

WHO 'LIKES' DRINKING? ALCOHOL MARKETING ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND RELATIONSHIP WITH ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AMONG YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

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Introduction and Aims: Alcohol brands have demonstrated successful marketing approaches on social media. There is emerging evidence that exposure to online alcohol advertising is associated with increased alcohol consumption. This study describes patterns of 'following' different types of alcohol marketing social media pages, and determines whether this is associated with alcohol consumption.

Design and Methods: As part of the annual 'Sex, Drugs, and Rock'n'Roll' study, an online survey was promoted to Victorians aged 15 to 29 years. Participants were asked about 'following' different types of alcohol marketing accounts on social media, in addition to questions about alcohol consumption (AUDIT-C) and other risk behaviours.

Results: 1001 young people (median age 21 years) completed the survey. Overall, 22% 'liked' or 'followed' at least one type of alcohol marketing on social media; most commonly liked pages were from brands of spirits (14%), alcohol retailers (13%), or brands of cider (12%). 'Liking' any alcohol marketing page was significantly associated (at $p < 0.05$) with male gender, living in a non-major city, ever using illegal drugs, early age of first alcohol consumption, and riskier alcohol consumption behaviours. Participants aged 15-17 were equally as likely as older participants to like or follow alcohol marketing pages.

Discussions and Conclusions: 'Liking' alcohol pages was common in our sample and associated with alcohol consumption at riskier levels and younger age. Alcohol marketing on social media is reaching large numbers of young Australians despite current restrictions and regulations in place by advertising boards and social media platforms.

Implications for Practice or Policy: There is a need to evaluate strategies used by social media moderators and alcohol regulation bodies to reduce the exposure to and potential impact of alcohol marketing pages on adolescents and young adults, and ensure these pages are not accessible to or targeting underage social media users.

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