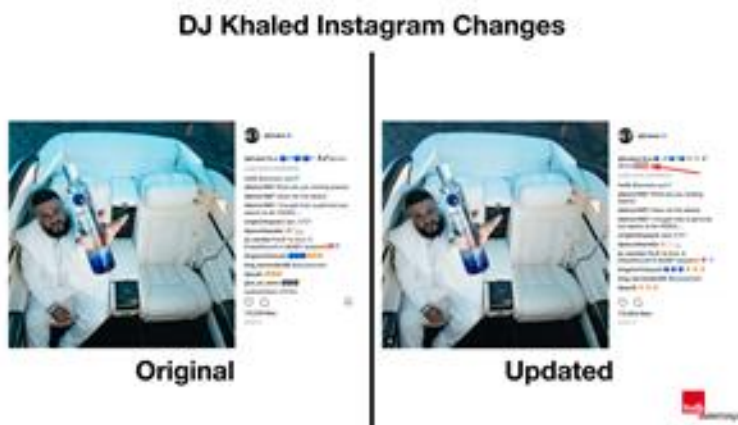


DJ Khaled's Snapchat Sobers Up

Groups Challenge Deceptive Influencer Marketing of Alcohol

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MADISON, CONN., April 09, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Hip-hop producer and “King of Snapchat” DJ Khaled has scaled back his rampant promotion of alcohol on social media after being [called out](#) by a coalition of advocacy organizations.



Based on the results of a truthinadvertising.org (TINA.org) [investigation](#), on March 29, TINA.org together with Public Citizen, Alcohol Justice, US Alcohol Policy Alliance, Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, The Center for Digital Democracy, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving [sent a letter](#) to the social media celebrity warning him about his failure to clearly disclose posts as ads in violation of federal law. In addition, Khaled has been violating the policies of social media platforms and industry groups, as well as long-standing social responsibility norms by advertising alcohol directly to the millions of minors who follow him.

TINA.org's investigation revealed that from June 2017 to March 2018, Khaled posted alcohol ads for Diageo's Cîroc Vodka, Bacardi's D'Ussé cognac, and Sovereign Brands' Belaire sparkling wine and Bumbu rum more than 300 times on [Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter](#). The vast majority of these ads, which include everything from overt shout outs to subtle product placement, were not marked as such despite Khaled's [material connection](#) to the liquor brands.

Within a week of receiving the warning letter, DJ Khaled overhauled his social media accounts completely, deleting or editing all of the alcohol-related posts on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter in TINA.org's sampling to include #AD. Even more significantly, he has not actively promoted alcohol brands on social media, including Snapchat, since receiving the groups' warning letter. Bacardi notified TINA.org that it had instructed Khaled to remove any social media posts related to D'Ussé cognac.

“DJ Khaled has done the right thing by disclosing his material connection to these alcohol brands,” said TINA.org Executive Director Bonnie Patten. “Time will tell if he is truly committed to ensuring that his followers are not misled by deceptive ads on his social media accounts. As for the alcohol companies, their failure to make certain that DJ Khaled complied with FTC law is absolutely inexcusable.”

"As an influential music icon with a substantial youth following, DJ Khaled's move to discontinue alcohol promotion and appropriately label social media ads was overdue," said Kristen Strader, campaign coordinator for Public Citizen. "Hopefully, DJ Khaled and other influencers will do right by their fans and label all paid endorsements on social media moving forward."

On Snapchat, Khaled’s posts regularly garner several million views each and while it does not disclose the percentage of users under 21, the platform is widely known to skew young. In fact, earlier this year, Cîroc’s Diageo announced that it was suspending all of its advertising on the platform due to concerns about age verification safeguards. Diageo conveniently ignored influencer marketers like DJ Khaled for whom Snapchat’s age-gate tools such as age verification are not being used, giving brands a direct conduit to millions of minors. Diageo along with Sovereigns Brands did not respond to the coalition’s warning letter.

David Monahan of Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood said: “Everyone is failing our children when alcohol companies pay celebrities like DJ Khaled to peddle products to kids on social media under the guise of shout-outs to fans. It’s always wrong to target vulnerable children with marketing—but especially with deceptive ads that encourage drinking hard liquor. We hope DJ Khaled will put an end to these ads, and others will get the message that they must do the same.”

Diane Riibe, Executive Director of the U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance said: “Overexposure to alcohol advertising is a driver of underage drinking, and it’s all the worse when it flies under the radar on social media platforms popular with youth, like Snapchat. These alcohol producers who are exploiting DJ Khaled’s popularity with young people need to stop this practice immediately and permanently, and Mr. Khaled should stop being an instrument of this exploitive marketing.”

To read more about TINA.org’s investigation of DJ Khaled’s influencer marketing of alcohol see:

<https://www.truthinadvertising.org/dj-khaleds-snapchat-sobers/>

About TINA.org ([truthinadvertising.org](https://www.truthinadvertising.org))

[TINA.org](https://www.truthinadvertising.org) is a non-profit organization that uses investigative journalism, education, and advocacy to empower consumers to protect themselves against false advertising and deceptive marketing.

Attachment

- [DJ Khaled Comparison](#)