

Less Healthy Food & Drink Advertising Restrictions

The UK is entering its strictest phase of food and drink advertising regulation. From 5th January 2026, HFSS and LHFD brands will face major limits on where and how they can advertise, following earlier restrictions on in-store placement (2022) and multi-buy promotions (2025). The 2026 rules extend deep into TV, digital and paid-online channels, making compliance planning essential for all marketers.

At a Glance

Already in force

- 2022: No LHFD products in restricted in-store locations (checkouts, aisle ends, store entrances).
- 2025: Multibuy promotions – including BOGOF – prohibited for LHFD products.

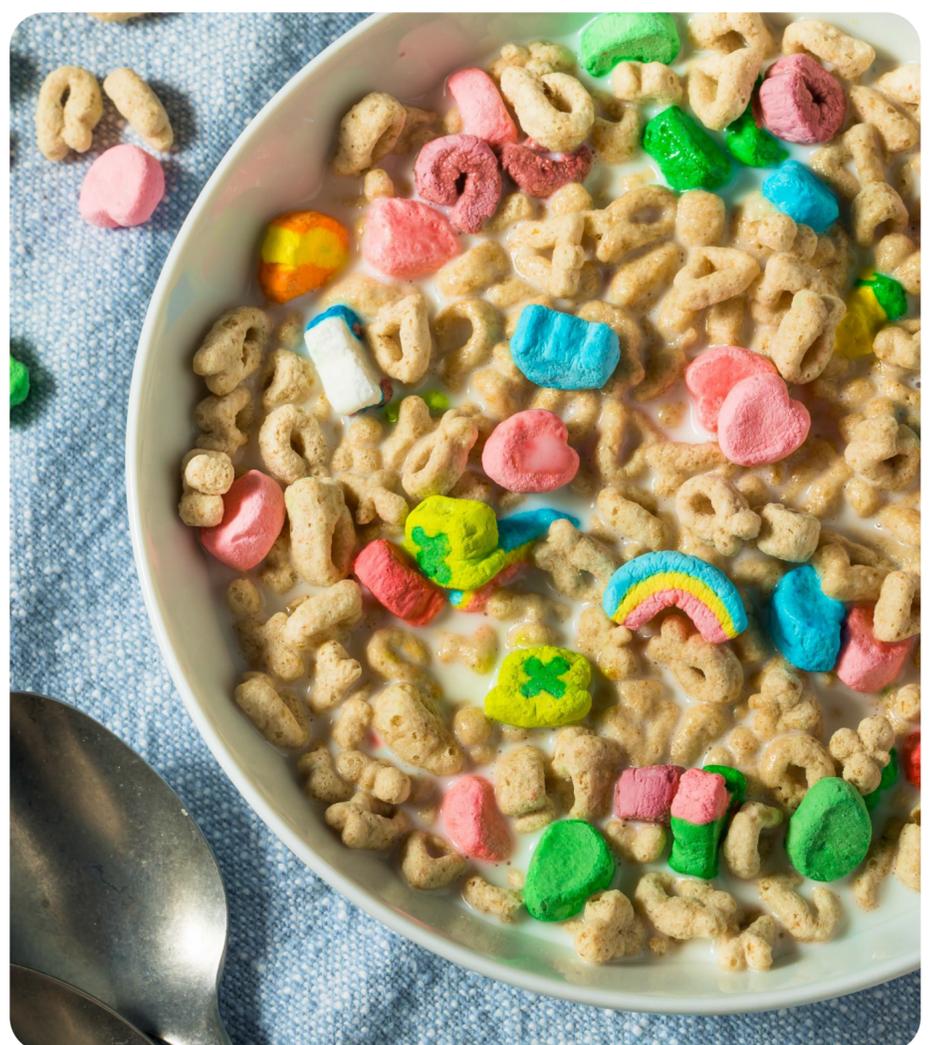
From 5th January 2026

- TV: No HFSS/LHFD advertising on live TV or on-demand between 05:30–21:00.
- Restrictions apply on landing pages and online checkouts.
- Paid-for online – a full ban on all paid digital advertising, including:
 - Influencer marketing
 - Promoted posts
 - Banners ads
 - Video ads
 - Search listings
 - In-game adverts
 - Specific product sponsorship



Products Affected Include:

- Soft drinks
- Savoury snacks
- Breakfast cereals
- Confectionery
- Ice cream products
- Cakes and pastries
- Sweet biscuits and cereal bars
- Pizza and ready meals
- Sandwiches and main menu items over 500 calories



Brand & Product, Owned & Paid

Brand only advertising is permitted providing there are no identifiable HFSS/LHFD products in the adverts. Product advertising is permitted on brand-owned media.

What's the difference?

Brand advertising focuses on building a positive image, emotional connection, and long-term trust for a company's overall identity.

Product advertising targets specific products to drive immediate sales by highlighting features, benefits, and price to persuade customers to make a purchase.

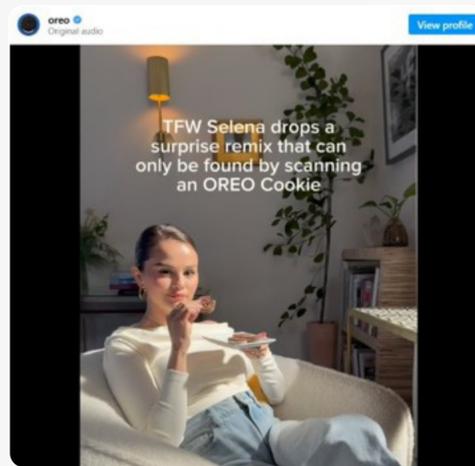
What advertising doors are left?

- Audio, radio
- Talent-led podcasts
- Brand-only advertising
- Brand-owned website & interactive games
- Brand-socials
- OOH
- In-store talkers

Celebs and talent constitute paid-for-marketing.

As a result, you **CANNOT** ask them to feature product, but you **CAN** still ask them to talk about your brand on their channels.

Talent podcasts are a natural way to feature product in an authentic way.



Don't Forget!

There are clear guidelines for Marketing to Children. Marketers must take care to ensure that any promotions meant for younger children are clearly targeted at parents through their content.

Licensed Characters and celebrities popular with children must be used with a due sense of responsibility.



Age-targeted Advertising of LHFD products.

LHFD product advertisements must not be directed at people under 16 through the selection of media or the context in which they appear.

No medium should be used to advertise LHFD products, if more than 25% of its audience is under 16 years of age.

The Opportunity: Prize Promotions As Your Strategic Alternative

With traditional advertising channels restricted, prize promotions offer a powerful alternative marketing strategy:



Compliance-Friendly Options:

On-pack promotions: Turn your product into your advertising medium

Point-of-sale activations: Engage consumers at the moment of purchase

Social media engagement: Leverage your owned channels (exempt from restrictions)

Email marketing: Activate your database with exciting prize opportunities

Audio promotions: Radio and podcast advertising remains permitted

Strategic Benefits:

First-party data collection: Build valuable consumer databases

Increased purchase frequency: Drive sales through compelling incentives

Brand loyalty: Foster deeper consumer relationships

Social media growth: Expand your owned channels for future marketing

Best Practices For LHFD Prize Promotions

1. Responsible Promotion Design

- Set appropriate entry limits (recommend 1 entry per week or per promotion period)
- Include disclaimers that your brand does not encourage excessive consumption
- Structure prize deliveries to avoid providing excessive amounts of LHFD products

2. Compliant Targeting

- Target promotions toward parents not directly to children
- Avoid partnerships with children's characters or cartoons
- Use sophisticated data collection to ensure appropriate audience targeting

3. Effective Mechanics

- **Instant win:** Provide immediate gratification at point of purchase
- **Collection mechanics:** Encourage repeat purchases over time
- **Social sharing:** Amplify reach through owned channels & followers
- **Experiential prizes:** Offer memorable experiences rather than product quantity



Frequently Asked Client Questions

What are the legal consequences of breaking LHFD advertising rules?

Financial penalties can be imposed for non-compliance with maximum fines of up to £5,000 per offence, with potential for multiple counts.

Advertising Standards Authority can force removal of non-compliant advertisements.

Legal action can be taken by Trading Standards and other regulatory bodies

What rules apply to on-pack promotions for LHFD products?

On-pack promotions are still permitted for HFSS products, with some limitations.

Price promotions like "50% off" or "£1 off" remain allowed.

Character and cartoon promotions aimed at children are heavily restricted.

Why Partner With PromoVeritas?

As Europe's leading prize promotion compliance experts, PromoVeritas offers:

Regulatory expertise: Navigate complex and changing regulations with confidence

Full-service management: From campaign concept to prize fulfilment

Legal compliance: All promotions vetted by our in-house legal team

Winner management: Fair, independent selection and verification

Prize fulfilment: Seamless delivery and exceptional winner experience

Risk mitigation: Avoid costly errors and potential penalties

See our work:
promoveritas.com/our-work

Call us at:
+44 (0)203 325 6000

Email us:
info@promoveritas.com



Certificate No: 343252020

