

**From:** Jonny Crane  
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**Subject:** Submission to the standing committee into the inquiry on billboards in the ACT

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*Submission to the standing committee into the inquiry on billboards in the ACT*

By: *Jonathon Crane*



To the standing committee into the inquiry into billboards in the ACT,  
My name is Jonathon Crane, and as a tax-paying citizen of the ACT it worries me to hear the news that there may be a proposal to reduce the restrictions on billboard advertisements in the ACT.

Of course not being bombarded with billboards is one of the unique charms of Canberra the "bush-capital" of Australia. Why would we want to negatively affect this already successful "brand" by polluting it with advertising?

Billboard advertising is part of an old business model and in my opinion Canberra's business plan should not be looking backwards but looking to an innovative future.


Ask yourself which search engine you prefer? One that puts Ads everywhere you try to click (Bing) or one that asks you simply "what do you want?" (Google) People will always need to buy things, don't worry about that... and if we work toward creating a city where its easier for people to buy what they need without being distracted by things they don't need, trust me, everyone will want to live here.

But hang on a sec, everyone already wants to live here. Canberra is rated the most livable city in the WORLD! And why is that? I would say our natural and simple built environment has a lot to do with it. Why would you want to be more like Sydney when you're already number 1?

Instead of Billboards I think we should be being more creative. Look at the successful business models of private companies. For example Google. They tell us that the future of advertising isn't billboards but targeted advertising. Imagine that the ACT government has an app that is so useful that everyone wants to use it - its integrated with transport systems (light rail ticketing, buses), libraries, health care, direction finding, parking... its a must have for every resident and visitor. Selling advertising on something like that will be the future. Private companies would fall over themselves to be able to have access to the kind of data you would have on Canberra residents and visitors. And don't worry, it could be an "opt in" service (Billboards do not have this advantage of allowing people to opt in or out)... residents who opt in may get a reduction on their tax bill for example (that is offset by the advertising revenue)... visitors and tourists in exchange for opting in might get discounts on local attractions who would again be falling over themselves to be able to "target" potential consumers in this way.

In summary, please consider my opinion that Billboards are a "way of the past" like travelling medicine shows or asbestos as a building material. Lets not adopt something that's only going to cause us more problems in the future.

Yours sincerely,  
Jonathon Crane

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