiser, the Advertiser did not have enough stock to supply the likely demand created by its advertisement. The Advertisement gave no indication of the extremely low number of items that would, in fact, be available for R3. This is misleading," said the ARB.

ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

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