

FEWER DROPS IN THE BUCKET: ALCOHOL INDUSTRY “RESPONSIBILITY” ADVERTISING DECLINED ON TELEVISION IN 2002

Introduction

*“There is no doubt that our efforts have helped promote responsible drinking. ... When it comes to fighting underage drinking and drunk driving, we all need to be a part of the solutions to these issues. When you think about it, it’s responsibility that really matters.”*¹

-- John Kaestner, vice president of Consumer Affairs at Anheuser-Busch, February 25, 2004, about all Anheuser-Busch responsibility communications

*“The federal government should fund and actively support the development of a national media effort, as a major component of an adult-oriented campaign to reduce underage drinking.”*²

National Research Council/Institute of Medicine, September 2003

In September 2003, the National Research Council/Institute of Medicine (IOM) issued a landmark report on underage drinking. Titled *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, the report stated that underage alcohol use was associated with violence, suicide, educational failure, traffic crashes, and other problem behaviors. It cited estimates that underage drinking in 1996 led to 3,500 deaths, 2 million non-fatal injuries, and at least \$53 billion in social costs.³

The IOM report noted that “current rates [of underage drinking] are not significantly different than they were in 1993 and remain disturbingly high.”⁴ It concluded that “the problem of underage drinking in the United States is endemic and, in the committee’s judgment, is not likely to improve in the absence of a significant new intervention.”⁵

The centerpiece of the IOM’s recommendations was a call for a national media campaign, targeted at adults, “designed to animate and sustain a broad, deep, societal commitment to reduce underage drinking,”⁶ and funded at a level roughly equivalent to the \$100 million per year being spent on the Office of National Drug Control Policy’s anti-drug campaign and the American Legacy Foundation’s anti-tobacco campaign.⁷ This recommendation was based on the IOM’s review of evaluations of illegal drug, tobacco and other public health media campaigns, which found the campaigns to be effective tools for changing attitudes and behavior.⁸

¹ Anheuser-Busch Companies, “Anheuser-Busch Unveils New Alcohol Awareness Campaign: Spending on Responsibility Efforts Over 20 Years To Exceed \$500,000,000 In 2004,” 25 February 2004. Available at <http://www.anheuser-busch.com/news/AlcoholAwareness.htm> (cited 5 April 2004).

² National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (NRC/IOM), *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, R.J. Bonnie and M.E. O’Connell, eds. (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2004), 3.

³ NRC/IOM, *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, 13. To our knowledge, 1996 is the most recent year for which such estimates are available.

⁴ NRC/IOM, *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, 101.

⁵ NRC/IOM, *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, 101.

⁶ NRC/IOM, *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, 105.

⁷ NRC/IOM, *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, 247-8.

⁸ NRC/IOM, *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, 115-9.

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In response to this recommendation, alcohol industry spokespersons have pointed to the industry's own media and other campaigns to promote alcohol awareness and reduce underage drinking. According to Beer Institute president Jeff Becker, "Brewers have committed hundreds of millions of dollars and substantial human, media, political and other resources to create effective anti-underage drinking programs."⁹ Anheuser-Busch Vice President Francine Katz told a Congressional subcommittee earlier this year that "my company has invested nearly a half billion dollars thus far"¹⁰ in efforts to fight the abuse of its products.¹¹ Distillers point to their investments in organizations such as the Century Council, which has received \$130 million from spirits companies since 1991 to fight drunk driving and underage drinking.¹²

The purpose of this report is to examine youth and adult exposure to alcohol industry responsibility advertising on television in 2002 in comparison with exposure to the industry's advertising for alcohol products.

Findings

The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth reviewed all alcohol industry "responsibility" advertising on television in 2002, as reported by TNS Media Intelligence/CMR. "Responsibility" ads in this report were defined as any ads warning against driving after drinking or encouraging use of a designated driver, advising viewers to drink responsibly, or informing them about the legal drinking age of 21. "Product" ads were ads that marketed alcohol products. Although many of these product ads included brief or small voluntary warnings (which research has found to be ineffective¹³), "responsibility ads" for the purposes of this report had to have as their primary focus a clear, unambiguous responsibility message such as warning against drinking and driving or discouraging underage drinking. There was no attempt to assess the effectiveness of the messages in the ads. The responsibility advertisements were analyzed in terms of spending and youth and adult audiences reached, and were also compared with such responsibility advertising in 2001.

Key findings included:

- Alcohol industry "responsibility" advertising declined substantially in 2002 from 2001 levels, at the same time that alcohol product advertising increased significantly.¹⁴ In 2002, alcohol companies placed 289,381 product commercials for alcohol on television and 1,280 responsibility advertisements, compared with 208,909 product advertisements and 2,379 responsibility ads in 2001. In other words, for every one responsibility ad aired in 2002, there were 226 product ads. In 2001, the ratio was 1 to 88. For every dollar spent on responsibility ads in 2002, the industry spent \$99 on product ads. In 2001, the ratio was \$1 to \$35 (see Figure 1).

Table 1: Alcohol Industry Product, Responsibility and Other Advertising on Television, 2001-2002

	2002		2001		% change 2001-2002	
	Ads	Dollars	Ads	Dollars	Ads	Dollars
Responsibility Ads	1,280	\$10,043,997	2,379	\$23,217,900	-46%	-57%
Product Ads	289,381	\$990,225,497	208,909	\$811,166,400	39%	22%
Other Ads ¹⁵	3,439	\$5,038,609	3,311	\$13,434,600	4%	-62%
Total	294,100	\$1,005,308,103	214,599	\$847,818,900	37%	19%

Sources: TNS Media Intelligence/CMR, Nielsen Media Research

⁹ Statement of Jeff Becker, President of the Beer Institute, United States Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, Subcommittee on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, September 30, 2003.

¹⁰ Testimony of Francine Katz, Vice-President, Corporate Communications, Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc., presented to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce, Subcommittee on Education Reform, February 11, 2004.

¹¹ According to the Anheuser-Busch Web site, since 1982 the company and its wholesalers "have invested more than \$465 million in alcohol awareness and education efforts to help fight underage drinking and drunk driving and to promote personal responsibility." "Anheuser-Busch Unveils New Alcohol Awareness Campaign." Available at <http://www.anheuser-busch.com/news/AlcoholAwareness.htm> (cited 5 April 2004).

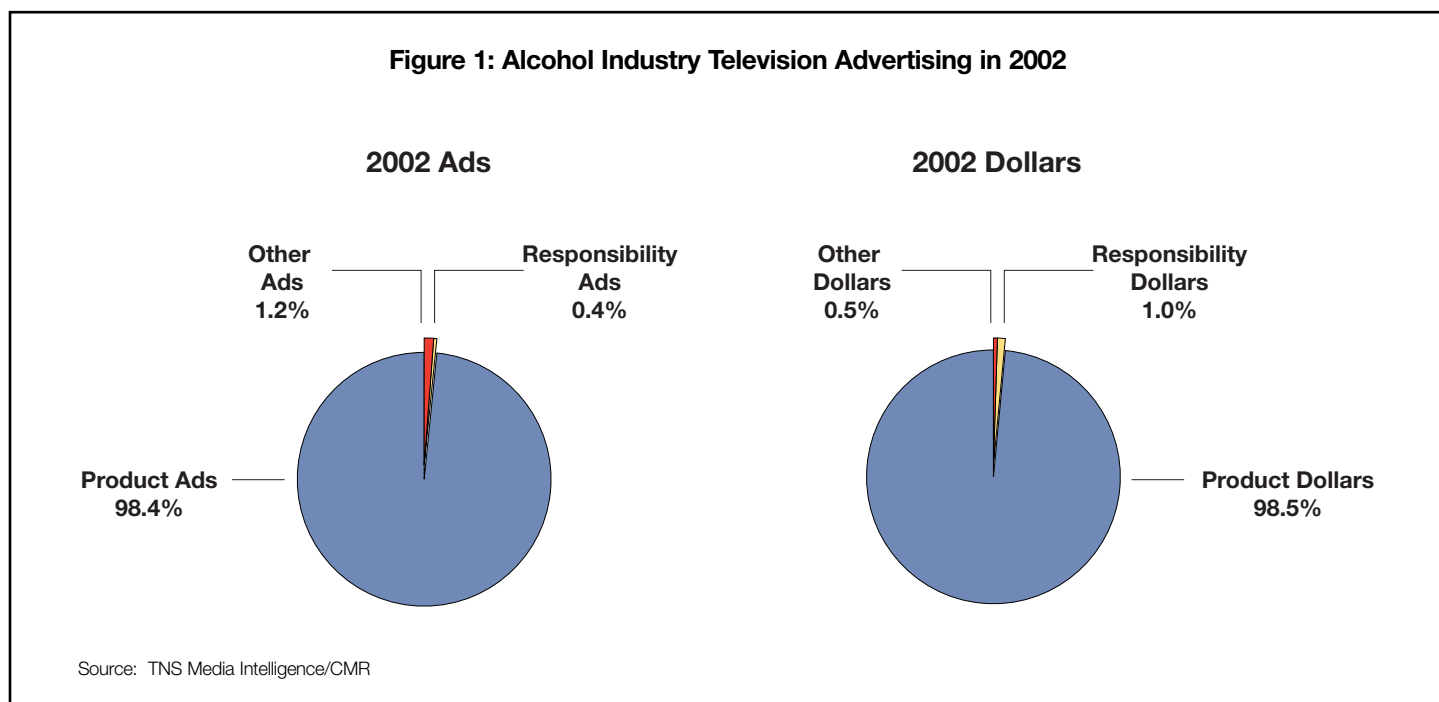
¹² Century Council, "About the Council." Available at <http://www.centurycouncil.org/home.html> (cited 18 May 2004).

¹³ RJ Fox et al., "Adolescents' attention to beer and cigarette print ads and associated product warnings," *Journal of Advertising* 27, no. 3 (1998): 57-68.

¹⁴ Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, *Youth Exposure to Alcohol Ads on Television, 2002: From 2001 to 2002, Alcohol's Adland Grew Vaster* (Washington, DC: Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, 2004).

¹⁵ "Other" refers to civic advertising not related to alcohol and to other corporate and community advertising purchased by alcohol companies.

- Advertising purchased by alcohol producers warning about drunk driving or the legal drinking age accounted for one percent of dollars spent, and less than one half of one percent of ads purchased by alcohol companies on television in 2002.



Messages

Alcohol industry responsibility messages fell into two categories: the legal drinking age and drunk driving.

- *Legal drinking age.* Alcohol companies aired 609 times as many product ads as they did ads warning about the legal drinking age.
- *Drunk driving.* Alcohol companies aired 359 times as many product ads as they did ads warning against drunk driving.

Audiences

- Young people ages 12 to 20 were 128 times more likely per capita to see an alcohol product ad on television than an alcohol company-sponsored responsibility ad. By message, they were:
 - more than 400 times more likely to see an alcohol product ad than an industry-sponsored ad about underage drinking, and
 - 188 times more likely to see an alcohol product ad than an industry-sponsored ad about drinking-driving.
- Adults 21 and older were 97 times more likely per capita to see an alcohol product ad on television than an alcohol company-sponsored responsibility ad. By message, they were:
 - 280 times more likely to see an alcohol product ad than an industry-sponsored ad about underage drinking, and
 - 148 times more likely to see an alcohol product ad than an industry-sponsored ad about drinking-driving.
- Product advertising for alcohol reached 90% of young people ages 12 to 20 and 96% of adults 21 and over. Of those who saw these ads, young people saw an average of 281 product ads, while adults saw an average of 404.5 ads.
- Alcohol industry responsibility ads reached approximately 52% of youth ages 12 to 20. Of those who saw these ads, young people were exposed to an average of 3.8 ads.
 - Messages about the legal drinking age reached approximately 37% of youth ages 12 to 20, and of those who saw these ads, young people were exposed to an average of 1.7 ads.
 - Messages about drunk driving reached approximately 38% of youth ages 12 to 20. Of those who saw the ads, youth were exposed to an average of 3.6 ads.

- Alcohol industry responsibility ads reached approximately 72% of adults 21 and over. Of those who saw the ads, adults saw an average of 5.6 ads.
 - Messages about the legal drinking age reached approximately 60% of adults 21 and over. Adults who were exposed to these ads saw an average of 2.3 ads.
 - Messages about drunk driving reached approximately 53% of adults age 21 and over. Adults who were exposed to these ads saw an average of 5 ads.

Table 2: Exposure of Youth and Adult Audiences to Alcohol Industry Product Advertising and Responsibility Advertising, 2002

Ad Type	12-20			21+		
	GRPs ¹⁶	Reach	Frequency	GRPs	Reach	Frequency
Product Ads	25,348	90%	281.6	38,907	96%	404.5
Responsibility/Drunk Driving	135	38%	3.6	263	53%	5
Responsibility/Underage Drinking	63	37%	1.7	139	60%	2.3
Total Responsibility Ads	198	52%	3.8	402	72%	5.6

Sources: TNS Media Intelligence/CMR, Nielsen Media Research

Companies

Of the 59 alcohol marketers advertising their products on television in 2002, four placed responsibility advertisements.

Table 3: Alcohol Industry Product and Responsibility Advertising by Parent Company, 2002

Parent Company	Expenditures			# Ads		
	Drinking/Driving	Legal Age	Product	Drinking/Driving	Legal Age	Product
ADOLPH COORS CO	\$450,013	\$170,036	\$183,022,235	285	140	36,241
ANHEUSER-BUSCH COS INC	\$3,135,861	\$3,489,692	\$298,953,910	223	282	44,925
SABMILLER PLC	\$322,839	\$386,420	\$187,769,451	175	53	47,696
DIAGEO PLC	\$2,089,136	\$0	\$88,567,069	122	0	36,069
Subtotal of selected companies	\$5,997,849	\$4,046,148	\$758,312,665	805	475	164,931

Sources: TNS Media Intelligence/CMR, Nielsen Media Research

- Anheuser-Busch placed the most product advertisements and the most responsibility ads. The company spent 45 times as much on product ads as on responsibility ads, and placed 89 times more product ads than responsibility messages.
- In terms of spending, the next largest spender on responsibility advertising was Diageo PLC, whose alcohol brands include Smirnoff Vodka, Smirnoff Ice, and Captain Morgan Rum, among others. In December 2001, Diageo reached an agreement with NBC to allow it to advertise on that network's broadcasts, provided that Diageo also produced and paid for alcohol responsibility advertisements on the network. NBC rescinded the agreement in late March of 2002 in response to public and Congressional pressure. In 2002, Diageo placed no paid responsibility advertisements on television after April 20 through any of the outlets for which data were available for this report.

Conclusion

Adults and young people face a television environment filled with product advertising for alcohol, with very little information about the dangers alcohol use can pose for young people. This in turn buttresses the IOM's recommendation for an adult-focused national media campaign about underage drinking. A survey of more than 800 parents of teenagers nationwide conducted for CAMY by Peter D. Hart Research Associates and American Viewpoint in June of 2003 found that a wide gap exists between parents' perceptions of

¹⁶ "Gross rating points" measure how much an audience segment is exposed to advertising per capita. Another way of measuring advertising exposure is "gross impressions" (the total number of times all the members of a given audience are exposed to advertising). The adult population will almost always receive far more "gross impressions" than youth, because there are far more adults in the population than youth.

their teens' drinking habits and those habits reported by teens themselves.¹⁷ The largest gap is between 15-to 16-year-olds and their parents. Only 31% of parents of teens in this group say that their teen probably or definitely has consumed an alcoholic beverage in the last year, as compared with 60% of teens in this age group who report having done this.¹⁸

Parents need a more accurate picture of the role that drinking plays in the lives of their teenaged children. This report illustrates that alcohol company-sponsored responsibility advertisements on television fall far short of providing this. As the IOM recommended, an adult-focused national media effort independent of the alcohol companies is needed to help build and sustain a broad, national commitment to preventing and reducing underage drinking.

About This Report

The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University (www.camy.org) monitors the marketing practices of the alcohol industry to focus attention and action on industry practices that jeopardize the health and safety of America's youth. Reducing high rates of underage alcohol consumption and the suffering caused by alcohol-related injuries and deaths among young people requires using the public health strategies of limiting the access to and the appeal of alcohol to underage persons. The Center is supported by grants from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to Georgetown University.

The analysis for this report was performed for the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth by Virtual Media Resources (VMR), a media research, planning, market analysis and consulting firm based in Natick, Massachusetts. All spending and occurrences for this report were classified and tracked by TNS Media Intelligence/CMR (formerly Competitive Media Reporting), an industry-standard source for advertising tracking and reporting. Television audience data for this analysis were provided by Nielsen Media Research, the industry-standard source for ratings, audience composition and population/universe estimates.

Responsibility ads in this report were selected using a two-stage method. An initial set of commercials was identified using the summaries of ad creative copy provided by TNS Media Intelligence/CMR. Verification was then accomplished by obtaining actual commercials from Video Monitoring Service (VMS) and subjecting them to review by staff at VMR.

This report includes all advertising bought on network, national cable, and local broadcast stations. It does not include advertising bought directly on regional/local cable networks, Hispanic networks, and miscellaneous other sources, all of which are not covered by TNS Media Intelligence/CMR or Nielsen. It also does not include television advertising paid for by alcohol industry associations or funded organizations, or alcohol company expenditures on alcohol education in venues outside of television advertising.

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¹⁷ Memorandum, "Results of a National Survey of Parents," from Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc./American Viewpoint to All Interested Parties, Washington, DC, June 24, 2003. The poll was conducted for CAMY and is available at <http://camy.org/research/files/hartmemo0703.pdf> (cited 5 May 2004).

¹⁸ LD Johnston, PM O'Malley and JG Bachman, *Monitoring the Future: National Results on Adolescent Drug Use—Overview of Key Findings*, 2002 (Bethesda: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2003), 47.