



International Festivals & Events Association
World Headquarters
2603 Eastover Terrace, Boise, Idaho 83706, U.S.A.
Telephone: 208-433-0950 Web: www.ifea.com

April 30, 2019

Randall Stephenson
Chairman and CEO
AT&T
208 S. Akard St.
Dallas, TX 75202

Dear Mr. Stephenson:

I am writing on behalf of the [International Festivals & Events Association](http://www.ifea.com) (IFEA World), the premier association supporting and enabling festival and event professionals worldwide. On behalf of our members and global industry peers, who strive to provide safe, fun and memorable events in virtually every city and community on the planet, together with far-reaching national and global events that bond our world closer together, I join our industry alliance partners in sharing our disappointment with one of your television spots. The ad, "OK Carnival," from the "Just OK is not OK" campaign, shows a mother and son sitting on an amusement ride, asking the ride operator if it is safe. The operator responds saying, "I assembled it myself last night. I think I did an OK job." When the child asks further, "What if something bad happens?", the operator responds that "We just move to the next town." Here is the link to the spot on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJ-4tRbmX7Q>.

This ad is highly concerning to the countless people who work in the festivals, events and attractions industry. The safety of event attendees (especially in today's world) is our number-one priority, as we know it is with the very professional carnival and amusement ride operators who serve and partner with our events. They are meticulously cautious in all aspects of ride design, manufacture, inspection, operation and maintenance, as well as customer service and relations. The ad implies that these industry employees are "just OK" when it comes to safety and are not focused on providing quality experiences that are fun and safe.

While we understand that using humor and “tongue-in-cheek” messaging is a common tactic in advertising, your depiction of the attractions and event industry in a false, misleading, and negative light, does not demonstrate the integrity or fair messaging that your company stands for. You would not want others portraying the professionals in your own business in a similar light. On the “Ethics and Compliance” page of your website, it reads, “Ethics and integrity are foundational to who we are at AT&T. While AT&T continues to transform the world of media and entertainment, communications, and technology—our commitment to running a business rooted in ethics and integrity will never change.” I am asking that you call upon that commitment in this case.

Festival, event and attractions industry producers, owners, operators, employees, and attendees around the country are AT&T customers, and we are very disappointed in how our common industry is being portrayed by this ad. In consideration of our professional concerns, and in support of our allied industry partners, we respectfully request that you discontinue the use of this ad in your marketing and promotional campaigns.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding your decision and thoughts on this matter, so that we may relay your concern and support for all those misrepresented, along to all those that we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Steven Wood Schmader". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "S".

Steven Wood Schmader, CFEE
President & CEO

cc: Greg Chiecko, President & CEO, Outdoor Amusement Business Association