

The challenges for advertisers today



By [Richard Clarke](#)

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In a world where advertisers are being targeted by legislators globally regarding the advertising of products - from toys to alcohol - as well as advertising to children, the challenges are to keep abreast of legislation in the global village and on your own doorstep.

Stephan Loerke, managing Director, World Federation of Marketers, spoke on Friday about the challenges for advertisers today. Loerke talked about the need to defend the right to advertise responsibly, but stressed that no freedom comes without responsibility.

"Advertising has been the scapegoat when it comes to obesity and advertising as well as targeting kids with advertising messages," says Loerke. "The threats that are emerging for advertisers are increased materialism of the young, increased obesity, alcohol abuse, financial debt and deaths on the roads."

There are strategies specific to certain countries that attempt to deal with this problem and Ireland, for example, have focused on the irresponsible alcohol advertising, while Italy look at banning ad actors under 14 years, and Greece are looking at a ban on advertising toys.

"Ireland are also looking at mandatory health warnings on confectionary and soft drinks ads as well as prohibiting the use of celebrities, sports stars and comic book heroes promoting food and drinks."

There are also calls for bans on fast food advertising in Australia, New Zealand, UK, France, Brazil and Thailand, while activists have labeled food 'the new tobacco'.

"These concerns have been around for a while and in the last year or two, the activists and other role players have achieved serious media coverage, so this debate is crossing borders at a fast rate in the global village that is our current world," says Loerke.

"Getting hit by legislation that you did not see coming is not an excuse, as more and more, advertisers are made responsible for how their brand is perceived in the marketplace," concludes Loerke.

ABOUT RICHARD CLARKE

Richard Clarke founded Just Ideas, an ideas factory and implementation unit. He specialises in spotting opportunities, building ideas and watching them fly. Richard is also a freelance writer.

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