

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

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On 29 September 2026, the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) released the *Guidelines for Responsible Labelling of Synthetically Generated Content in Advertising* (Guidelines), following consultation on the draft guidelines issued in May 2026. The Guidelines set out labelling requirements for synthetic content in advertisements and identify prohibited use cases. The Guidelines come into effect three months after the date of publication (i.e., 29 December 2026).

The Guidelines categorise advertisements into 3 categories: (a) advertisements where use of synthetically generated content (SGC) is prohibited, (b) advertisements where the use of SGC warrants a disclosure, and (c) advertisements where the use of SGC does not warrant a disclosure. The Guidelines also provide a useful framework for advertisers using SGC to determine the categorisation, focusing on its effect on consumers rather than the technology used to create it.

While the Guidelines provide assessment questions and illustrative examples, advertisers may encounter edge cases when determining whether SGC materially influences consumer decisions or creates a misleading impression if left unlabelled. In practice, advertisers should review SGC as part of their advertising approval processes, document the basis for their labelling decisions, and coordinate with agencies and platform partners on the appropriate disclosures. Advertisers should pay particular attention to AI-generated product recommendations that are paid for or sponsored and ensure that the commercial relationship is clearly disclosed to consumers.

### Key Provisions of the Guidelines

For the purposes of the Guidelines, SGC means “any audio, visual, or audio-visual content in an advertisement that is artificially or algorithmically originated, created, generated, modified, or materially altered using a computer resource, to appear real, authentic or true and depicts or portrays any individual or event in a manner that is likely to be understood, perceived or believed to be true or as indistinguishable from a natural person or a real-world event.” Put simply, SGC means any computer-created or materially altered audio, image or video used in an advertisement that appears real or portrays a person or event as though it were genuine. An example is an AI-generated video depicting an event that never occurred in a manner that appears realistic.

While the Guidelines do not retain the draft guidelines’ classification of SGC into high, medium and low risk categories, the underlying distinction is retained, with SGC in advertisements classified into three categories, namely, (i) prohibited content, (ii) content requiring a label, and (iii) content requiring no label (discussed below). The Guidelines emphasise that the assessment of an advertisement must be based on consumer outcomes (i.e., its impact on consumers) rather than solely on the technology used to generate SGC. Importantly, the Guidelines add a specific compliance layer for advertisements that use SGC (in addition to Chapter I of the ASCI Code, which already bans misleading, false or unsubstantiated advertising claims). The key provisions of the Guidelines are discussed below.

1. **Prohibited content** – An advertisement that is illegal, infringes third-party rights, makes misleading claims or otherwise contravenes the ASCI Code is prohibited even if it is appropriately labelled for SGC. The Guidelines provide examples of such content, including (i) fabricated endorsements or

testimonials, or (ii) synthetic depictions that misleadingly exaggerate product results, such as unachievable weight loss outcomes. Advertisers should therefore assess both the claims made in an advertisement and the manner in which a product is depicted to ensure that such claims are truthful, substantiated and transparent.

2. *SGC requiring mandatory labelling* – An advertisement containing SGC must be labelled where the SGC materially influences consumer decisions and its non-disclosure would mislead consumers. The Guidelines also provide examples of such content, including (i) the replication of a real person's face or voice for an endorsement with the individual's consent for personalised messaging, (ii) demonstrations of products that do not yet exist, and (iii) AI-generated sponsored product recommendations. Hence, the distinction between prohibited content and content that may be used with a label is fact-sensitive, particularly where SGC is used to depict product performance or endorsements. Additionally, where AI is used for paid or sponsored product recommendations, the disclosure must also clearly identify the sponsorship, using 'Sponsored by [Brand]'.

ASCI has further indicated that labels such as "Audio/Video created using AI" or "Audio/Video enhanced using AI" may be used to disclose SGC in advertisements. However, advertisers may adopt other appropriate formulations depending on the context. ASCI's disclaimer guidelines will continue to apply where relevant.

3. *SGC where no label is required* – No label is required where an advertisement contains only minor modifications or uses SGC in a manner that does not materially affect a consumer's ability to make an informed choice. Examples include routine edits that do not alter the substance or core claims of the advertisement, purely decorative synthetic elements unrelated to the product's actual capabilities or promise, and accessibility features such as subtitles and closed captions.

The Guidelines apply to all advertisers deploying SGC, and SGC advertisements remain subject to the full ASCI Code. Non-compliance will be treated as a contravention of the ASCI Code, potentially leading to recommendations for modification or withdrawal.

## Comments

The Guidelines will require advertisers to assess whether their claims and representations when deploying SGC are truthful and substantiated, and whether disclosure is required. The Guidelines also emphasise upon prohibited advertisement which will continue to violate ASCI code even if appropriately labelled.

The Guidelines sit alongside other frameworks addressing synthetic content, including the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, as amended in February 2026 (IT Rules). The IT Rules require intermediaries to label all synthetically generated content, whereas the Guidelines apply to advertisers and require labelling only where the content materially influences consumer decisions. Compliance with ASCI's Guidelines should therefore be assessed alongside any applicable legal requirements and obligations that may arise under the IT Rules.

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