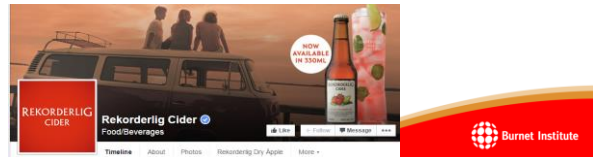


Young peoples' perceptions of alcohol advertising on Facebook

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Background

- Social media provides novel opportunities for alcohol brands
 - Reach millions of young people
 - Engage with customers and tailor messages
 - Paid and no-cost advertising
 - Social network and peers reinforce messages
 - Large volume and rapid turnover means advertising more difficult to regulate



Background

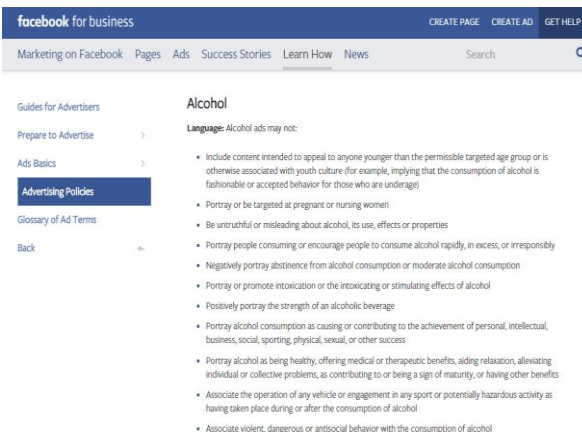
- Alcohol advertising is regulated by the Australian Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC)



- ABAC applies to all advertising, including social media
- Social media platforms additionally have their own regulations

ABAC

- Ads must not...
 - Encourage rapid or excessive consumption
 - Encourage irresponsible or offensive behaviour
 - Have strong or evident **appeal to minors**
 - Suggest that the beverage may contribute to a significant **change in mood** or environment
 - Show the beverage as contributing to personal, business, **social**, sporting, sexual or other **success**
 - Suggest that the consumption offers any therapeutic benefit or aid to **relaxation**
 - Show consumption before or during an activity requiring high alertness



Alcohol

Language: Alcohol ads may not:

- Include content intended to appeal to anyone younger than the permissible targeted age group or is otherwise associated with youth culture (for example, implying that the consumption of alcohol is fashionable or accepted behavior for those who are underage)
- Portray or be targeted at pregnant or nursing women
- Be untruthful or misleading about alcohol, its use, effects or properties
- Portray people consuming or encourage people to consume alcohol rapidly, in excess, or irresponsibly
- Negatively portray abstinence from alcohol consumption or moderate alcohol consumption
- Portray or promote intoxication or the intoxicating or stimulating effects of alcohol
- Positively portray the strength of an alcoholic beverage
- Portray alcohol consumption as causing or contributing to the achievement of personal, intellectual, business, social, sporting, physical, sexual, or other success
- Portray alcohol as being healthy, offering medical or therapeutic benefits, aiding relaxation, alleviating individual or collective problems, as contributing to or being a sign of maturity, or having other benefits
- Associate the operation of any vehicle or engagement in any sport or potentially hazardous activity as having taken place during or after the consumption of alcohol
- Associate violent, dangerous or antisocial behavior with the consumption of alcohol

Background



- Researchers have identified problematic alcohol ads on social media
- However, young people interpret advertising messages differently to adults and trained researchers
- Receiver-oriented message analysis (ROMA) is a methodology establishing how information is perceived by receivers

Aim

- To use ROMA to explore young people’s perceptions of current alcohol advertising on Facebook
- To determine whether advertising complies with ABAC code and Facebook Policies according to the views of young people



Methodology

- A focus group discussion to inform questions
- Online cross-sectional survey
- Australians aged 16-29 years
- Convenience sample
- Recruited through online advertising
 - Pureprofile (18-29 years)
 - Facebook ads (16-18 years)



Apart from telling you to drink Strongbow, what do you think is the single main message of these ads?

Results

- 172 participants
- 63% female
- 40% university educated
- 47% drank alcohol <=monthly



Results: Open-ended

anytime anywhere australian best better brand buy casual celebrate
 chill classy cool couples culture different **drink** drunk
 enjoyed events family feel festivals food
 friends fun gatherings happy help life love mans nice night
 occasion party people perfect pride
 refreshing relax romantic share social
 sophisticated special **summer** taste weekend women young

Results: common themes

- Social success (n=200)
 - "Make you more sociable"
 - "That it's a good way to impress people"
- Party/festivals (n=124)
 - "Party drink, fun and social"
 - "Be young and party"
- Mood improvement (n=121)
 - "A drink that makes you feel happier, relaxed, and loving"

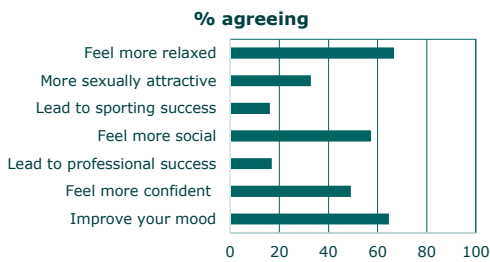


Results: common themes

- Tastes good (n=62)
- Drink on any occasion (n=71)
- Summery (n=93)
- Sophisticated/elegant/classy (n=58)
- Romantic/sexy (n=80)
- Masculine (n=47)
- Australian (n=38)



Results: closed-ended



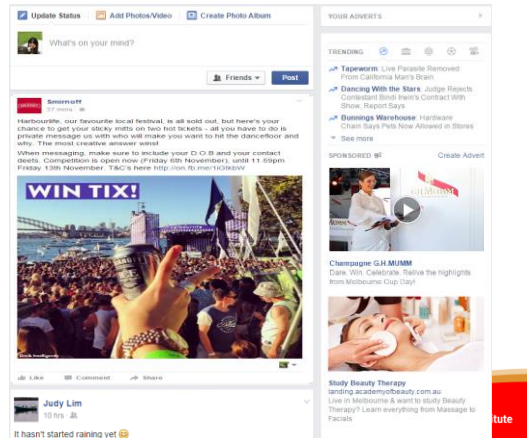
Discussion

- Young people perceive Facebook alcohol ads as relating to social success and mood enhancement
- Ads not conforming to ABAC guidelines
 - Enforcement of guidelines poor
 - Compliance voluntary



Discussion

- Ads not conforming to Facebook guidelines
 - Concept of 'ad' on Facebook is a grey area



Declarations

- Funded by ANPHA
- No conflicts of interest to declare

