



Communication and Advertising Principles

for the Volkswagen Passenger Cars brand



March 2023



Foreword

Dear colleagues,

Our common mission is to manage the Volkswagen Passenger Cars brand in a sustainable, transparent and responsible manner.

Our employees, our customers, our shareholders and the public rightfully deserve communication with respect, integrity and sincerity.

All of us who, on behalf of our brand, engage in communication and advertising messaging, carry part of the responsibility of painting the big picture: respecting our environment and treating all individuals with respect, sincerity and foremost equally. Both internally and externally, online and offline. We all demonstrate this attitude on a daily basis through responsible and conscious actions.

It's important to note that it is not about the initial intention behind our messages, but only about how these messages sit and are translated into our consumers' minds. Our incentive is to act attentively, weigh appropriately and decide farsightedly, every day.

The communication and advertising principles as well as the corresponding decision support help us fulfil our mission and claim. These instruments serve as a compass to preserve the reputation and values of the brand and actively shape the future.



Nelly Kennedy
Chief Marketing Officer

Jens Katemann
Head of Communications
Volkswagen Brand



Preliminary Remarks

The communication and advertising principles complement, among other things, the guidelines of the code of conduct and ensure that our communications, advertising activities and messages are in line with the ethical standards and corporate values of Volkswagen AG.

These principles are in line with our global standard, but also take into account the local and regional rules as well as other specificities such as cultural differences. In addition, the principles provide an overview of critical topics and representations that must be avoided in Volkswagen's communication and advertising.

1. Basic Rules

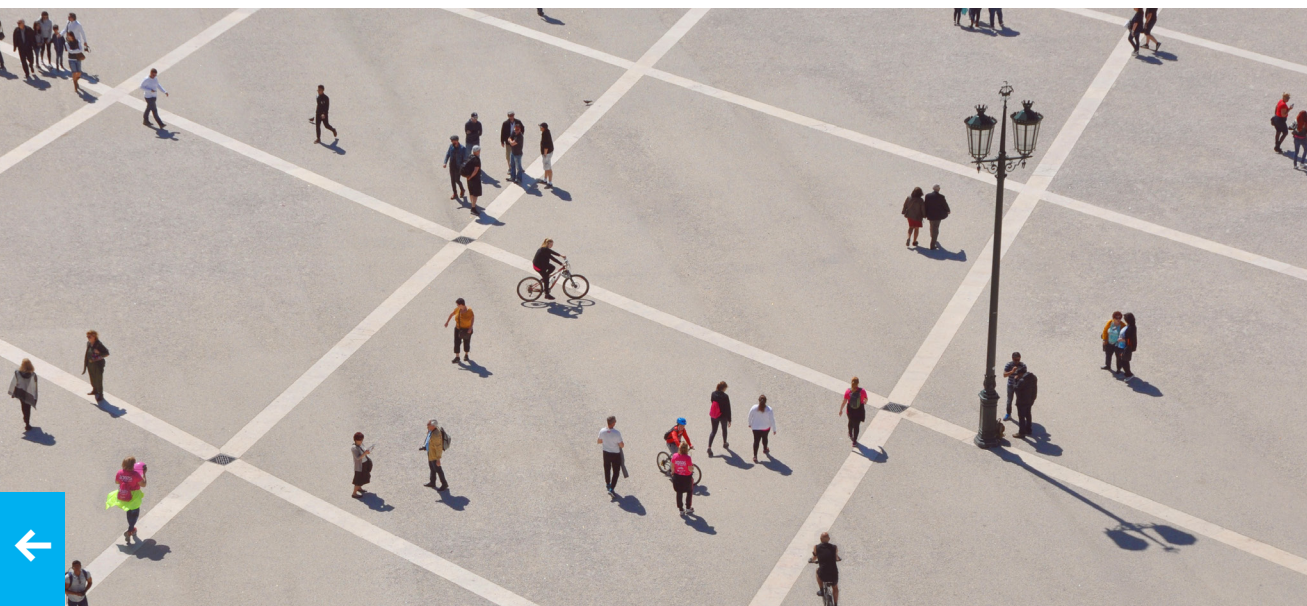
In particular, Volkswagen's communication and advertising activities do not:

- include, accept or tolerate any kind of racism or discrimination
- abuse consumer confidence or exploit lack of experience or knowledge
- contain realistically appearing horror figures
- contain mutilated people
- ridicule people with disabilities instead of promoting their inclusion
- insult or disparage religious beliefs
- portray any act of violence or war
- portray the death of a person, including suicide
- present a risk of imitating dangerous behaviour (e.g. smartphone at the wheel presented as acceptable behaviour)
- disrespect the right of privacy
- infringe rights of third parties (e.g. image copyrights, intellectual property rights)
- name or portray competitors or competing products in a discrediting, inaccurate or disparaging way
- create fear or exploit misfortune and suffering

Volkswagen promotes the following guidelines:

- When using symbols and images which have a basis in a local or indigenous culture, the company analyses the potential impact of commercialization of their symbol or image and obtains the informed consent of the representatives of this culture before using the symbols in product development or marketing processes.
- The material characteristics of the product, service or other subject of our advertising and communications are described, depicted or otherwise portrayed in a manner that is accurate and not false or misleading.
- Volkswagen marketing campaigns are reviewed especially considering vulnerable groups and groups often likely to be discriminated or which need special protection (e.g. children) to ensure that the groups do not feel degraded or the target of hatred or discrimination.
- Volkswagen identifies, assesses and monitors its risks and impacts on vulnerable groups related to content and visuals used in its communication and advertising.
- Anyone who develops communication and advertising assets must actively ensure that content is assessed and evaluated by competent, non-biased, multi-eyes principles.
- People whose names are officially associated or named with the brand must be chosen based on their integrity first (reputation etc.) and be continuously checked. People who are not named are only checked in case of suspicion. This is particularly applied to: public figures, influencers or brand ambassadors.
- Brand ambassadors are natural persons who, because of their reputation, communicative reach and/or status nationally or internationally, communicate orally, in writing or digitally as advocates and/or permit promotional communication of the types described above, including their person. This also includes, for example, testimonials and influencers.

Every agreement must be made in accordance with the applicable legal provisions as well as internal guidelines and processes, and in compliance with integrity and minimum standards.



2. Disparagement and Discrimination

Volkswagen communication and advertising activities do not contain, tolerate or stimulate:

- discrimination against people because of their gender, sexual orientation, skin colour, ancestry, ethnicity, origin, language, culture, religion, faith, political opinion, age, disability, or membership in a group or organisation
- degrading people because they are not in line with prevailing public perceptions in terms of their appearance, behaviour, characteristics or lifestyle
- any statements on violence or the trivialisation of violence towards people
- showing violence or dominant/aggressive behaviour as acceptable
- the impression that a person's dignity is not respected or that people are being objectified
- the reducing of people to their sexuality or suggestions of their sexual orientation
- exaggerated nudity conveying a degradation of gender
- any depictions of sexual or pornographic nature
- stereotypes that imply that a gender or the identification with a non-binary gender concept is inferior or unsuitable for the exercise of certain tasks or of a specific function



3. Children and Young People

Volkswagen communication and advertising activities do not contain, tolerate or stimulate:

- any behaviour of children which is not in accordance with the child's natural expressions, like sarcasm for example
- children in dangerous situations, unless this is needed to explain safety features
- criminal acts or other misconduct
- children as sexual objects
- realistic scenes which might cause stress for or fear to children, e.g. accidents, family conflicts
- any direct offer motivating children to buy or consume a product or service
- any direct invitation from children or to children for persuading their parents or others to purchase the goods or services advertised
- abuse of the special trust that children have in parents, teachers and other people of trust

4. Animals

Volkswagen communication and advertising activities do not contain, tolerate or stimulate:

- violence towards animals
- depictions of sexual or pornographic nature
- abusive behaviour towards animals as acceptable
- content in which animals are treated like objects



5. Environment

Volkswagen communication and advertising activities do not contain, tolerate or stimulate:

- violations of rules which protect the environment
- any kind of damage to the environment as acceptable
- any environment-related inadequate use of vehicles
- making fun of any behaviour aiming at environmental and resource protection

Decision Support Communication and Advertising Principles

The following questions are for reflection and decision making. They are to be answered to the best of your knowledge and conscience. They are carefully checked before publishing advertising and communication pieces. If you might consider answering “no” to one of the questions, kindly rethink your project.



How to use:

- Do the type and content of the advertising or communication pieces correspond to the legal and internal regulations, the code of conduct, the Volkswagen Group essentials and the communication and advertising principles?
(Compliance Check)
- Am I convinced that there is no violation of a prohibition of discrimination/equal treatment? Am I sure people could not feel insulted, stigmatized, degraded or discriminated against by this measure, particularly on the basis of their ethnic or national origin, gender, ideology, culture, religion, sexual orientation, skin colour, language, political views, social origin, age, disability, occupational group or other protected characteristics?
(Discrimination Check)
- Have I identified the context and potential risks that could arise from my market, my regional culture and history, my current societal environment and current events, and factored them into my decision?
(Context Check)
- Are the messages, content and type set in such a way that people, nature/environment and animals are presented respectfully, appreciatively and appropriately?
(Environment Check)
- Would I implement these measures if I myself or my family members (e.g. my children) or friends were involved?
- Would I implement these measures if I had to show it to my family or friends?
- Would I present these measures to an audience of friends or customers from other religious, ethnic or cultural background than myself?
(Involvement Check)
- Am I convinced that the type and content of these measures will be interpreted and understood in the interests of the company in public?
(Officiality Check)