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# **Alcohol Industry “Responsible Drinking” Messages New Problems and Policy Recommendations**

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# Sarah Mart

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The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose.

# ALCOHOL JUSTICE - The Industry Watchdog

formerly Marin Institute

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We promote evidence-based public health policies and organize campaigns with diverse communities and youth against the alcohol industry's harmful practices.

- Charge for Harm
- Stop Alcopops & Alcoholic Energy Drinks
- Reduce Alcohol Advertising
- Support State Control

# The 1980's. And so it began...

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**30 years later, we know what does not change behavior:**

- Mass media campaigns (including drink-driving campaigns)
- Warning labels and signs
- Industry voluntary self-regulation codes
- Education and information

Babor, et al. Alcohol: No ordinary commodity. Research & public policy. (2010).

# The Problem

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- Increased exposure to alcohol advertising leads to earlier onset of drinking, increased consumption, and favorable attitudes towards producers.
- Researchers have criticized these campaigns for vagueness, pro-drinking sentiment, and increasing the industry's favor with the general public.
- Findings have not demonstrated “drink responsibly” messages are effective in achieving public health outcomes.

# Goals and Methods

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- To describe the industry's use of “drink responsibly” messages, we:
  - Examined alcohol ads in magazines, on Facebook, and YouTube
    - Message characteristics in product ads
    - Industry-sponsored “drink responsibly” campaigns
  - Compared the ads to industry self-regulatory advertising codes

# Findings

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1. Many brands use their own graphic logos
2. Messages are formatted to blend into ads, hide, or disappear
3. Action-oriented drinking terms are combined with brand names and undefined “responsibly”
4. Message size is tiny
5. Messages on Facebook and YouTube were tiny, if present; mostly nonexistent
6. Industry “campaigns” have devolved into one- shot press events and other public relations

# Promotion - Graphic Logos



Think Wisely.  
Drink Wisely.



**drinkaware.co.uk**  
for the facts

ENJOY WITH ABSOLUT RESPONSIBILITY®



# Message Format - Mouse print



Mouse print is faint, low-contrast, tiny type, often buried out of easy sight in ads<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mouseprint.org. Background. 2006. Available at: [www.mouseprint.org/about](http://www.mouseprint.org/about).

<sup>2</sup> Portigal, S. Interacting with advertising. *Interactions*. March-April 2009. Vol. 16(2):52-53.

# Message Content - Vague

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Drink

Sip

Enjoy

Discover                      (brand name)                      responsibly

Celebrate

Fiesta

Play

# Message Size & Proportion

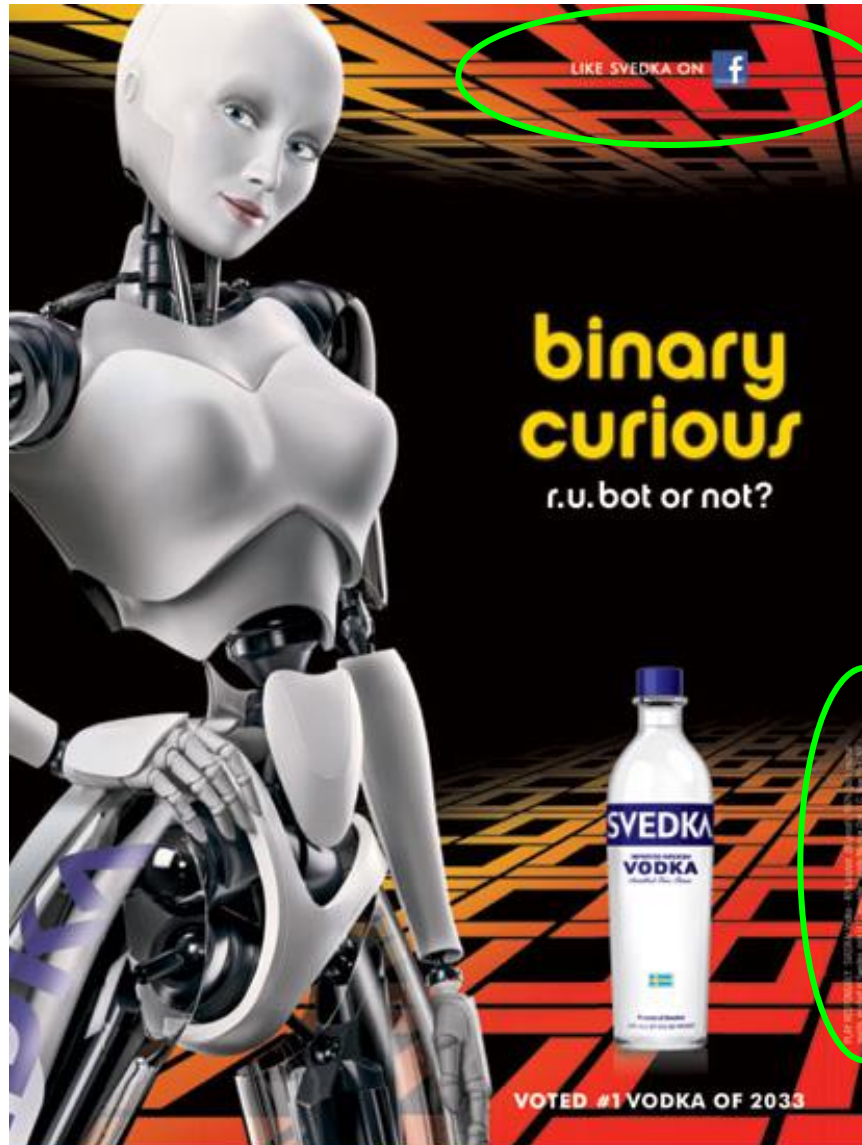


In the magazines we reviewed, “drink responsibly” messages represented an average of 0.33% of the total ad inches.

ENJOY WITH ABSOLUT RESPONSIBILITY®

**ABSOLUT LEMON DROP**  
*Cocktails Perfected*  
a Vision from  
**ALI LARTER & AMANDA DE CADENET**

# Facebook - Svedka



# Facebook - Svedka

facebook Search

Svedka Vodka Like

Wine/Spirits

**PARTY YOUR BOT OFF**

SVEDKA\_GRL FEMBOT COSTUME ON SALE NOW AT RICKYSHALLOWEEN.COM

**SVEDKA PARTY\_BOTS INVADE NEW YORK**

- Coco works her SVEDKA\_Grl costume
- Fembots at the Richie Rich fashion show
- Ice-T loves Coco during fashion week
- A hot pose from a gorgeous group
- Coco and the original SVEDKA\_Grl
- 3 Fembots are better than 1

Wall  
Info  
Friend activity  
Cocktail Predictor  
Walk of Shame  
Halloween  
Cocktails  
BOT or NOT  
FRIENDER BLENDER  
MORE

145,303 like this

1,532 talking about this

Likes See all

Bodega Girls  
Gala Darling

# Facebook - Budweiser

facebook Search

Budweiser ▸ Heroes/Baseball Like

Food/Beverages

**"LIKE Budweiser ON FACEBOOK FOR NEWS AND SPECIAL OFFERS"**

**Budweiser GREAT TIMES ARE ON DECK**

A M A ★ S C R L A S W N D P N C  
G R A T B C S T B K T S A S D C

**MUST SEE HIGHLIGHTS FOR YOUR TEAM FROM MLB.com**

**HERE'S TO THE HEROES** MLB.com

**HERE'S TO THE HEROES**

**HOME RUN TALLY**

**4 5 5 2**

Wall  
Info  
Friend activity  
Band of Buds  
52 Weeks to Win  
The Bowtie Can  
Bud DD  
Heroes/Baseball  
The Big Time

About  
Responsibility Matters. Whether you're enjoying a Budweiser or writing about it on our wall please keep in mind that any offensive or irresponsible consumption posts will be removed.

1,332,782 like this  
9,724 talking about this

Likes  
Bud American Ale

## About

Responsibility Matters. Whether you're enjoying a Budweiser or writing about it on our wall please keep in mind that any offensive or irresponsible consumption posts will be removed.

# Facebook - SKYY



Like Comment

 SKYY Vodka  
Sometimes you just gotta keep it simple. SKYY and soda? Done and done.  
Like · Comment · Share · 04 September

256 people like this.

Tags: SKYY Vodka  
Album: Photos of SKYY Vodka in Wall Photos

Download

# Facebook - Four Loko

facebook

**BREAKING NEWS**  
EVERYTHING'S GONE  
**Four Loko**

Get the new **POCO LOKO** in stores NOW!

NEWS 4

Four Loko ▸ Welcome

Food/Beverages

Upload a picture of you "Going Four Loko" to the wall then enter the **FB sweepstakes!**

**DO NOT GO TO drinkfour.com**

- Wall
- Info
- Friend activity
- Sweepstakes
- Welcome
- Product Locator
- Four Loko Rules
- XXX Flavor Poll
- Go Loko! Events!
- MORE ▾

About  
Premium Malt Beverage

## Four Loko

Food/Beverages



### Basic Information

About	Premium Malt Beverage
General information	If you are 21+ and choose to drink, please do so responsibly. If you are under 21, respect the law and don't drink alcohol.
Mission	Here at Phusion Projects, we do not condone alcohol abuse or misuse. We encourage our consumers to drink our products responsibly. Any comments or posts that encourage or promote irresponsible behavior or use profanity, will be removed immediately.
Website	Thank you for your continued support! <a href="http://www.phusionprojects.com">http://www.phusionprojects.com</a> <a href="http://www.drinkfour.com">http://www.drinkfour.com</a> <a href="http://www.phusioncares.com">http://www.phusioncares.com</a> <a href="http://www.phusionresponsibility.com">http://www.phusionresponsibility.com</a>

### Likes and interests

Likes	Casey's General Stores, Casey's General Store, PowerCoco, 7 11, Sedanos Supermarket 38, Rouses Markets, Southern Eagle New Orleans, 5 Paces Inn, The Pearl, Colonial Spirits
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by Colt  
45

TWITTER.COM/BLASTBYCOLT

FACEBOOK.COM/WORKSEVERYTIME

BLASTBYCOLT.COM



Info Favorite Share Flag

### Snoop Dogg, Estevan Oriol and Rosa Acosta Blast by Colt 45 Photo Shoot



From: BlastbyColt | Mar 7, 2011 | 39,612 views

Check out the behind the scenes of the Blast by Colt 45 photo shoot with Snoop Dogg, Estevan Oriol and Rosa Acosta. Blast by Colt 45 in stores April 5!

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Snoop Dogg, Estevan Oriol and Rosa Acosta  
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2:49

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0:50

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817 views - 4 months ago  
0:32

Censored Over Ice  
495 views - 4 months ago

BlastbyColt

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Alissonci...



hawaiianr...



Mystaryth...



dummydude2



miseg86



cfcarr1981

Profile

# “Campaigns” or Public Relations

**CHAMPIONS  
DRINK RESPONSIBLY**

"I try to beat everyone at tennis, not at drinking"

**RAFAEL NADAL**  
8-TIME TENNIS GRAND SLAM CHAMPION

Support our campaign at [championsdrinkresponsibly.com](http://championsdrinkresponsibly.com)

**BACARDI LIMITED**  
BACARDI AND BACARDI LIMITED ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF BACARDI & COMPANY LIMITED

This advertisement features Rafael Nadal in a blue polo shirt, holding a glass of Bacardi rum. The background is a dimly lit tennis court. The text is in a mix of white and gold fonts.

*Join the Pact.com*  
NEVER DRINK AND DRIVE

For your chance to win a trip to Singapore and meet Lewis Hamilton in person, sign up at [www.jointhepact.com](http://www.jointhepact.com)

**JOHNNIE WALKER**  
KEEP WALKING

Never Drink And Drive

This advertisement shows a group of men, including Lewis Hamilton in his racing suit, standing in a line. The background is dark with a gold glow. The text is in gold and white fonts.



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## News Releases

### **[Across U.S., 1,500+ Anheuser-Busch Employees to Leave Offices this Friday in Effort to Promote Alcohol Responsibility](#)**

*September 21, 2011*

ST. LOUIS – More than 1,500 Anheuser-Busch employees across the United States won't be at their desks on Friday, Sept. 23. Instead, they'll be out visiting bars, restaurants and grocery stores to promote the use of designated drivers.

It's all part of Global Be(er) Responsible Day, an annual effort organized by Anheuser-Busch and its sister companies around the world.



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# Spending

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- The alcohol industry spent \$1.684 billion on measured advertising and promotion in 2010<sup>1</sup>
- Anheuser-Busch InBev says it has spent \$830 million since 1982 on responsibility programs and advertising, an average of \$28.6 million per year<sup>2</sup>
- Member distillers give an average of \$8.75 million to fund Century Council alcohol education programs annually<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, Nielsen Monitor Plus (2010)

<sup>2</sup> Anheuser-Busch. Corporate Responsibility. History. <http://www.beeresponsible.com/history.html>.

<sup>3</sup> The Century Council. FAQ. <http://www.centurycouncil.org/faq>

# Policy Recommendations

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- Industry should stop putting “drink responsibly” messages in any of its ads.
- Industry should not be allowed to insert brand/company names into any messages or ads intended to be pro-health.
- Industry trade group’s advertising training summits should include public health/public interest representation.
- Independent, external, third-party ad review body
- Objective standards for judging content and format of all ads
- Enforcement power and mechanism for serious penalties beyond pulling ads

WHAT PART OF DRINK RESPONSIBLY DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

WILD TURKEY® Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey, 50.5% alc./vol. (101 proof), 40.5% alc./vol. (81 proof).

©2011 Skyy Spirits, LLC, San Francisco, CA.

**We understand.**

And we demand that industry stop using false, ineffective prevention messages to increase positive public perception, credibility, and sales of its brands.

# Contact Us

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