

Alcohol Beverage Federation of Ireland Digital Media Best Practice Principles

Section 1: Introduction

There may be a belief that there are no controls in place, in the digital media space, to restrict the exposure of young people to alcohol advertising. In particular social media sites like Facebook are perceived as being used by mainly young people. However, over 79% of the global Facebook population are over the age of 18. The real power of digital marketing is in the accurate targeting tools, which means that advertisements can be restricted from those who are under the age of 18.

Reflecting the controls in place, and actively applied by our members, the following principles have been developed as a formal reference document for digital marketing, to ensure that those under 18 are not directly exposed to alcohol advertising.

Section 2: Scope

These principles should be applied to all Republic of Ireland digital marketing which serves to promote an alcoholic drinks brand.

The following are examples of digital marketing technologies, tools and platforms to which these guidelines apply:

Applications (e.g. iPhone, Google Android)

Blogs

Bluetooth

Brand Websites

Instant Messaging

Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)

Mobile Communications (WAP sites, advertising on mobile devices)

Mobile Messaging (e.g. SMS, MMS)

Online Advertising/banner ads

Online Gaming (e.g. Second Life, World of Warcraft)

Opinion Sites (e.g. epinions, Yelp)

Peer-to-Peer File Sharing

Photo Sharing (e.g. Flickr, Zoomr, Photobucket, SmugMug)

Podcasts

POS / Event-based digital experiences

Relationship Marketing (e.g. consumer email outreach, member get member campaigns)

RSS feeds

Search Engine Marketing and Optimization

Social Networking (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace)

Social News Sites (e.g. Digg, Mixx, Reddit)
User Generated Content
Video Sharing (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo)
Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia, PBwiki)

These guidelines do not apply to digital communications outside the control of the brand owner even if these feature particular brands (for example, comments on private blogs). Companies should nonetheless take every possible reasonable step to prevent their brand names, trademarks and logos from being used by third parties in a manner which violates these standards.

As with other traditional media the content and placement principles will not apply to PR.

Section 3: The Principles

Basic principles

1. Digital marketing communications are intended for adults above 18 years old.
2. Digital marketing communications must respect user privacy.
3. Digital marketing communications and product promotions must be transparent as brand marketing by being identified as such. This includes personnel working for or representing the interests of the company.
4. Those involved in digital marketing must have completed ABFI's industry training on responsible marketing and all applicable codes as well as their own in house training.

Placement principles

5. Digital marketing communications should be placed only in media where at least 75% of the audience is expected to be above 18 years old.
6. Advertising is placed on websites in accordance to the maximum space allowed to alcohol brands, 25% of the overall available advertising space.
7. Digital marketing communications on a site or web page controlled by the brand advertiser that involve direct interaction with a user should require age affirmation by the user prior to full user engagement of that communication to determine that the user is above 18 years old.
8. Where visitors fail local legal purchase age (LPA) restrictions they are redirected to a social aspect organisation site e.g. drinkaware.ie.
9. All alcohol sites should contain Nanny Tags, which describe the site's content in a format that parental control software detects. This helps to exclude browsing activity by children.
10. Digital marketing communications that are intended to be forwarded by users should include instructions to individuals downloading the content that they should not forward these materials to individuals below 18 years old.
11. Alcohol pages on social networking sites should use the sites' "age targeted" technology so they are not being viewed by those under 18.

Content principles

12. Any paid for advertisements and website or You Tube content, created for brand owners, should be submitted to CCCI for approval.
13. All content including user-generated content on a site or web page controlled by the brand advertiser must be monitored and moderated every 24 hours. Comments, posts and feedback from brand fans are checked and either automated software or company personnel will remove inappropriate content.
14. Companies should work, where possible, to remove user-generated imitation sites, web pages and video content.

Section 4: Use of digital media to promote responsible drinking

- Brand owners should encourage moderate and responsible consumption on their websites, social media pages, You Tube channels etc.
- All brand websites and social media forums should have responsibility messaging and contain links to drinkaware.ie or other alcohol moderation sites.