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My friends Bundy, cruiser and VB: alcohol marketing on facebook

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Abstract

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using positively-valenced words and/or playing on the theme and imagery in the advertisement. Fifty-five percent included the word 'enjoy' in the responsibility message and 24% linked the wording of the responsibility message to the theme of the advertisement. In all cases the responsibility message was in substantially smaller font than other writing in the advertisement, and placed at the bottom and/or margin.

Discussion and Conclusions: It appears that responsibility messages in alcohol advertisements are designed not to be noticed by consumers and, if they are noticed, to further promote and encourage consumption by reiterating the key advertising messages.

Paper 158

IT MUST BE GOOD FOR ME, IT'S IN A HEALTH MAGAZINE

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Introduction and Aims: Research into the extent and nature of alcohol advertising in Australian magazines has predominantly focused on 'lifestyle/entertainment' magazines. 'Health' magazines are often perceived as an appropriate source of information on health and nutrition. It is reasonable to expect that advertisements in these magazines would predominantly be for health-promoting (or at least not health-damaging) products.

Design and Methods: We audited three 'health' magazines (*Men's Health*, *Women's Health* and *Prevention*) for the presence and nature of alcohol advertisements for the period 2010–12 (102 of 108 issues published).

Results: Over the three years there were 30 alcohol advertisements in *Men's Health*; seven in *Women's Health* and 10 in *Prevention*. There was considerable variation across years, with over half of the advertisements in *Men's Health* appearing in 2010 and the number in *Prevention* increasing over time. Advertisements in *Men's Health* were predominantly for beer (76.7%); and in *Women's Health* and *Prevention* for wine/champagne. What was particularly concerning was the frequent presence of a 'health' message in advertisements appearing in these magazines, with 17 (36.1%) including a claim about low calorie or low carbohydrate content, but only two promoting low(er) alcohol content.

Discussion and Conclusions: Consumers are presented with a wide range of conflicting messages about alcohol, the majority of which encourage consumption. We find alcohol advertisements are present in 'health' magazines in similar frequencies to other magazine genres, but are often positioned in such a way as to suggest a health benefit or minimise the perception of a health risk.

Paper 104

MY FRIENDS BUNDY, CRUISER AND VB: ALCOHOL MARKETING ON FACEBOOK

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Introduction and Aims: The Internet is increasingly being utilised as a medium for alcohol advertising, although the nature of online media makes it difficult to determine the volume of alcohol marketing. Given the high Internet usage of young people, there is growing concern about promotion of alcohol to children and adolescents.

Design and Methods: We examined the official Facebook pages of 12 alcohol brands. Two trained research assistants audited the pages independently, double coding 25% of pages to ensure reliability of coding, during May–June 2012.

Results: Key findings included: alcohol brands had an average of 75 000 fans across the 11 Australian-based pages. The two-way nature of communication was evident with posts by fans exceeding posts by brands by more than 28 to 1 (4796 compared to 170). All pages appeared to breach one or more clauses of the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code, most commonly: 1(a) mature, balanced and responsible approach to consumption of alcohol; 1(b) appeal to children or adolescents; and 1(c) suggest consumption or presence of alcohol beverages as a cause of or contributing to a significant change in mood or environment. The widespread presence of 'unofficial' pages is potentially even more problematic; with six of 12 having 50 or more.

Discussion and Conclusions: Given the high volume of alcohol advertising, limiting exposure through gateway mechanisms (such as age verification tools) is important, although largely ineffective. Thus, complementary policies are required, including encouraging Facebook and alcohol brands to work together to remove 'unofficial' pages that use brand's names and trademarks.

Paper 250

MEDIA LITERACY AS A STRATEGY TO PREVENT YOUTH TOBACCO USE: MIXED METHODS AND MIXED RESULTS

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Introduction and Aims: Pro-tobacco messages in media play an important role in initiating smoking behaviour among youth, but can be addressed in health promotion media literacy interventions. This study uses mixed methods to assess a tobacco prevention media literacy intervention.

Design and Methods: This study compares and contrasts qualitative and quantitative data gathered through focus groups and before and after assessments of treatment and control groups of young adolescents (n = 41, ages 8 to 15 years). Focus groups explored the acceptability of the anti-smoking program, as well as participants' understanding of media and awareness of marketing tactics by the tobacco industry. Using validated quantitative measures, changes in general and tobacco-specific media literacy were also assessed.

Results: General media literacy and some tobacco-specific media literacy measures improved significantly for treatment compared to control ($P < 0.05$); results for other tobacco-specific media literacy measures and for tobacco attitudes were not significant. Future expectations of smoking increased significantly for treatment participants ages 10 and younger ($P < 0.05$). Several themes emerged from the qualitative data, including: (i) understanding persuasion strategies used in advertising; (ii) desirability of commercials despite the intervention; (iii) pre-existing negative attitudes toward smoking; and (iv) distrust of industry intent.

Discussion and Conclusions: Both quantitative and qualitative data indicated differences by age. Improvements in media literacy may be accompanied by an increase in future expectations to smoke, especially for younger children. Pre-existing negative views of smoking may create ceiling effects among young adolescents.

Implications for Practice: Anti-smoking media literacy has potential for developing the ability of young adolescents to recognise persuasive intent, but this ability may not negate the desirability of pro-tobacco media or the expectation of future smoking. Findings will assist in age-appropriate targeting and further development of media literacy interventions.