

G-Regs™

Netherlands – Credit Warning



Full title: Netherlands Financial Markets Authority (Autoriteit Financiële Markten - AFM) – Links to credit warning logos and messages in advertisements

Title of relevant section: Information on Credit Warning and Download Files



Be careful! Borrowing money costs money

In advertisements for credit and loans, financial companies are obliged to include a warning about the consequences entailed by such loans. The purpose of this warning is to raise consumers' awareness to the consequences of borrowing.

The credit warning consists of the warning phrase 'Be careful! Borrowing money costs money' and the warning symbol. For more background information on this measure and the choice of phrase and symbol, please refer to the FAQ section.

Inclusion in advertising copy

The 'Further Regulation on Supervision of Market Conduct of Financial Firms' (Nadere regeling gedragstoezicht financiële ondernemingen - Nrgfo) contains the rules and regulations for the inclusion of a warning phrase and symbol in advertisements for credit or loans (Article 2.2). This warning is mandatory for all credit advertisements on TV, radio, the Internet and in printed media. The exception being advertisements for mortgage loans in cases where no link is made, in the advertisement, with a purpose other than acquiring a home of one's own.

The warning (the combination of a phrase and a symbol) must not be of your own design; only the artwork of the AFM may be used. Listed below, per medium, are the image- and audio files that MUST be used, available in different formats. The rules for including the warning message are also shown by means of a brief explanation: for the exact rules on this, we would refer you on to the Nrgfo (Art. 2.2). Also refer to the FAQ on that.

Advertising messages in writing and on the Internet

In advertising messages, put down in writing, the warning is incorporated at the midpoint of the footer. For advertising messages posted on the Internet, the rule obtains that the warning must be displayed at the midpoint of the header of the ad.

URL of source: <http://www.afm.nl/nl-nl/professionals/onderwerpen/informatieverstrekking/kredietwaarschuwing-iv>

Written documents

'Advertising messages in writing' shall, at any rate, include advertisements in newspapers, dailies, weeklies and monthlies, TV and radio magazines and other written media, e.g. catalogues, brochures, folders, leaflets, direct mailings by post or email, SMS services and billboards.

The Internet

Every web page that contains an advertising message should also show the warning. Having the warning just on the home page will not, therefore, suffice. In addition, the warning has to be shown in all advertising on the Internet, even if the ads contain moving images or are displayed as an ad banner. If the ad on the Internet contains an audio file too, then that file should also contain the warning. Things you need to consider when using audio files can be found under the heading 'Audio Advertising'.

The image is made available in different files and in six different formats. These files are listed below. A financial firm that has to use this image in advertising messages, can choose from these supplied files, but on these conditions:

1. The image, as supplied in the download files, should be displayed in the original proportions and over the full width of the ad.
2. The minimum height of the image is 10% of the height of the advertisement (including the warning).
3. The download files may be magnified or made smaller, with a minimum type size of 7 points for the letters used in the image.

The last condition means that the image may be reduced in size until the minimum type size of the warning phrase in this image has been reached. If, when using the image, the full width and/ or the minimum height of 10% of the advertisement (including the warning) are not reached, the image, in its original proportions, should be magnified until the image fills the full width and at least 10% of the height of the advertisement. NB: the minimum font size of 7 points is stipulated herein in order to ensure adequate legibility in small-print ads.

In the [example of a credit warning](#), you can browse through the different formats. They are shown in the standard types of advertisement in which they can be used. The download files are listed below.

Image (for written documents and the Internet)

Eps files

- [1st format](#)
- [2nd format](#)
- [3rd format](#)
- [4th format](#)
- [5th format](#)
- [6th format](#)

Jpg files

- [1st format](#)
- [2nd format](#)
- [3rd format](#)
- [4th format](#)
- [5th format](#)
- [6th format](#)

Audio Advertising

Audio commercials on the radio or on the Internet should come with a warning stored on one of the following audio files. The warning must be played straight after the commercial. On the Internet, it's possible to broadcast a commercial without the corresponding image. This type of commercial is bracketed in the same category as commercials on the radio. The sound clip to be downloaded (containing the warning) should be played at the original speed and at the same volume as the advertising message.

- [Audio file \(wav\)](#) [Audio file \(mp3\)](#)

Television

For commercials on TV, the warning should be displayed, bottom centre, over the full width of the screen. In the case of television, the rule is that the size of the commercial should correspond with that of the 'safety frame'. This is a frame within which the commercial is formatted so as to ensure that commercials with different image formats are in full view at all times. The image, plus warning, must be displayed visibly, of course, and, consequently, inside the safety frame. The warning must be displayed throughout the advertisement for credit (or loans). In addition, and solely for TV, the condition is included that the warning must also be displayed if the commercial is an audible one. We're alluding here, among other things, to the kind of commercials one hears during a TV programme ('in-programme advertising').

- [Image for TV \(eps\)](#) [Image for TV \(jpg\)](#)
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