

# Get 'em Young:

Mapping young people's  
exposure to alcohol marketing  
in Ireland



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by

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All images in this report were supplied by young people involved in the research from 2007

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# Foreword

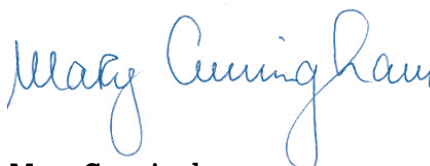
NYCI has been working on the issue of alcohol misuse and alcohol related harm as it impacts on young people in Irish society for many years. We know from the work of our member organisations that alcohol misuse among young people is a major and growing issue across many communities up and down the country.

Children as young as 10 and 11 years of age are starting to drink and the numbers of young people under 18 who are heavy and frequent users of alcohol here is among the highest in Europe. We recognise that there is an immediate impact on health and well being of young people from such frequent and heavy alcohol use. Their education can be affected are education, as can relations with parents and family; there is also greater potential for accidents, unprotected sex and getting into trouble with the Gardaí. However, there is growing evidence of the longer term health affects of young people starting to drink so much alcohol early in life, such as cognitive impairment, greater levels of addiction, and liver disease. We have a duty to protect and to support young people to understand the full impact of alcohol consumption on their lives.

However, as a society we cannot lay all the responsibility on young people. Irish society has a problem with alcohol and our Government must respond with policies that work. All the evidence suggests that we require a range of policy measures to deal effectively with this issue. These include restricting availability, addressing costs, informing and mobilising young people and their communities along with controlling the advertising and marketing of alcohol to young people. Marketing and advertising plays a major role in forming and shaping opinions, attitudes and behaviour in our society. The drinks industry is among the highest spenders in this sector; however they state that their activities do not target young people.

Therefore in this initial piece of work we decided to put this assertion to the test. This report is unique in that for the first time in Ireland, young people record their experience of alcohol advertising and marketing in their own surroundings and environment. The Government is on record as stating its concern about alcohol misuse among young people and we hope this report will inform them about the efficacy of the current policies and actions. We look forward to working with them following the publication of this report.

NYCI appreciates the financial support we received from the Health Service Executive for this piece of work. I want to thank Dr. Ann Hope whose experience and expertise was vital in delivering this project and writing the report based on the findings. Thanks also must go to Niamh McCrea for facilitating and supporting the young people who were participants in the research and my colleagues in NYCI Marie-Claire McAleer, Clodagh O'Brien and James Doorley for their work on the project and managing the production of this report. Most of all I want to thank the young people involved in the project who gave their time to note and record their interactions with and experiences of alcohol advertising and marketing. We hope their contributions will lead to more effective policy by Government, which will benefit not only young people, but Irish society as a whole.



**Mary Cunningham**

**Director  
National Youth Council of Ireland**

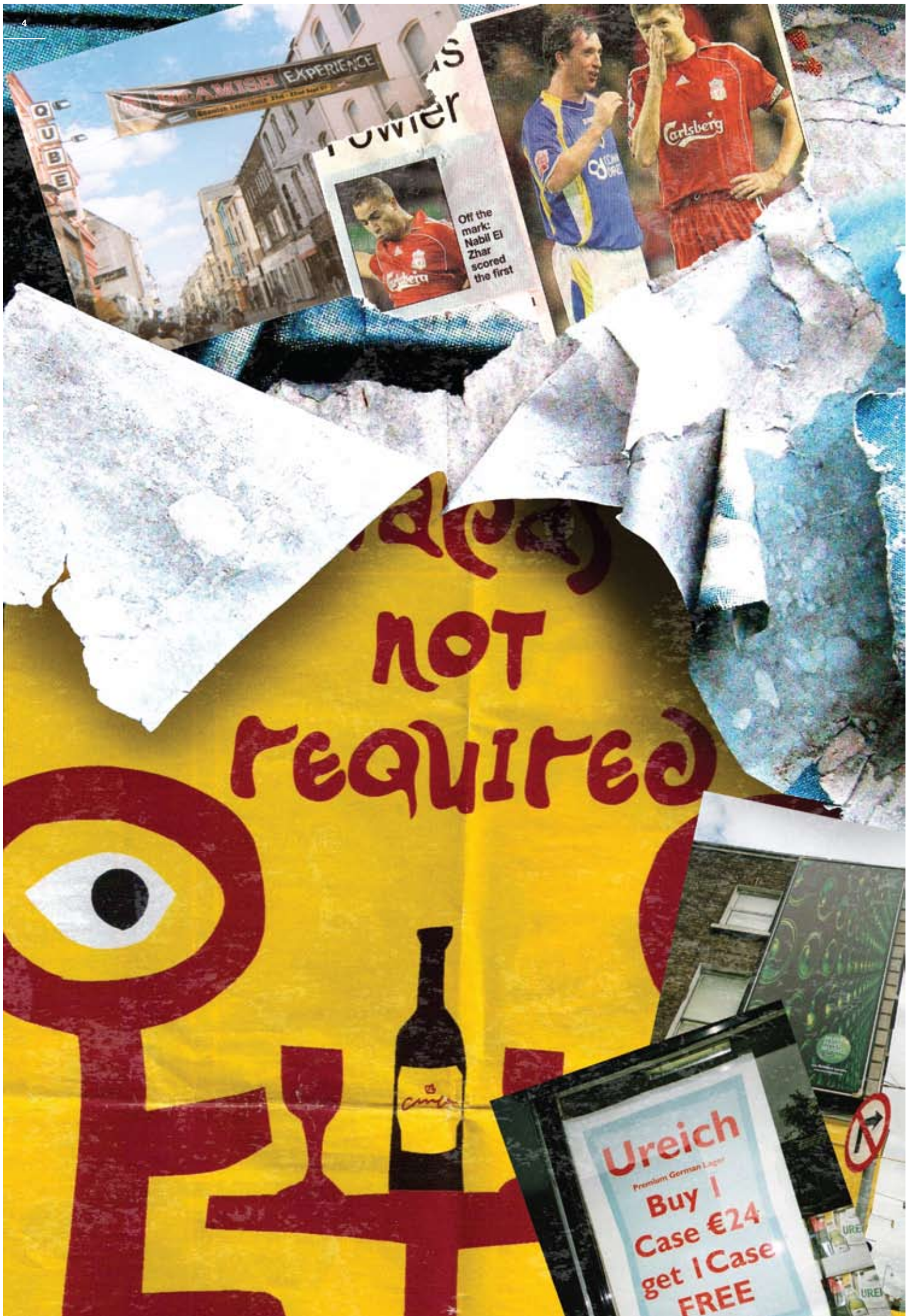
# Acknowledgements

I would like to warmly thank the young people who participated in this research project. They were engaging, committed and a delight to work with throughout the process. This report reflects their work and documents their views. The young people chose the title of the report – ‘Get ‘em Young’ – which reflects an insightful understanding of alcohol marketing and young people.

A special thanks to Niamh McCrea as youth leader who co-ordinated the involvement of young people in terms of recruitment, training, back-up support and monitoring during data collection and throughout the project.

**Dr. Ann Hope**





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# 1. Introduction

Ireland has given international commitments to protect children from the pressures to drink and to ensure that alcohol products are not designed or promoted to appeal to children (WHO European Charter on Alcohol, 1995; WHO Declaration on Young People and Alcohol, 2001; EU Council Recommendation on the drinking of alcohol by young people in particular children and adolescents, 2001).

## 1.1 Alcohol Policy in Ireland

In Ireland, against a backdrop of rapid economic growth, alcohol consumption dramatically increased during the 1990s<sup>1</sup>. The increase in alcohol consumption corresponded with an increase in alcohol related harm in terms of sickness and death<sup>2</sup>, damaged lives and reduced public safety<sup>3,4,5</sup>. Harmful drinking, in particular episodic heavy drinking, more common in Ireland than in other European Countries, added to the burden of harm<sup>6,7</sup>.

The alcohol science is clear as to what works in reducing alcohol harm, which includes high taxation, strict controls on availability, marketing and random breath testing<sup>8,9,10</sup>. However, the Government has made, for the most part, questionable policy choices (no tax increases during economic boom, longer opening hours, free movement of licences, below cost selling of alcohol) and pursued policies that have been shown not to work (information campaigns, education, individual responsibility and self regulation).

The Government did implement two effective alcohol policy measures, a significant increase in excise duty on alcohol (2003) and the introduction of mandatory alcohol testing (2006). Both of these measures have reduced alcohol related harm<sup>5</sup>. While alcohol laws (Intoxicating Liquor Acts) were strengthened (temporary closure for underage sales and service to drunken customers along with a happy hour ban), the measures were very limited and enforcement was limited and weak. The impact of the earlier closing time for off-licences (2008) has yet to be evaluated.

## 1.2 Protecting Young People

The arrival of alcopops to Ireland in 1995 marked a new era in underage drinking. It accelerated a growing problem and had its greatest impact in introducing young girls to alcohol<sup>11</sup>. It demonstrated the Drinks

Industry's ability to capture a whole new segment of the population (girls under 18 years) through these new products with sweet flavour, soft drinks look-alikes, appealing packaging and advertising. Research on the impact of alcohol advertising in Ireland, found that adolescents (12–17 years) were strongly attracted to alcohol advertisements and this played a role in their beliefs, expectations and knowledge about alcohol use and for some (especially girls) was a source of encouragement to drink. Appealing elements identified by young people in Ireland were humour, sports personalities, animation, animals, music, bright colours, risky activities, clubbing, dancing, plenty of action or objects of visual appeal<sup>12</sup>. This report recommended that exposure of children to alcohol advertising in Ireland should be significantly reduced.

The Strategic Task Force on Alcohol (STFA), established by the Department of Health and Children in 2002, extended the recommendation in their first report to include all alcohol marketing, covering placement, content and sponsorship in order to protect children and reduce pressure on children to drink. The Minister of Health and Children announced his intention in early 2003 to introduce legislation to restrict alcohol marketing, which was formally approved by government in 2003. The Taoiseach, speaking at the European Brewery Convention in Dublin (2003), outlined the proposed legislation to protect young people. It was to restrict where alcohol advertising could be placed (public transport, youth events and youth centres), establish a TV watershed of 22.00 hours, ban drinks industry sponsorship of youth leisure activities and require a health warning on all alcohol advertisements and promotional materials. In 2004, the second STFA Report called for immediate enactment of the proposed legislation to reduce the exposure of children to alcohol advertising, sponsorship and promotions.

In parallel with this process, the Department of Health and Children approached the advertising, drinks and

media communication industries to inform them of their concerns and advise them of the proposed Bill on restricting alcohol marketing<sup>13</sup>. The industry accepted the concerns and asked for time to respond. The first response of industry was to set up a company (Central Copy Clearance Ireland Ltd) in 2003 to vet and approve all alcohol advertisements to ensure the content was in line with the voluntary ASAI Code and the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland Code. The second response was to propose an industry Voluntary Code of practice (2004) based on audience profiling (placement) with a cut-off of 33%. This meant that no alcohol advertisements would be shown during TV and radio programmes where more than 33% of the audience was below 18 years of age. When applied to outdoor advertising, it meant that of all the available space, 33% could be used for alcohol advertisements, in other words no ‘wrap rounds’.\*

The Minister for Health and Children endorsed this voluntary code and established the Alcohol Marketing Communications Monitoring Body (2005), to monitor adherence to the code. However, the Minister retains the option of reactivating the Bill if the voluntary codes do not prove to be effective. Following the First Annual Report from the monitoring body, a revised voluntary code is now in place since mid 2008. The two main changes to the code are that the audience profile cut-off is now 25% instead of 33% and where advertising is permitted alcohol advertisements will be limited to 25% of the available space. A summary of the new code is in Appendix 1. While some changes have been made to the volume of alcohol marketing (supply side), no evaluation has taken place to assess if these changes have provided any real protection for children or what impact these changes have on young people’s decision to drink and how they drink (demand side).

Protecting young people from exposure to alcohol marketing is an important part of an overall alcohol strategy to reduce alcohol harm. Other necessary measures include reducing the supply of alcohol (access, server/seller liability), ensuring communities act in the best interest of children, supporting families and providing adequate services for children at high risk. The bottom line is that alcohol strategies must be based on what works and not on what is popular but ineffective<sup>14</sup>.

### 1.3 Exposure to alcohol marketing – a risk factor

The international research evidence shows that the earlier children start to drink, and the more they drink at a young age, the more likely they are to suffer alcohol related harm, now and in the future<sup>15,16,17</sup>. Alcohol marketing plays a significant role in young people’s decision to drink and in how they drink<sup>18</sup>. Conclusions of a comprehensive review of the research was that there is *increasingly compelling evidence that alcohol marketing is having an effect on young people’s drinking*<sup>19</sup>. Exposure of young people to alcohol advertising changes their beliefs and expectations about drinking and increases the likelihood of heavier drinking. Young people are particularly drawn to elements of music, characters, story and humour<sup>20</sup>. Websites for promoting alcohol have also been found to have elements attractive to young people such as the option of playing games and competitions, downloading sound/music items and photo galleries<sup>21</sup>.

Alcohol sports sponsorship links masculinity, alcohol and sport and embeds alcoholic products into the every day life of the consumer. It reaches the target audience – young males who are the keenest sports fans and heaviest drinkers. During the 2008 European Football Championship, there was high exposure of young adolescent boys (under 16 years) to beer advertisements. Those who watched more football games had a higher intention to drink alcohol in the following months than youths who have not seen the games frequently<sup>22</sup>. A recent study found a direct effect of alcohol advertising and alcohol portrayal in movies on drinking behaviour of male adolescents<sup>23</sup>. It is also important to recognise that many of the contemporary marketing communications practices are not subject to detailed measurement or research evaluation. In the UK, twenty six different marketing practices have been listed as components used by alcohol providers to market alcohol products<sup>24</sup> (Appendix 2), several which are below the line activity.

Longitudinal studies have further strengthened the science base which shows that the volume of advertisements and media exposure increases the likelihood of young people starting to drink, the amount they drink, and the amount they drink on any one occasion. The findings are similar to the

\* A wrap round denotes that all sides of the available space is given to the advertisement.



impact of advertising on smoking and eating behaviours. The results showed that alcohol marketing practices such as alcohol advertising on television<sup>25</sup>, radio, billboards<sup>26</sup>, music videos<sup>27</sup>, alcohol use in movies<sup>28</sup>, in-store alcohol displays, advertising in magazines, alcohol concession stands at sport or music events<sup>29</sup> and alcohol branded merchandise<sup>30</sup> all have an impact on young people's drinking. Cheap alcohol in the form of alcohol price promotions are associated with increased binge drinking<sup>31</sup>. A systematic review, of the 13 longitudinal studies undertaken to date, reported that 12 of the studies found that exposure of alcohol advertising and promotion predicts both the onset of drinking amongst non-drinkers and increased levels of consumption among existing drinkers<sup>32</sup>. One of the studies, measuring impact of exposure to outdoor advertising within 453 metres of schools, did find an effect on intentions to drink in the next month, but not on behaviour. Alcohol advertising, estimated to be only a quarter of the total promotional budget in the UK, is only part of the wide range of marketing communication practices. Therefore the total effects of alcohol marketing are likely to be underestimated.

While the drinks and communication media industries have many self regulatory codes in place in several countries such as the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, UK and Ireland, there is no scientific evidence available that tests the effectiveness of such codes in protecting children, both in terms of exposure to alcohol marketing and the appeal to young people (content) of alcohol marketing.

#### 1.4 Overview of Research Project

The purpose of this research project is to examine if Ireland's stated commitment to protect young people from pressure to drink is reflected in the actual experience of young people. The engagement with young people in this project is a key feature and gives substance to the goal in the National Children Strategy that 'children will have a voice in matters that affect them'<sup>33</sup> in line with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. The involvement of young people was guided by the principles of best practice set out by the National Children's Office, Children's Rights Alliance and the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)<sup>34</sup>. The project was designed with young people as co-researchers to provide a better understanding of their experiences and to improve the credibility of the knowledge that is derived from research involving young people<sup>35</sup>.

This report maps young people's exposure to alcohol marketing, as documented by young people. The term 'mapping' in this study is defined as the detailed description and documentation by young people of alcohol marketing practices that they are exposed to in their daily lives. This mapping report was conceived as part of a broader examination of the impact of alcohol marketing on young people. However, the other phases of the research have not gone ahead due to current economic constraints.

This project was managed by the National Youth Council of Ireland. NYCI is the representative body for national voluntary youth work organisations in Ireland and acts on issues that impact on young people. Its role is recognised in legislation through the Youth Work Act 2001 and as a Social Partner in the Community and Voluntary Pillar. NYCI represents and supports the interests of 55 voluntary youth organisations across Ireland. NYCI wishes to acknowledge the financial support for this project from the Health Service Executive. The Health Service Executive is the Irish State agency responsible for health service delivery and in promoting better health for all.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Research Design - Phase One

The aim of this research was to map (document, describe and provide examples) young people's exposure to alcohol marketing practices in Ireland. The specific objectives were:

- To develop a protocol for the assessment of alcohol marketing practices, using the guidelines and experience of the EU ELSA project.
- To prepare a short review on the impact of alcohol marketing on young people, based on published international research evidence.
- To engage with and train a team of young people in the assessment of alcohol marketing practices.
- To collect examples of the different alcohol marketing practices which young people are exposed to in their daily lives.
- To map the different alcohol marketing practices that young people are exposed to in Ireland.
- To prepare a report with examples on the exposure of young people to alcohol marketing practices in Ireland, based on the mapping exercise.

### 2.2 Study Sample

Through the NYCI network, a group of young people were selected from across the regions (Ulster, Connacht, Leinster and Munster), between 2-4 young people per region. The selection was based on young people who were active in their youth organisations and who had experience of project/group work, but had not worked on alcohol projects. A total of sixteen young people for the project were invited to participate. There were more males than females in the group and the majority were aged 16/17 years. There were three young people aged 18/19 years to ensure that a full range of venues such as pubs/nightclubs could be included in the study. Informed consent was obtained for each individual prior to participation in the project. Training and support was provided for the young people throughout the process.



**One bottle of Wine & 5 cans  
Ureich Lager only €10**



### 2.3 Data Collection

A protocol was developed to ensure a systematic approach to the collection, recording and documentation of alcohol marketing practices. The data was collected by a team of trained young people, supervised and supported by a youth leader and an alcohol researcher. Three single training days were provided which included team building, personal communication skills, building an awareness of the different types of alcoholic beverages, an understanding of marketing practices and the technical requirements in data collection.

A pilot stage was followed by a ten week time period for data collection which took place during the fourth quarter of 2007. A debriefing day at the end of the data collection period was built in for youth researcher discussion and feedback. A 'Tool Kit' was developed by the youth expert for the youth researchers which explained the project and their role in it and included a camera, record sheets and a diary for data collection. Each of the teams (2 people per team) were asked to collect at least 25 examples of alcohol marketing practices. The selection of alcohol marketing practices was to be prioritised based on practices that the youth researcher thought to be popular among young people and/or that the youth researcher liked. Full details of the marketing practices observed (place, beverage type, brand name, marketing practise and its appeal) were to be recorded and where possible, examples provided (Appendix 2).

### 2.4 Data Analysis

Marketing can be defined as *'the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of programs designed to bring about desired exchanges with target audiences. It relies heavily on the adaptation and co-ordination of product, price, promotion and place for achieving effective response'*<sup>36</sup>. The framework used for analysing alcohol marketing practices documented by young people was the four P's of marketing, known as the marketing mix – Product, Price, Place and Promotion.

Product denotes the physical features of the drink, the brand name and the packaging that makes the product more attractive to buy. Branding with a 'personality' is the main feature of contemporary

marketing where desirable lifestyle linked to the product rather than the drink in itself is the focus.

Price is the amount of money to be paid for alcoholic beverages which can range from very low (free or discount prices) to very high (premium prices).

Place is the distribution channels where alcoholic products are marketed and sold. The focus of this project is alcohol on sale to the public through off-premise sales (shops, supermarkets, off-licenses, internet etc.) and on-premise sales (bars, restaurants, night clubs, festivals, events etc.).

Promotion is communicating with the customer about the alcohol product through mass selling, sales promotion and personal selling.

In addition new technology and a range of media such as internet, e-mail, mobile phone, sports and music are used to promote alcohol. Marketers often use a range of marketing techniques within one campaign called 'integrated marketing'. Buzz marketing or 'viral' marketing are strategies used to develop interpersonal interaction, through internet, e-mail, mobile-SMS and special incentives (free telephone time, prizes, free tickets etc), where the consumer becomes the 'marketer' and spreads the commercial messages.

The first stage of the analysis was the debriefing day with all the youth researchers. All examples were viewed and discussed and the top ten most appealing marketing practices were selected by the young people. In addition discussions took place on the data collection process and on a possible title for the report. 'Get 'em young' was put forward by a young person in the group and was agreed. The youth expert collected the record sheets and transferred to them to an Excel sheet template. The alcohol researcher examined the marketing practices recorded by the young people and mapped the results using the 4 P's of marketing.



MARTINI BIANCO  
THE JUICE...



# JOIN THE RED PARTY

Smirnoff are hitting the road with their great new Experience vodka world tour

**Caoimhe YOUNG**

**R**USSIANS know how to drink vodka - neat and without a thought of caution.

According to statistics the Irish knock back 1.8 litres of vodka a year per capita while the Russian average 20 litres - depending on your point of view.

Sales of Guinness are not as high as they once were in Ireland but, like vodka to the Russian, it's a drink we associate with tradition and our national identity. The capital's biggest tourist attraction is no longer picturesque Dublin Zoo or historical Guinness Hop Store.

Since opening in November 2000, it has attracted more than four million visitors from every corner of the globe.

So now the Russians and Smirnoff hope to repeat that success and promote the beginning of the world's most famous vodka with guided tours around the Smirnoff Trading House.

A spokeswoman for Diageo said: "We think it will be a great tourist attraction. It will be a truly Russian experience and bring visitors back in time to when Smirnoff was born."

A man called Piotr Arsenovich Smirnoff began to sell vodka under the name Smirnoff in 1864. By the way Smirnoff is an common name in Russia as Smith is in Ireland.

What set Smirnoff apart was that he was given the Tsar's seal of approval. FCHH times - no other vodka matched that.

It was PIA's third son Vladimir Smirnoff who made sure Smirnoff was revived after the Russian revolution.



HIT: Fans poured into Moscow to savour the music and vodka at the Experience

While the Trading House gets a makeover Smirnoff has already begun to tell people about its history with an event called Smirnoff Experience.

This began with a gala in Moscow with Faithless and Mark Ronson and will take in Shanghai - one of the cities visited by Vladimir at the height of its early success.

In September 2000, year one of the Smirnoff Experience will conclude with a celebration in New York. Details of the events have not yet been released but to keep us happy in the meantime the good people at Smirnoff have come up with some yummy recipes. For the Smirnoff Experience visit [www.smirnoff.com](http://www.smirnoff.com)



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## 3. Results

Thirteen of the 16 young people fully trained in data collection returned record sheets and, where possible, examples. A total of 162 alcohol marketing practices were collected. Of these, five were alcohol related but not in line with the protocol and so were excluded from the analysis. Excluded was an example of a pile of empty beer cans at the edge of a basketball court and an example of beer flavoured chips with the text *'tastes like real beer'*. There were three examples of non-alcoholic drinks, however, the reasons given by young people for their selection were that these non-alcohol products had identical packaging to alcohol products *"comes in lots of colours, in glass bottles identical to WKD® and Fat Frog® and has carrier packs like real drink"*. This might suggest that young people are being primed for alcohol products.

Box 1: Marketing Mix – examples of the 4 P's of marketing

<p><b>Product</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brand name</li> <li>• Physical features of drink (taste, ingredients, strength and appearance)</li> <li>• Packaging of alcohol (style, text and images)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Price</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower price</li> <li>• Happy hours</li> <li>• Volume discounts</li> <li>• Bulk buying</li> <li>• Special offers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Place</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shops/supermarket</li> <li>• Off-licence</li> <li>• Events e.g. sport, cultural, musical</li> <li>• Pub</li> <li>• Hotels</li> <li>• Nightclubs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Promotion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising on TV, radio, cinema</li> <li>• Advertising outdoors – billboards</li> <li>• Advertising in print media</li> <li>• Advertising price discounts</li> <li>• Internet based advertising and promotions</li> <li>• Advertising through mobile phone</li> <li>• Sponsorship of events – sport, cultural, musical</li> <li>• Merchandising – using other products with alcohol logo e.g. t-shirts, games</li> </ul>

The marketing mix framework was used to map the different alcohol marketing practices documented by young people. Examples of the marketing mix (4 P's) product, price place and promotion are outlined in Box 1. However, there is some overlap across the four areas.



Smirnoff®  
magazine advert

Martini®  
magazine advert

### 3.1 Alcohol marketing – Product

Of the total alcohol marketing practices documented by young people, beer products were by far the most often recorded (Table 1). Six of every ten alcohol products that young people recorded were beer/cider products. Spirits (including liqueurs) and wine products were about a quarter of all those recorded and a further 8% were a combination of beer, spirits or wine products. Alcopops/Ready To Drink (RTD) products represented the smallest group (5%) recorded by young people.

Table 1: Alcohol marketing practices by beverage category

Alcohol products	No of times recorded	Percent
Alcopops/RTD	8	5.1%
Beer	89	56.7%
Cider	6	3.8%
Spirits/Liqueurs	24	15.3%
Wine	17	10.8%
More than one beverage product	13	8.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100%</b>

Beer products had a strong branding presence with four 'big' brands dominating – Heineken®, Guinness®, Carlsberg® and Budweiser®, representing over two-thirds of all the beer products recorded by young people. There was just one brand, Bulmers®, recorded in the cider products. Of the spirits/liqueurs products recorded, only three brands had repeat mention – Smirnoff®, Jagermeister® and Baileys®. For the alcopops category, three brands had repeat mention – WKD®, Bacardi Breezer® and Smirnoff Ice®. There was no brand focus in the wine examples.

The way in which alcohol is packaged can ensure that alcoholic products are more attractive to buy. The two alcohol beverage categories where several comments were made about style and appearance of the packaging were spirits and alcopops. The shape and colour of bottles as well as the colour of the product itself were features that young people found most attractive, resulting in spirits products that looked 'fancy', 'stylish' and 'exciting' and for alcopops products that "looked young and trendy". For the most part the packaging of beer products was considered plain and 'nothing special', with the exception of a keg of beer, which was considered attractive 'very classy'.



Outdoor billboard  
outside Cobh train  
station

Outdoor advertising  
at Woolshed Sports  
Baa & Grill

Beer mat

### 3.2 Alcohol marketing – Promotion

Communicating with the customer about the alcohol product through a range of promotional tools is a key part of the marketing mix. In total, there were 16 communication channels where young people documented exposure to alcohol marketing practices and included TV, magazines/newspapers, internet, street flyers, billboards, post, radio, cinema, merchandise, music, sports stadiums and bus. These were clustered into four broad channels – broadcast media, outdoors, print media and new media (Table 2). The issue of place is included in the table for completion and will be explained in the next section.

Television was the most dominant channel of exposure to alcohol marketing recorded by young people. In the outdoor media, promotional flyers delivered on the street were ahead of the more traditional billboard advertisements. Not surprisingly, the new media, in particular the internet, was recorded as an important channel of exposure to alcohol marketing.

When the promotional practices were examined across beverage category, two important findings emerged. Firstly, that commercial communication channels used for alcohol marketing differed across beverage category. Wine promotions were mainly seen in print media. Spirits promotions were evenly distributed across print, television and promotional street flyers. While beer promotions were recorded in all but one of the communication channels listed in Table 2, television was the most dominant channel for the marketing of beer followed by the internet and billboards.

Secondly, the findings showed several communication channels were used to promote alcohol products within one campaign, known as 'integrated marketing'. Two-thirds of the young people reported that they had seen the same alcohol product promoted in other media channels. This was, in particular, the case for beer and spirits promotions. A good example of integrated marketing was for Heineken® where the marketing of the beer was recorded in a magazine, newspaper, supermarket, shop window, billboards, bar mat, internet, cinema and on television.



Table 2: Alcohol marketing - promotional channels used in recorded practices

Promotional channels		Number recorded	Total	Overall proportion %
Broadcast	TV	47		
	Radio	3		
	Cinema	3		
	<b>Total</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>33.8%</b>
Outdoors	Billboards	13		
	Bus	1		
	Street flyers	15		
	Sports stadium	2		
	<b>Total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>19.7%</b>
Print media	Mag/newspaper	23		
	Post	5		
	<b>Total</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>17.8%</b>
New media	Internet	17		
	PlayStation®	1		
	Merchandise	3		
	Music/other	3		
	<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>15.3%</b>
Place	Supermarket/shop	12		
	Bar/pub	4		
	Nightclub	5		
	<b>Total</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>13.4%</b>



Outdoor advertising on bus shelter

Promotion in shop window

Outdoor billboard on bus



Fibber Magees venue flyer

Red Square bar flyer

### 3.3 Alcohol marketing – Place

This section was limited to the place where alcohol could be sold and is listed in Table 2 (last section). Shops and supermarkets were cited by young people as the place where they saw most alcohol products for sale. The other two locations documented were pubs and nightclubs.

### 3.4 Alcohol marketing – Price

Of all the alcohol marketing practices documented by young people, one in every four involved a price promotion. These included special offers, free alcohol, volume sales (2 for 1), happy hour, deep discounts (50% off), and free gifts. Price promotions were recorded across all beverage categories and were more common for beer and combined alcohol products. The location most often recorded for price promotions was on the street, where young people were given fliers with offers of free or cheap alcohol. The Fibber Magees bar flyer is a good example of price promotions with students as the target audience. Other channels for price promotions were shops or supermarkets followed by newspapers, nightclubs, in the past, in pubs and on the internet.

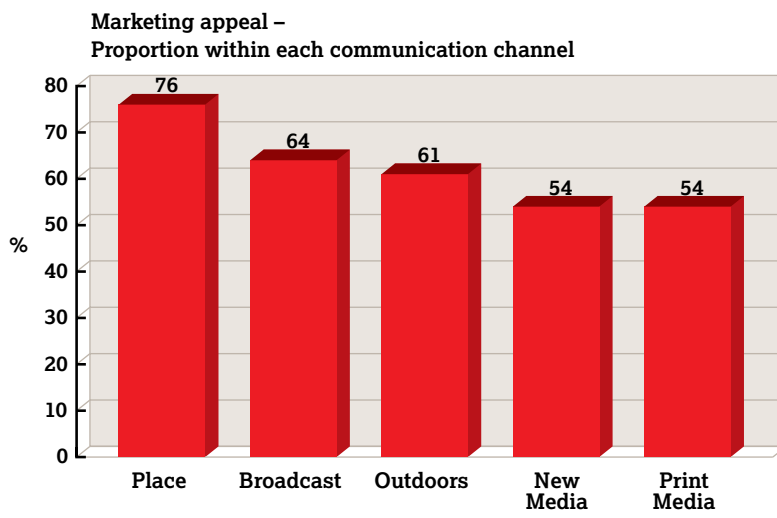




### 3.5 Appeal of alcohol marketing practices

Young people were asked if they liked the alcohol marketing practices they recorded and why, and if they believed the alcohol marketing practice documented would appeal to other young people. Of all the alcohol marketing practices recorded, six out of every ten (62%) appealed to young people. The vast majority of marketing practices for spirits (79%), alcopops (75%) and for three of the top beer brands (Carlsberg®, Guinness® and Heineken®) particularly appealed to young people. While just a third of wine and cider marketing practices were considered appealing.

Figure 1: Marketing appeal



Exposure of young people to marketing practices that appealed to them occurred in all commercial communication channels (Figure 1). Three-quarters of the marketing practices recorded in shops, pubs and nightclubs (place) appealed to young people. Within the broadcast media, almost two-thirds (64%) were appealing. For outdoor media the figure was 61% and for print and new media channels over half (54%) of the marketing practices recorded appealed to young people.







Box 2 - Appeal of alcohol marketing to young people

A content analysis of the appeal elements mentioned by young people revealed a variety of reasons why young people like alcohol marketing (Box 2). Overall, humour or *‘funny’* was mentioned most often as the appealing element of alcohol marketing, followed by *‘clever’*, *‘cheap/free’*, *‘attractive’*, *‘cool’* and *‘eye-catching’*.

Youth researchers were asked, at the debriefing day, to identify the top ten most appeal marketing practices. Eight of the top ten most appealing alcohol marketing practices, decided by young people, were television advertisements (Box 3). The inclusion in the list of an alcohol advertisement (Budweiser® frog ad) which is no longer shown on television illustrates the longevity of appealing advertisements and the opportunities that the internet provides to view television ads after they run their television promotion.

Youth friendly internet sites such as ‘YouTube’ provides access to both repeat showings of the alcohol advertisements, and also creates a form of viral marketing where young people become the marketer as they are invited to add their comments and opinions to the websites. The link of alcohol to sport was captured in this mapping exercise where all of the Heineken® rugby marketing practices were seen as appealing which was extensive in all media channels including television, as the World Rugby Cup was taking place (Oct 2007) during part of the data collection period. A product placement (in film) and a price promotion marketing practices (8 cans of beer for D8) were also selected in the top ten which highlights the importance of price (cheap alcohol) for young people.

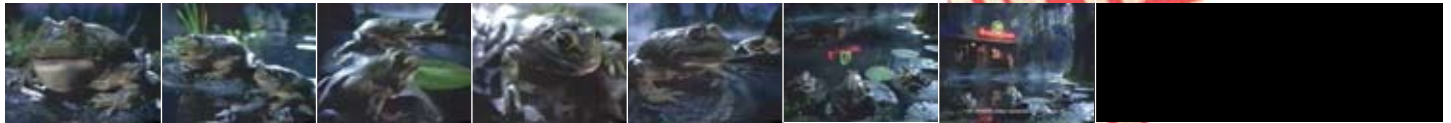
## Top 10 most appealing alcohol marketing practices

### 1 Carlsberg® TV advertisement 'Irish Tourists in Brazil'.



Beer commercial with the tagline 'Probably the best lager in the world' featuring 3 guys in Brazil reciting an Irish 'poem'; originally created by Saatchi & Saatchi. *"It's very funny and clever. It made me laugh out loud"*

### 2 Budweiser® frogs – Internet advertisement.



Frogs named 'Bud' 'Weis' and 'Er' feature in this Budweiser® advert croaking the brand name featured on TV from 1994.

### 3 Heineken® International 'Continental Shift' campaign TV advertisement.



Beer commercial from Heineken® in the lead up to the Rugby World cup in 2007 with the tagline 'One World, One Cup, One Beer' showing people pushing mountains and continents; created by Bates, Singapore.

*"Ad was quite clever and amusing", "Young people admire sports people and could be influenced by them"*

### 4 Guinness® 'Music Machine' TV advertisement.



Guinness® created this advert in which cream-clothed stunt men bounce around inside a glass of the dark beer, bouncing off Irish drums, plucking harp strings and sounding horns with the tagline "It's Alive Inside"; created by Irish International BBDO.

*"It looked like fun to drink, lively and exciting", "It had catchy music with images which caught my attention"*

### 5 Bulmers® 'Time Dedicated to You' campaign TV advertisement.



Campaign by Bulmers® kicked off in 2004 with tagline "Time Dedicated to you" showing people in the sunshine with the drink; created by Youngs Euro RSCG. *"Makes itself sound good", "It shows a party which would have some appeal"*

Box 3: Top Ten most appealing alcohol marketing practices:

1. Carlsberg® Irish language ad (TV)
2. Budweiser® frog ad (internet)
3. Heineken® Rugby ads (in general)
4. Guinness® Drum ad (TV)
5. Bulmers® 'Time dedicated to you' (TV)
6. Corona® – product placement in Heartbreak Kid Film (Film)
7. WKD® ad (TV)
8. Baileys® Crushed Ice ad (TV)
9. Dutch Gold® (Price promotion)
10. Bud Light® ad with man 'wearing' his dog on head (TV)



## 4. Main Findings of the study

The main findings of the research project were:

- Sixteen different communication channels were documented by young people where they were exposed to alcohol marketing practices – bar/pub, billboards, bus, cinema, internet, magazines/newspapers, merchandise, music, nightclub, PlayStation®, post, radio, sports stadiums, street flyers, supermarket/shop and TV.
- The top six communication channels where alcohol marketing practices was recorded were television, magazines/newspapers, internet, street flyers, billboards and supermarkets/shops.
- Packaging of spirits and alcopops were considered the most attractive with shape and colour of the bottles and colour of the product itself the main attractive features.
- Integrated marketing was common. Two-thirds of the young people reported they had seen the same alcohol products in other media channels.
- One in every four of the alcohol marketing practice recorded involved a price promotion such as special offers, free alcohol, volume sales and deep discounts.
- The location most often recorded for price promotions was on the street (street flyers), followed by supermarkets.
- Of all the marketing practices recorded, six out of every ten appealed to young people. Spirits, alcopops and three of the beer brands (Carlsberg®, Guinness® and Heineken®) marketing practices had the most appeal.
- Marketing practices that appealed to young people occurred in all communication channels. Within the broadcast media, almost two-thirds of the marketing practices were appealing. For the outdoor media, six out of ten marketing practices were considered appealing by young people.
- The elements of the alcohol marketing practices that particularly appealed to young people were humour, clever, cheap/free alcohol and attractive.
- Eight of the top ten most appealing alcohol marketing practices agreed by the youth researchers were television advertisements. In addition a product placement (alcohol portrayal in film) and price promotion (8 beers for D8) made the top ten list.

## 5. Discussion

Of all the alcohol marketing practices documented by young people, beer products were the most frequently recorded, with Heineken®, Guinness®, Carlsberg® and Budweiser® the most popular brands. Spirits products were the second most common beverage category recorded and their packaging was considered to be the most attractive. **Exposure of young people to alcohol marketing was recorded in sixteen different commercial communication channels with television the most dominant.** The international evidence that exposure to a variety of alcohol marketing practices, such as alcohol advertising on television, radio, billboards, music videos, alcohol use in movies, in-store alcohol displays, advertising in magazines and alcohol concession stands at sports or music events and alcohol merchandise, has an impact on youth drinking<sup>20</sup>. Young people in Ireland recorded exposure to many of these same alcohol marketing practices.

In addition, several of the marketing communication practices reported by young people (internet, street flyers, supermarkets, nightclubs, bars, post, merchandise, music, sports stadium) are considered 'below the line' activity as they are not measured. Alcohol advertising in the UK is estimated to represent only a quarter of the total spend on alcohol marketing practices<sup>32</sup>. **Applying a similar proportion in Ireland would suggest an estimated total alcohol marketing spend of €220 million per annum in Ireland, given the reported spend on alcohol advertising in Ireland for 2006 was €55 million\***. While this figure is a rough estimate, what is critical to note is that young people are exposed to a wide range of alcohol marketing practices that are not reflected in available data, meaning the proportion of spend could be much greater. Therefore, the cumulative effect of young people's exposure to alcohol marketing practices may even be greater and the risk substantial. An integrated marketing approach was evident as the majority of young people reported that they had seen the same alcohol products promoted in other media channels.

**One in every four of the alcohol marketing practices documented involved price promotions.** These were most common on the street, where young people were given flyers with offers of cheap or free alcohol, and in the supermarkets. Young people considered price promotions very attractive. Cheap alcohol, in the form of alcohol price promotions, has been shown to increase binge drinking in young people<sup>31</sup>.

The findings of this study suggest that all marketing channels matter in terms of exposure of young people to a wide range of alcohol marketing practices. The internet, a new media channel, is an important communication channel for young people and exposure to alcohol marketing is evident both directly and indirectly in a number of different ways – alcohol marketing by drinks industry/branded web sites, alcohol advertisements/ promotions in sports and entertainment web sites and through youth social networks such as 'YouTube'. The majority of the marketing practices documented were appealing to young people with humour, cleverness, cheap offers of alcohol and attractiveness the most important appealing elements. The importance of humour in drawing young people to alcohol advertising has also been reported in several other studies<sup>20, 12</sup>.

\* Institute of Advertising Practitioners in Ireland reported in the Alcohol marketing communications monitoring body, First Report 2006.



## 6. Conclusion

It is clear from this initial research that young people in Ireland are exposed to alcohol marketing through a variety of channels on a regular basis and can be described as pervasive. Despite the pre-vetting system for all alcohol advertisements, established by the drinking industry in Ireland in 2003, young people continue to find alcohol advertisements appealing, with humour the most important element.

Equally the introduction of audience profiling for the placement of alcohol advertisements by the drinks industry does not appear to have protected young people, given the range of alcohol advertising and promotion practices that young people documented. This is not surprising given that audience profiling works on a relative rather than an absolute basis. Therefore, a proportion of young people will always be exposed to alcohol marketing practice in all of the commercial communication channels using audience profiling. The fact that less than 25% of young people watch a TV programme with alcohol advertisements with a total audience of 100,000 or 400,000 is of little public health value in terms of risk or protection. The research evidence clearly shows that young people's exposure to alcohol marketing practices increases the likelihood that adolescents will start to drink and to drink more.

The level of exposure to alcohol marketing practice documented by young people in this study is in direct contradiction to the stated commitment of the Government in 2001 to the WHO Declaration *'to minimize the pressures on young people to drink, especially in relation to alcohol promotions, free distributions, advertising, sponsorship and availability, with particular emphasis on special events'*.

There are **over 1 million young people** under 18 years of age in Ireland. **These young people need adequate protection** from an unnecessary exposure to risk – marketing practices that promote alcohol. A substance that carries serious health and social risks for young people.







# RED SQUARE BAR

## PROMOTIONS

Double Vodka & Red Bull ... €8

2 x Jagermeister & Red Bull ... €10

3 x Miller ... €10

Sambuca ... €10

Apple Sour ... €3



One World  
One Cup  
One Beer





# Appendix 1

## Summary of Alcohol marketing, Communications and Sponsorship Codes of Practice, 2008\*

### Outdoor Media

- At all times a maximum of 25% of total inventory, by format, will apply to alcohol advertising.
- No alcohol advertising within 100 metres of a primary or secondary school entrance, or designated youth clubs, scouting and girl-guide premises. A list to be drawn up by the Department of Health and Children.
- No bus shelter wrap rounds and a maximum of one display of alcohol advertising on a bus shelter.
- No wrap round on individual buses. No full side or full rear displays of alcohol advertising on exterior of any bus. A maximum of 25% space of bus exterior panel to carry alcohol advertising. A maximum of one in four bus interior panels to display alcohol advertising.
- No wrap rounds on trains or light rail. A maximum of one in three train/light rail exterior panels and a maximum of one in four train/light rail interior panels to carry alcohol advertising.
- No wrap rounds on taxis. Only one display of alcohol advertising on exterior of any taxi.
- A maximum of 25% of overall advertising space available for alcohol advertising in a train or bus station or on the interior of any bus, train or taxi.
- A maximum of one alcohol advertising display on a prismatic/scrolling unit or in any group of hoardings.
- No alcohol advertising on mesh building banners or on designated school buses.
- No additional large permanent alcohol advertisement on buildings, bridges etc. (excluding licensed premises).

### Television and Radio

- Alcohol advertising is permitted in any programme where 75% or more of the audience is over 18 years.
- Where alcohol advertising is permitted, a maximum of 25% of advertising time and one in four alcohol advertisements will apply. No more than two alcohol advertisements in any commercial break.
- No alcohol advertising to be placed in programmes specifically aimed at children.
- No alcohol advertisements between 6am and 10am.
- No alcohol sponsorship of sports programmes.
- No alcohol advertising in solus/whistle breaks during sports broadcasting.
- Code of Conduct for presenters to ensure that speech content does not glamorises or encourages over-consumption or misuse of alcohol.

### Cinema

- No alcohol advertising from strength alcohol brands i.e. brands with ABV >25% or their Ready to Drink variants
- Alcohol advertising only shown with films targeting adults and where the attendances will have an adult audience profile of 75% or greater.
- Where alcohol advertising is permitted, it will account for no more that 25% of total advertising per screening.
- No alcohol advertisements outside the main advertising reel.

### Print Media

- Alcohol advertising is permitted in any publication where 75% or more of the readership is over 18 years.
- A maximum limit of 25% of sold advertising space per issue per publication for alcohol advertising.
- No alcohol advertisements in publications aimed specifically at young people or 3rd Level Students.
- No alcohol sponsorship of sports pages or sports supplements.

### Sponsorship

- All alcohol sponsorship events must have an adult audience profile of 75% or greater.
- No sport sponsorship by alcohol brands companies of events designated specifically for participants under 18 years of age.
- No sponsorship by alcohol drinks companies of music events featuring bands or acts which are below the legal drinking age or of music events where the target audience has a profile of 25% or more under 18 years or of racing/rallying or sports that focus on aggression (boxing etc)
- Alcohol branded merchandise will not be designed to overtly appeal to those below the legal drinking age. No children's sizes in alcohol branded merchandise will be produced.

\* Alcohol marketing, communications and sponsorship Codes of Practice (2008). Department of Health and Children. [www.dohc.ie](http://www.dohc.ie)

# Appendix 2

## Contemporary Marketing Communications Practices<sup>24</sup> and components used by alcohol providers within the UK

1. Any Branding practice in general
2. Public relations
3. Corporate communications
4. TV advertising
5. Radio advertising
6. Print advertising
7. Internet advertising
8. Viral or social e-networking marketing
9. Cinema advertising
10. Outdoor advertising
11. Retail sales promotion
12. Trade promotions
13. Direct marketing
14. Personal selling
15. Packaging (multi-pack, design, aesthetics, shape, size)
16. Point of sale/point of purchase
17. Merchandise
18. Mobile phone communications
19. Development of brand identities
20. Brand logos and other aspects of visual identity
21. Product placement
22. Celebrity endorsement
23. Sponsorship
24. Product competitions
25. Event-related marketing
26. Heritage marketing





# Appendix 3

## RECORD SHEET

*Please use this sheet to write down an example of alcohol advertising or promotion that you saw. Please use ONE sheet for each example of alcohol advertising or promotion that you saw. (If you need more space, please use an extra blank page and staple it to this one). Answer as many questions as you can, but remember not all questions might apply to your example.*

<p><b>What time and date did you see this ad or promotion?</b></p>	<p><b>What kind of alcoholic drink was being advertised or promoted?</b></p>
<p><b>Where did you see or hear this ad or promotion?</b></p>	<p><b>What was the BRAND name of the drink?</b></p>
<p><b>Describe how the drink was advertised or promoted.</b></p>	<p><b>What did the drink look like? E.g. how was it packaged? What colours or images were used on the label or packaging?</b></p>
<p><b>Did the ad or promotion have a message or slogan?</b></p>	<p><b>Did you like the way the drink was packaged? Why?</b></p>
<p><b>Did you like the way the drink was being promoted? Why?</b></p>	<p><b>If you tasted the drink, what did it taste like?</b></p>
<p><b>Do you think the way this drink was advertised or promoted would appeal to other young people? Why?</b></p>	<p><b>Was the price of the drink shown in the ad or promotion?</b></p>
<p><b>Have you seen this drink being advertised or promoted anywhere else? If so, where and how?</b></p>	<p><b>If so how much was this drink?</b></p>
	<p><b>Was it part of a special offer?</b></p>

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