Can paid search damage the search engine’s image? The truth is that this kind of advertisement is as harmful for search engines as a spot is for TV.

Of course, there are numerous consumers annoyed by the inclusion of advertisement in television spaces, but it’s also true that without the current business model we would only have paid TV or state channels.

Paid search, like paid listings or any other formula that takes advantage of the capacity of a communication platform to get brands closer to consumers, is a totally permissible business source, provided users’ rights are safeguarded.

In the case of search engines, these activities could only be judged if paid search, being the only available option, did not meet the request for information, did not differentiate—the contrary of what has been happening—, between paid and neutral results, or if situations of advertising oversaturation annoying to consumers arose, as has been happening in other media for some time.

Search engines, above all, in their role as advertising support, just like brands and advertising agencies, have to make sure that the development of their activities fits into business ethics, allowing users to exercise their inalienable right to choose as they have always done.