

Politics & Big Alcohol

Countering Industry Tactics in the U.S.

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Marin Institute Strategies

- ❑ Monitor and expose the alcohol industry's harmful products, practices, and promotion
- ❑ Research and propose viable policy solutions to reduce alcohol-related harm
- ❑ Support communities, coalitions, and organizers in rejecting Big Alcohol's damaging activities



Big Alcohol's Tactics

- ❑ **Consolidate** into multinational conglomerates
- ❑ **Lobby** to undermine effective public policy
- ❑ **Target** vulnerable populations such as youth
- ❑ **Public relations** that blames parents, drinkers
- ❑ **Fund** alternative science, “responsibility” programs
- ❑ **Misdirect** with voluntary, self-regulation charade

The Biggest of Big Alcohol



A-B InBev

- \$395 million advertising 9 beers
- \$3,460,000 - lobbying
- \$373,500 - campaign donations

- ❑ Parent companies HQ in Belgium & England
- ❑ 80% of the U.S. market
- ❑ 40% of global market

MillerCoors

- \$315 million advertising 7 beers
- \$1,367,000 - lobbying
- \$426,930 - campaign donations

The Biggest of Big Alcohol

DIAGEO

- ❑ HQ: England
- ❑ Top spirits producer
- ❑ \$99 million - advertising
- ❑ \$1.96 million - lobbying



The Biggest of Big Alcohol



Pernod Ricard



- ❑ HQ: France
- ❑ Top spirits producer
- ❑ \$42 million - advertising
- ❑ \$1.2 million - lobbying



Lobbying Arms



BEER INSTITUTE



WINE INSTITUTE
THE VOICE FOR CALIFORNIA WINE

DISTILLED
SPIRITS
COUNCIL
OF THE
UNITED
STATES

Front Groups

Bacardi U.S.A.
Beam Global
Brown-Forman
Constellation Brands
DIAGEO
Hood River Distillers
Pernod Ricard
Sidney Frank Importing Co.



Anheuser-Busch InBev
Asahi Breweries
Bacardi-Martini
Beam Global
Brown-Forman
Diageo
Heineken
Molson Coors
Pernod Ricard
SABMiller



International Center for Alcohol Policies
Analysis. Balance. Partnership.



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Targeted Marketing to Youth



Public Relations – Blame Parents

Parents Cannot be Expected to Shoulder the Burden Alone

Other ways we help parents:

- Speed limits, speed bumps
- Child pornography laws
- Child labor laws
- Toy safety laws
- Food safety laws

"My daughter's high school graduation is a special occasion, so I think it's okay if I allow her and her friends to drink alcohol."

THINK AGAIN.

Parents have the power to help prevent underage drinking. Regardless of whether you're buying teens alcohol or hosting a drinking party for minors, it's irresponsible and illegal. Do your part to prevent. Don't provide alcohol to minors.

Brewery don't provide alcohol to minors
ANHEUSER-BUSCH, INC.

In partnership with
National Parental Leadership Institute
National Responsible Beverage Association

RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS™

Funding Educational Programs

Education alone has proven to be a dismal failure

“There is not a single public health crisis in the history of mankind that has been solved by handing out brochures.”

- Harold Goldstein, director,
California Center for Public Health Advocacy



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Why Big Alcohol Can't Police Itself

A Review of Advertising Self-Regulation in the Distilled Spirits Industry

- **Examined 7 DISCUS Code Reports 2004-2007**
 - **Complaints and decisions made by Review Board**
 - **Analyzed variables**
 - **Reasoning for the decisions**

Results – Failure of Self-Regulation



- **Worst “repeat offender” brands:**
 - Skyy Vodka (8 complaints)
 - Svedka Vodka (6 complaints)

- **Worst “repeat offender” companies:**
 - Diageo (14 complaints)
 - Campari (11 complaints)

Results – Failure of Self-Regulation



- The most common complaints by far were about ads with sexual content
- 22 complaints alleged that ads overexposed youth
- Complaints by industry members 12.7 times more likely to be found in violation

Results – Failure of Self-Regulation

- **34% of complaints were from companies with DISCUS member on board**
- **Of these, 13% were in violation**
- **Complaints regarding ads from companies with a member on the review board were 3 times less likely to be found in violation**

Barriers to Effective Self-Regulation

- 1) Little public awareness
- 2) No independent review
- 3) Subjective guidelines
- 4) No penalties or enforcement power

Realities About Self-Regulation

- ❑ **Response by industry to regulatory threat**
- ❑ **Voluntary system of vague rules**
- ❑ **Defined and controlled by corporations**
- ❑ **Alternative to enforceable laws**

Realities About Self-Regulation

“No one would seriously suggest that individuals should regulate themselves, that laws against murder, assault, and theft are unnecessary because people are socially responsible.”

Joel Bakan, *The Corporation*, 2003



What We Can Do

- ❑ Increase alcohol prices
- ❑ Stop youth-oriented products
- ❑ Restrict alcohol advertising
- ❑ Reject Big Alcohol funding and messages
- ❑ Call for an end to self-regulation
- ❑ Get politics out of policymaking

Increase Alcohol Prices

- ❑ One of the most effective prevention strategies
- ❑ Youth are especially sensitive to price
- ❑ Alcohol taxes can generate new revenue
- ❑ Lots of activity in states due to economy

Stop youth-oriented products



Alcoholic energy drinks
- soon to be history?

Alcopops campaign
- continues in states

Stop Youth-targeted Marketing



“Alcohol Promotion on Facebook”

**Marin Institute article,
Journal of Global Drug
Policy and Practice**

(September 2009)

Restrict Alcohol Advertising

- ❑ Local level, on government property
- ❑ Rulemaking on product placement
- ❑ Self-regulation?



What We Can Do – Expose Lobbying

Marin Institute Reports

- **Big Beer Duopoly**
- **You Get What You Pay For**
- **Alcohol Fuels Presidential Campaign**



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Contact Info

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