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



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



The Biggest of Big Alcohol





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





Lobbying Arms



Front Groups

Bacardi U.S.A. Beam Global **Brown-Forman Constellation Brands** DIAGEO Hood River Distillers Pernod Ricard



Distillers fighting drunk driving and underage drinking

Sidney Frank Importing Co.

International Center for Alcohol Policies ICAP Analysis. Balance. Partnership.

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



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Targeted Marketing to Youth









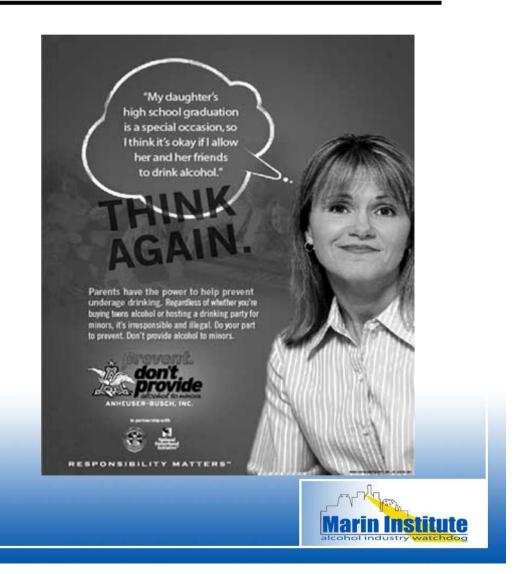


Public Relations – Blame Parents

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



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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