Make Your Mark on Big Alcohol’s Advertising Tactics

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Marin Institute Strategies

- Monitor and expose the alcohol industry’s harmful products, practices, and promotion
- Research viable policy solutions to reduce alcohol-related harm
- Support communities, coalitions and organizers in rejecting Big Alcohol’s damaging actions
- Frame the issues from a reasonable public health perspective
Big Alcohol’s Tactics

- Consolidate into transnational firms
- Market: Get kids hooked
- Lobby: undermine effective prevention
- Public Relations: Blame parents (schools, servers, cops)
- Public Relations: Fund ineffective prevention
Federal Alcohol Taxes, 1950-2002
Big Alcohol Claims

- Ads are for adults, youth are not affected
- Education is the best solution to underage drinking
- Self-regulation is effective and essential
- First Amendment bars advertising restrictions
The Realities...

- Alcohol advertising affects youth drinking

- Education is one of the least effective strategies to reduce underage drinking

- External regulation is necessary

- The First Amendment does not bar advertising restrictions
Realities of Youth Exposure

Greater exposure to alcohol advertising contributes to:

- Earlier initiation of drinking for youth who have not started yet
- Higher drinking levels among underage youth who drink
- Positive expectations and attitudes about alcohol that help create an environment promoting underage drinking.

Realities of Alcohol Education

- Neither parents nor schools alone can match Big Alcohol’s expertise in targeting youth

- School-based education has no sustained positive effect on behavior (Anderson et al, 2009)

- Parenting programs have produced mixed results in reducing alcohol use (Petrie et al, 2007)

- Industry-funded educational programs tend to increase positive views about alcohol and the alcohol industry (Fisher et al, 2001 and Smith et al, 2006)
Realities of Industry Self-Regulation

Recent Headline:

Alcohol Advertising Self-regulation Not Working

“Addiction scientists are calling for tighter regulation of alcohol advertising, as new research shows that self-regulation by the alcohol industry does not protect impressionable children and youth from exposure.”

(Science Daily, June 9, 2009)
Realities of Industry Self-Regulation


Marin Institute (2008)

Barriers to effective self-regulation include:
- lack of public awareness
- lack of an independent review
- subjective nature of guidelines
- lack of penalties and enforcement power
Realities of the First Amendment

• Not an absolute right, but a balancing act between competing interests
• Need to follow Supreme Court test
• Government property easier to restrict
Realities of the First Amendment

Supreme Court test for regulating advertising:

- Unlawful or misleading?
- Substantial interest?
- Directly advance?
- Narrowly tailored?
Alcohol Promotion on Facebook

- 300 million users in 2009
- 1/3 of users are under age 21
- Began accepting paid alcohol ads in 2008
- Main functions of Facebook:
  - Advertisements
  - Pages
  - Applications
  - Events
  - Groups
Alcohol Promotion on Facebook

- Paid ads: 1 in 8 were alcohol-related
- Pages
  - 93 for beer brands, 334 for spirits
  - 6 out of 12 (50%) of Pages were accessible to the under-21 user
- Applications
  - More than 500 Apps for general alcohol terms
  - 4 out of 6 (67%) were accessible to the under-21 user
- Events
  - More than 2200 Events for top 5 beer and top 5 spirits
- Groups
  - More than 58,000 Groups for “alcohol”
  - 342 Groups for “binge drinkers”
Facebook Recommendations

- Stop accepting paid alcohol advertisements
- Stop allowing alcohol-related Pages, Applications, Events, and Groups;
- Monitor and enforce alcohol content regulations.

Out of Home Alcohol Advertising

Billboards

Alternative
Out of Home Alcohol Advertising

Transit

Street Furniture
# 2008 Top Out of Home Advertisers

1. VERIZON
2. MCDONALDS RESTAURANT
3. AT&T
4. SPRINT
5. STATE FARM
6. APPLE
7. GEICO
8. COORS
9. ANHEUSER-BUSCH
10. WARNER BROS PICTURES
11. COCA-COLA
12. PARAMOUNT PICTURES
13. HSBC BANK
14. CHARLES SCHWAB
15. HEINEKEN
16. COMCAST
17. MILLER
18. CRACKER BARREL RESTAURANT
19. WALT DISNEY PICTURES
20. UNIVERSAL PICTURES

(2008 Megabrands Report)
2008 Advertising Market Share

- Network TV: 20%
- Cable TV: 16%
- Syndication: 4%
- Spot TV: 14%
- Magazines: 21%
- Newspaper: 19%
- Outdoor: 3%
- Radio: 3%

(TNS Media Intelligence)
The San Francisco Experience...

Miller Ad near Sutro Elementary School

Bailey’s Ad near Avila Elementary School
Considerations for Drafting

- Technology-neutral language
- Include findings (evidence of the problem, scientific basis for the restriction)
- Sufficient evidence the proposed restriction will be effective
- Restrict alcohol ads or all ads?
- Public or private ownership of the ad space
- Purpose of the restriction
- Narrowly tailored
- Enforcement, penalties
- Make friends w/ your jurisdiction’s legal counsel
Are there currently regulations restricting OOH alcohol ads?

Yes:
Assess compliance/enforcement
Compare results to regulations

No:
Assess current extent of OOH alcohol ad problem in your community
Draft proposed restrictions using survey results, MI Guide, other resources, and attorney review

Organize
Advocate
Regulate
Take Action, Join Us

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