

NZDJA

Social Media and Judges

by Ray Greer

There is no disputing that advertising works and has been around for us for all of our lives. We are subjected to it constantly, and we have learnt to apply many levels of acceptance to it. This barrage of advertising ranges from basic food staples, to luxury nice to have items. If we were all to accept all forms of advertising as 'must have', we would have a house full of never used items and a bank account that is over used.

The level of advertising is often controlled by simple measures – the amount that one can afford for such activities, and in pure business sense, what is the correct amount of money one can spend for the returns that may be expected.

This is quite a simplistic way of viewing advertising, and yes we don't always buy a product or a service because we saw it advertised. The reason we are in that position is that as human beings we are blessed with the powers of reasoning, and we have the ability to sift through it all and determine which is wheat, and which is chaff.

Again I am saying nothing that is not new, we deal with this in our everyday lives, and we survive and more than often most of us get it right. However, there is the undeniable position that we often purchase items which we didn't really need due to slick or relentless advertising, or often we find out that the product is not what we thought or understood what it was. In our country there are many pieces of legislation in place with respect to advertising and protection for the consumer in an effort to give honesty and value to all parties. These pieces of legislation would never have been introduced if there was not deemed there was a need.

Having laid out some very basic facts about advertising and about life, and how we deal with it in our every-day lives, how does this relate to social media and dog judges? The similarities are strikingly similar, and yet there are no pieces of legislation around to protect the consumer.

Social media has quickly become a very quick and cost effective medium to convey information to a mass audience, and it is set to stay. That information may also include advertising about your dog's success and recent activities, and that information is open to everyone. The consumer here is both the judges themselves and our fellow exhibitors. I have gone to some length in the introduction to explain how we manage advertising in our everyday lives and I don't see any difference as to how judges should handle social media advertising in their judging lives. There is no legislative framework around what may or may not be used, said or presented, the information supplied could well be distorted or at worse photo-shopped, so judges need to be aware of these pitfalls and

at least apply your everyday life skills to advertising that is floated across your bows. Next step is to arm yourself with what you are supposed to have, a thorough knowledge of the breed standard, so an informed decision can be made, and you don't end up with a house full of unwanted purchases.

I would be naïve to suggest that social media advertising is not having an impact on results in the show ring. I have seen and have had reported to me too many instances where it is highly likely that this has been the case. Judges, as consumers, have the ability to provide the answers and solutions here, otherwise we will be asked to judge in situations where the options are fewer and fewer, and only the BIS winner will turn up for exhibition.

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Important Dates

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| 31 January 2017 | Applications for promotion close |
| 21 March 2017 | Theory Examination |
| 15 & 16 July 2017 | Auckland Practical Exams |
| 22 & 23 July 2017 | Wellington Practical Exams (if required) |
| 29 & 30 July 2017 | Christchurch Practical Exams |