

The Mystery Box Trend in Light of the Advertising Board's Decisions

A. Introduction

Sales methods such as “mystery boxes” and “surprise packages,” which arouse great curiosity among consumers and increase the desire to purchase, have become increasingly widespread on electronic commerce platforms and are frequently preferred by sellers. However, these methods give rise to significant legal issues, particularly due to the delivered products failing to meet consumer expectations and the absence of any prior information regarding the contents of the box or package.

The Advertising Board of the Ministry of Trade (**“the Board”**) has examined these legal issues in detail and, as a result of its assessments and reviews, adopted precedent-setting decisions for the e-commerce sector at its meeting dated 11 September 2025 and numbered 361 concerning the aforementioned sales methods.

The Press Release of the Advertising Board's meeting dated September 11, 2025 and numbered 361 can be accessed [here](#).

B. Obligation to Inform About the Contents of the Box and the Principle of Certainty

Pursuant to the provisions of the Law No. 6502 on the Consumer Protection Law (**“Law”**) and the Regulation on Commercial Advertising and Unfair Commercial Practices (**“Regulation”**), providing consumers with incomplete or misleading information about the nature, quantity, and characteristics of a product violates the principles of fair competition and constitutes an unfair commercial practice.

In this context, the Board has evaluated that the lack of any explanation regarding the contents of products marketed with expressions such as *“Electronic Surprise Box,” “Mystery Jewelry Jar,” “Surprise Cosmetic Box,”* or *“Surprise Jersey Package (European Teams)”* may direct

consumers to a transaction they would normally not engage in, due to the uncertainties about the content of the product or service being sold and the fact that the consumer cannot know what they are purchasing.

The Board emphasized that even promotional statements that include general category names such as *“Surprise Gift Box Mystery Box, Generally Electronic Products Are Included,” “Surprise Cosmetics,”* and *“Mystery Jewelry Jar 20-Piece Bijou Set,”* as well as customized expressions like *“Surprise Jersey Package Mystery Jersey – Whatever Comes Out (European Teams)”* are insufficient to provide the certainty required by the legislation.

The Board decided to impose an advertisement suspension penalty on companies selling products with unclear content, based on the grounds that the commercial practices in question are unfair, violate the principles of fair competition, and breach the provisions of the Law and the Regulation.

C. Misleading Statements and Time Pressure

Another significant issue addressed in the Board's decisions, which exacerbated the severity of the violation, is the failure to clearly inform consumers about the probability of products such as smartphones, laptops, computers, game consoles, headphones, and speakers being included in the boxes, despite the presence of product images in advertisements and promotions.

The Board stated that such images create an expectation that valuable products will come out of the box; however, the failure to meet this expectation constitutes a misleading practice. Consequently, the Board concluded that these misleading sales strategies violate the principle of accuracy and fairness regulated in Article 7 of the Regulation.

Furthermore, the Board identified the use of fake countdown timers under headings such as “*Time Left for the Discount, Don’t Miss This Opportunity!*” and classified these practices as “deceptive commercial practices.” The Board emphasized that these tactics, which pressure consumers with time constraints and force them to make hurried decisions, impair their will.

The Board did not limit itself to just imposing an advertisement suspension penalty for platforms with such serious violations, but also decided to block access to user accounts or websites if the content that constitutes a violation is not removed within 24 hours of the notification.

D. Conclusion

In light of the Advertising Board’s decisions, in

order for sales made under the name of “mystery box” and “surprise package” to be considered legally compliant, consumers must be transparently informed about the nature, quantity, and particularly the likelihood of the promised products being included in the box.

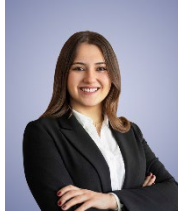
In its announcement dated November 10, 2025, the Ministry of Trade has stated that inspections will continue and that warnings have been sent to e-commerce platforms to take preventive measures in this regard. Otherwise, in addition to advertisement suspension penalties, more severe sanctions such as access restrictions may be imposed.

For more information and support, you can contact us.



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