

Alcohol advertising on social media platforms – A 1-year snapshot

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fare.

Foundation for Alcohol
Research & Education



CREATE CHANGE



Key findings

There is a copious amount of online advertising being placed by alcohol companies, with 39,820 distinct alcohol advertisements captured from 351 prominent producers, retailers and venues on Meta platforms in Australia over a 12-month period. This equates to an average of 765 distinct alcohol advertisements disseminated per week.

- The number of alcohol advertisements showed a seasonal pattern, with December being the most common time of the year to publish new alcohol advertisements and Christmas and New Year being major themes in advertising content during this period.
- Alcohol producers and retailers disseminated the largest overall number of distinct alcohol advertisements (27,272 and 8,713 respectively). 30% of all advertisements by alcohol producers distributed over the 12-month period on Meta platforms were published by one of six multinational alcohol producers (e.g., Bacardi Limited, Heineken and Diageo). 83% of all advertisements by alcohol retailers distributed over the 12-month period on Meta platforms were published by one of five large holding companies (e.g., Coles Group, Endeavor Group and Liquor Marketing Group).
- Alcohol advertising on Meta platforms is intrinsically linked to the online sale and delivery of alcohol, using a direct portal for companies to sell alcohol directly into the home. Most alcohol advertisements contained a call-to-action button (78%), with 66.7% of alcohol retailer advertisements containing a 'Shop Now' button. This creates a situation where the advertisement becomes the shop front, reducing the space between advertising exposure and purchasing decisions. This is highly problematic for alcohol because it is an addictive substance.
- The methods developed in this research have enabled insight into the amount and type of content being distributed by alcohol advertisers on Meta platforms. However, Meta fails to provide information on advertising targeting, spend and reach of advertisements (except for political advertisements). This makes it difficult to develop a holistic understanding of alcohol marketing on these platforms, including understanding how often people are exposed to these advertisements and the ways in which people are being targeted with alcohol advertising on these platforms.

Introduction

We connect digitally now more than ever before. More than 17 million Australians access social media platforms each month¹ and children spend an average of over 14 hours online each week.²

With the increasing role digital technologies play in our everyday lives, it's more important than ever that we have safe online environments that enable our health and wellbeing rather than undermining them. However, millions of people across Australia are exposed to relentless advertising online every day that targets their specific vulnerabilities, emotions and attributes. This is especially harmful when the products being pushed are harmful and addictive – like alcoholic products.

Alcoholic products cause significant harm to Australians. Alcohol use is causally linked to over 200 disease and injury conditions,³ and nearly 6,000 lives are lost and more than 144,000 people hospitalised from use of alcoholic products each year.⁴ Alcohol is an addictive substance. The 2019 National Drug Strategy Household Survey found that 10% of Australians who used alcohol products were likely to meet the criteria for alcohol dependence.⁵

Research shows that young people's exposure to online alcohol marketing is associated with more positive attitudes toward alcohol, intention to drink alcohol, and increased use of alcohol products.^{6,7} For children and adolescents, exposure to alcohol marketing increases the likelihood that they will start to drink alcohol at a younger age and that they will go on to drink alcohol at risky levels.^{8,9} For people at risk of or experiencing an alcohol problem, a recent research review shows that alcohol marketing can increase positive alcohol-related emotions and cognitions and cue alcohol cravings, and for people in recovery from an alcohol use disorder it is seen to trigger a desire to drink alcohol.¹⁰

A study by Monash University, The University of Queensland, and VicHealth in 2022 found that adolescents and young adults are being targeted with alcohol advertising while they are on social media platforms.¹¹ However, most of the advertising is happening out of sight, only visible to the people directly targeted with these advertisements.¹¹

To date, there has been little capacity to systematically monitor and document alcohol advertising on social media platforms. The increasingly ephemeral nature of advertising on social media platforms makes it particularly difficult for researchers, civil society, and governments to identify and control such advertisements. Therefore, while we know that alcohol companies are using social media platforms to target people with marketing for their products,¹² the true extent and nature of this is not yet clear.

About this report

To shed light on current placement of online advertising by alcohol companies, we have developed methods to document alcohol advertising on Meta social media platforms. This report presents initial findings from a study monitoring these adverts. It provides an early illustration of the amount and type of advertising alcohol producers, retailers and venues are disseminating on the Meta ecosystem.

Methodology

Computational methods were developed to collect alcohol advertising published through Meta platforms – Facebook, Instagram, Messengerⁱ and the Audience Network.ⁱⁱ These methods are only able to be used on Meta platforms due to the Meta Ad Library, which stores a copy of every advertisement while it is active on the platforms. Other social media platforms, which do not provide this basic level of transparency, were therefore unable to be included.

A list of 351 major alcohol producers, retailers and licenced venues that sell/advertise alcoholic products and advertise on Meta platforms was compiled for collecting advertising data. Alcohol producers include global and Australian companies, such as Heineken, Asahi, Bombay Sapphire, Penfold’s, and Starward. Retailers represent both national and regional chains, notably Vinomofo, BWS and Jimmy Brings. The venues category is comprised of licenced bars, clubs, live music venues and mixed-use event spaces that operate a bar and host live events. Prominent venues were selected from major Australian markets, such as The Fortitude Music Hall in Brisbane, Northcote Social Club in Melbourne, and Prince Lane Bar in Perth. Data was collected from the ‘Australian’ section of the Meta Ad Library from 1 November 2021 to 1 November 2022.

The data that is available to be collected includes: advertisement images and videos, caption text, call-to-action button text, date of advertisement publication, and platforms where the advertisement was published.

Additional advertising metrics such as reach, spend, and targeting information are not made public by Meta and are therefore unable to be monitored. As specific geo-targeting data is not published by Meta in the Ad Library, advertisements that appear in the ‘Australian’ section of the Ad Library include global advertising campaigns (i.e., may also be seen elsewhere).

The data was analysed for the number and basic features (i.e., presence of video or image and call-to-action buttons) of alcohol advertising captured from the subset of accounts that we monitored and compared by advertisers, market category, and publishing platforms. Figures within the report reflect distinct advertisements published, meaning each advertisement containing a unique ID number had only been counted when it was first available in the Ad Library, and only counted once (i.e., even if published on multiple platforms). This report does not address the total number of advertisements running at any single point in time, although analysis indicates the number of distinct advertisements was highly correlated to the total number of advertisements running at any time.

Select examples with preliminary observations of advertisement formats (e.g., basic content) are also provided.

| Box 1. Data collection | |
|---|--|
| Data source | Meta Ad Library |
| Collection dates | 1 November 2021 – 1 November 2022 |
| Advertisers tracked across 6 market categories | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 229 alcohol producers • 28 retailers • 94 venues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 36 bars - 26 clubs - 7 mixed use venues (e.g., combined bars and venues) - 25 venues focussed on live performance |
| 4 Meta Publishing Platforms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Instagram • Messenger (sponsored chats and stories) • Audience Network (ads placed on third-party websites and apps) |

ⁱ Messenger ad placements allow advertisers to send messages to target audiences, initiate a chat directly with customers, and post Messenger stories.
ⁱⁱ The Audience Network places advertisements in third-party apps and websites outside of Meta, such as in-game video ads and website banner ads.

Results

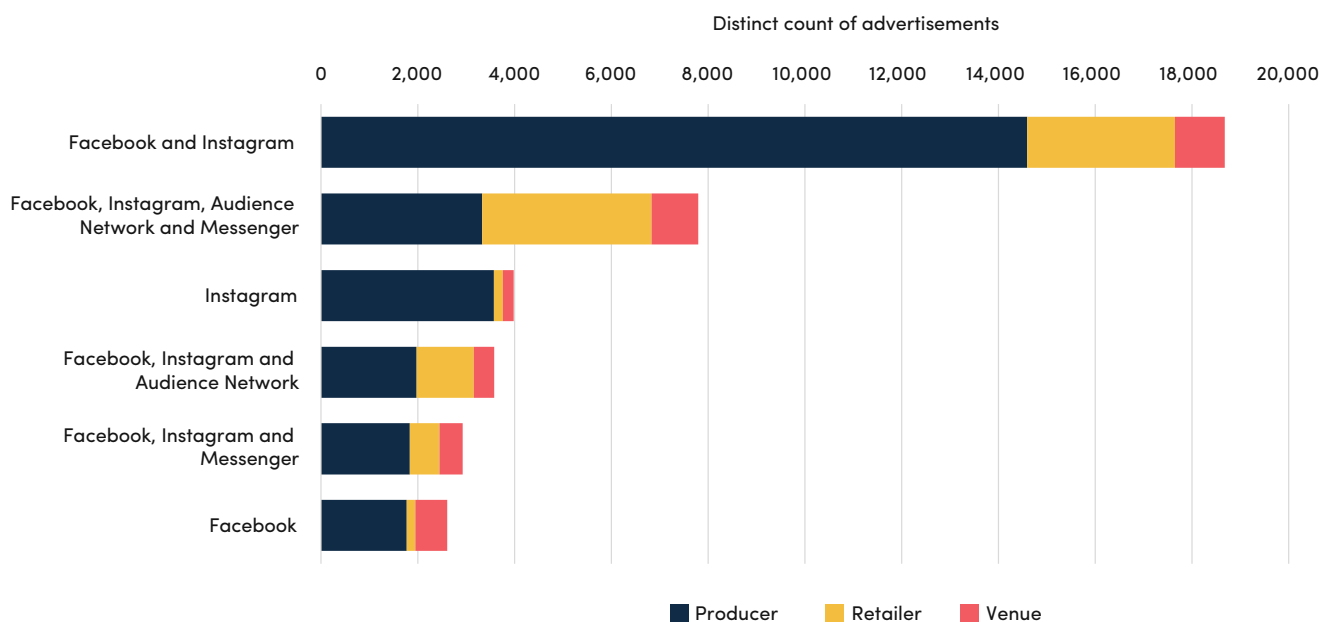
How much alcohol advertising is on Meta platforms?

Over the one-year period, 39,820 distinct alcohol advertisements were captured from the subset of accounts that were monitored on Meta platforms for promotion in Australia, equating to an average of 765 distinct alcohol advertisements disseminated per week. However, how many people see each of these advertisements, and how frequently, is unknown.

Producers contributed the largest overall number of distinct advertising (27,272), followed by retailers (8,731). However, alcohol retailers disseminated more advertising on average per advertiser, producing an average of 311 advertisements per advertiser over the 12-month period – almost 3 times more advertisements than producers, who disseminated an average of 119 advertisements per advertiser over the 12-month period. Venues, bars and clubs contributed the least distinct advertisements (3,817), averaging 41 advertisements per advertiser over the 12-month period.

Most advertisements were placed on both Facebook and Instagram, while Messenger and Audience Network were less used publisher platforms and generally used alongside Facebook and Instagram rather than independently (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Alcohol advertisements published across the Meta network, by market category



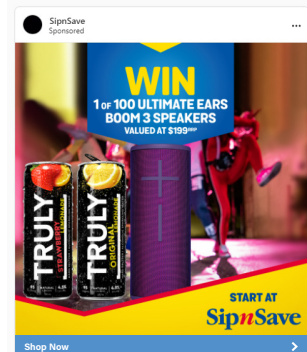
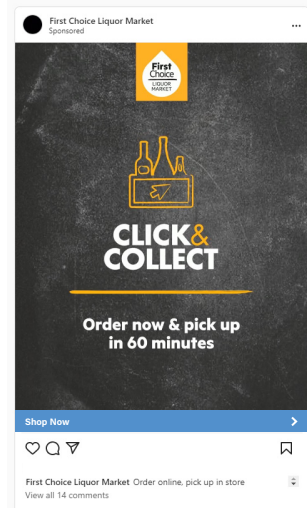
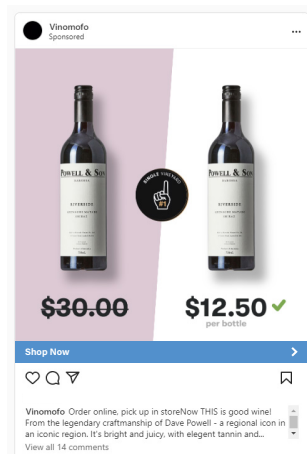
What does alcohol advertising on Meta platforms look like?

The advertising by alcohol retailers, producers and licenced venues varied. Alcohol retailer advertising was heavily focused on product availability, price and promotions, whereas alcohol producers appear to be making more use of brand-building in advertising, for example through storytelling and creative visual design choices. Licenced venues tended to emphasise events or special offers in their advertisements (see images below).

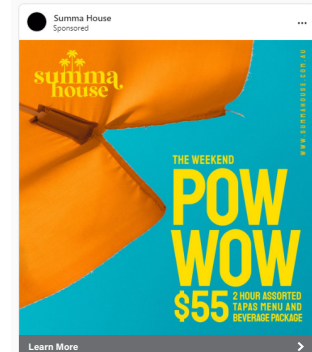
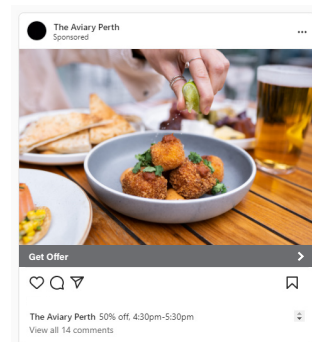
PRODUCERS



RETAILERS



VENUES

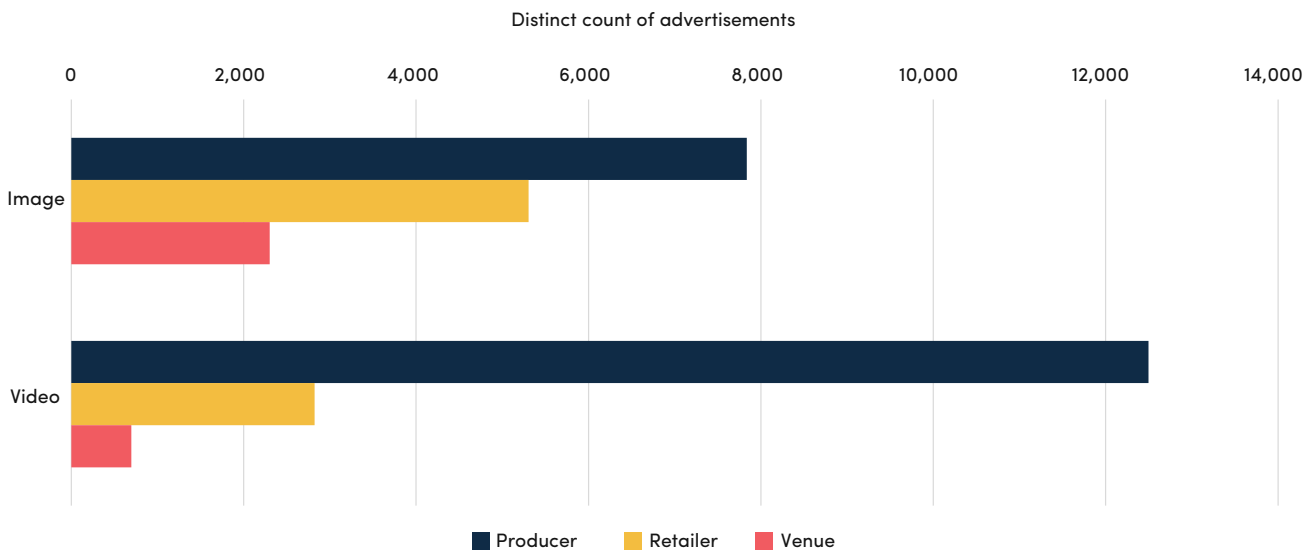


USE OF IMAGE AND VIDEO CONTENT

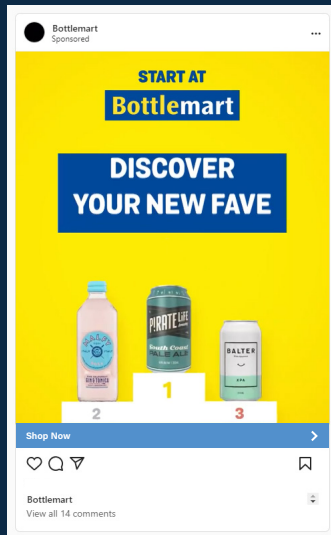
Retailers and venues placed a higher proportion of advertisements that used images (63% and 75%, respectively) compared to videos (33% and 20%, respectively). Conversely, producers placed a higher proportion of advertisements that used videos (58%) compared to images (36%; Figure 2). This could be a reflection of the budget required for the creation of high-quality video content, and the strategic purpose of the advertising (such as promoting a limited-time sale compared to building brand awareness).

Global alcohol producers tend to use the highest proportion of advertisements with video content, with Heineken (1,364) and Asahi Beer (667) being the producers using the highest number of distinct advertisements that include videos. BWS and Jimmy Brings are the alcohol retailers using the highest amount of video content (746 and 367 distinct advertisements including videos respectively), and tend to use the format of brief, looping videos that act as an animated ‘catalogue’.

Figure 2. Alcohol advertisements featuring an image or video, by market category

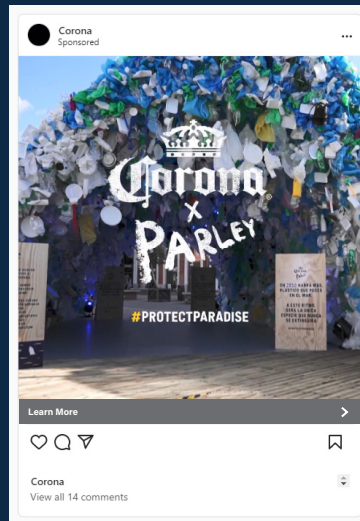


Box 2. Three ways that alcohol advertisers are using video in advertisements on Meta platforms



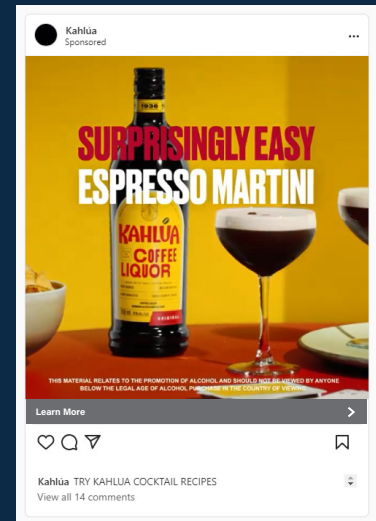
The animated catalogue

Retailers create animated, looping videos to highlight sales and promotions, such as this video from Bottlemart.



Brand stories

Short videos sharing brand history or values are predominately used by producers, such as the collaboration between Corona and non-profit Parley.



Product inspiration

Illustrating how to use the product in cocktails is another tactic used predominately by producers, as illustrated by Kahlua.

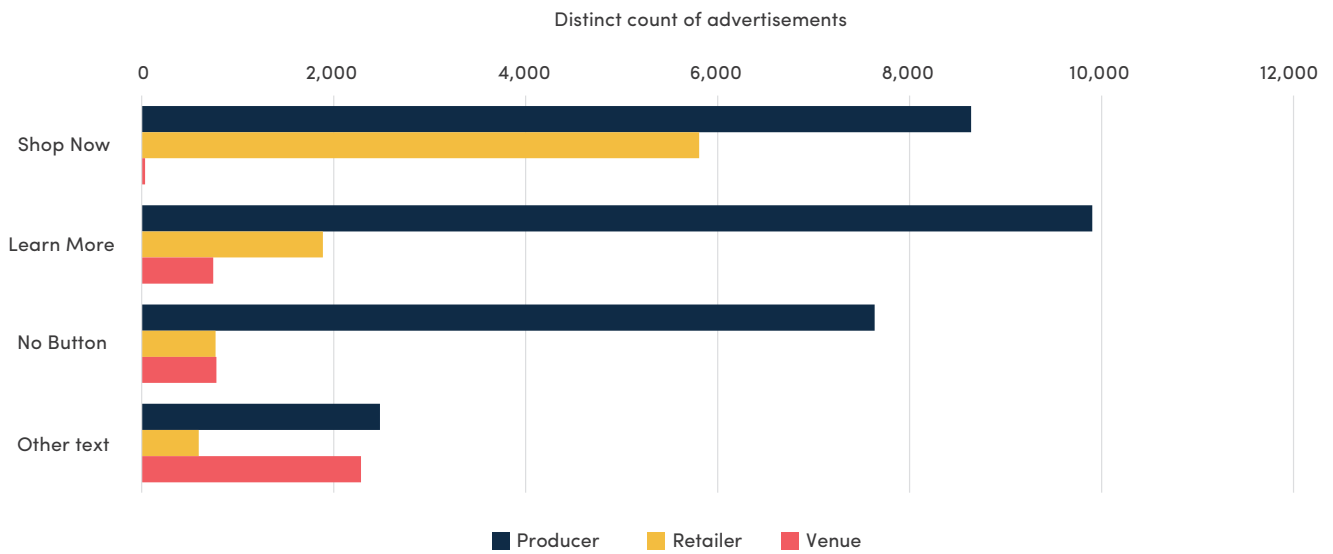
PROMPTING PURCHASE – USE OF CALL-TO-ACTION BUTTONS

Advertisers can choose from a pre-selected list of call-to-action text, which can appear as a button alongside advertisements. Most alcohol advertisements contained a call-to-action button (78%), with 'Shop Now' (36%) and 'Learn More' (32%) the two most popular choices for alcohol advertisers (Figure 3).

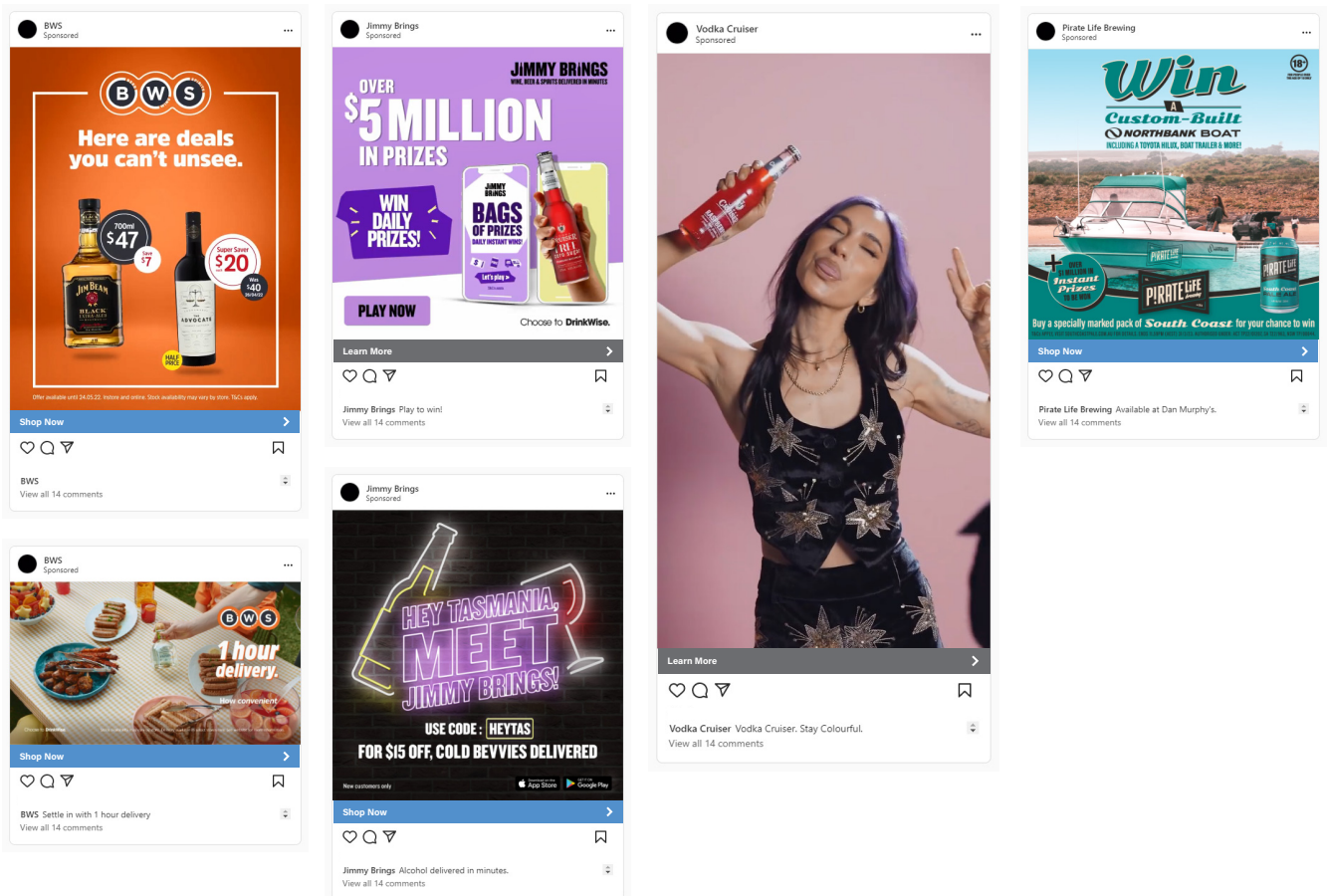
Use of a call-to-action button was highest among alcohol retailer advertisements (91%), with two thirds (66.7%) of alcohol retailer advertisements containing a 'Shop Now' button and almost a quarter (21.7%) containing a 'Learn More' button (noting this can still redirect to shoppable landing pages). Advertisements with the 'Shop Now' button often featured a specific product or promotion (e.g., a discount code or sale) and some retailers (e.g., Jimmy Brings and BWS) advertised rapid delivery alongside the use of the 'Shop Now' button.

RESULTS

Figure 3. Alcohol advertisements featuring call-to-action button, by market category



Images: Examples of advertisements using 'Shop Now' and 'Learn More' call-to-action buttons

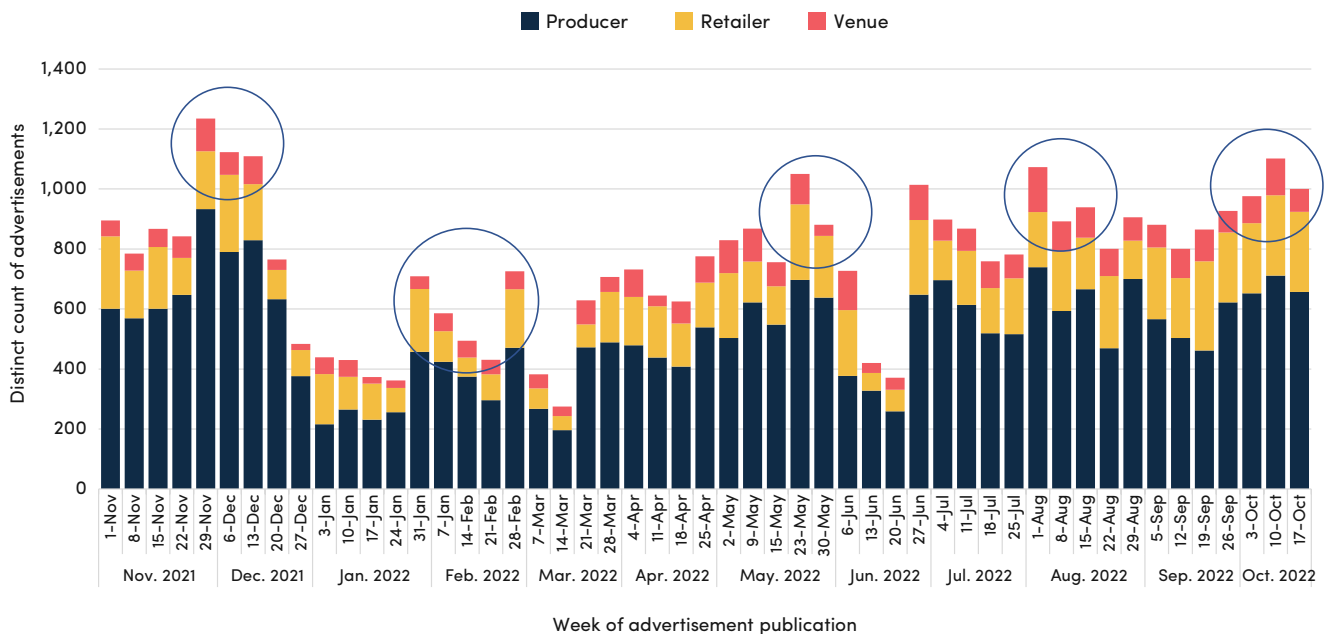


How did the number of alcohol advertisements change throughout the year?

Most advertisements were published on the Meta platforms between July to December (i.e., in the first half of the financial year), with December being the month with the most advertisements published (Figure 4). This was largely due to advertisements published by producers, which followed a distinct pattern with seasonal peaks (circled in Figure 4) that coincided with, and cross-promoted, seasonal holidays and events (Table 1). In this way, alcoholic products were positioned as playing a central role in holidays, cultural events and sports.

By comparison, retailer advertising was more uniform, with relatively consistent publishing of advertisements across the year (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Number of distinct advertisements published, by week and market categoryⁱⁱⁱ



ⁱⁱⁱ This is the count of any new advertisements running that were collected throughout the sampling period. Each advertisement is only ever counted once when it was first collected (distinct count).

Figure 5. Number of distinct advertisements published by alcohol producers and retailers, by week

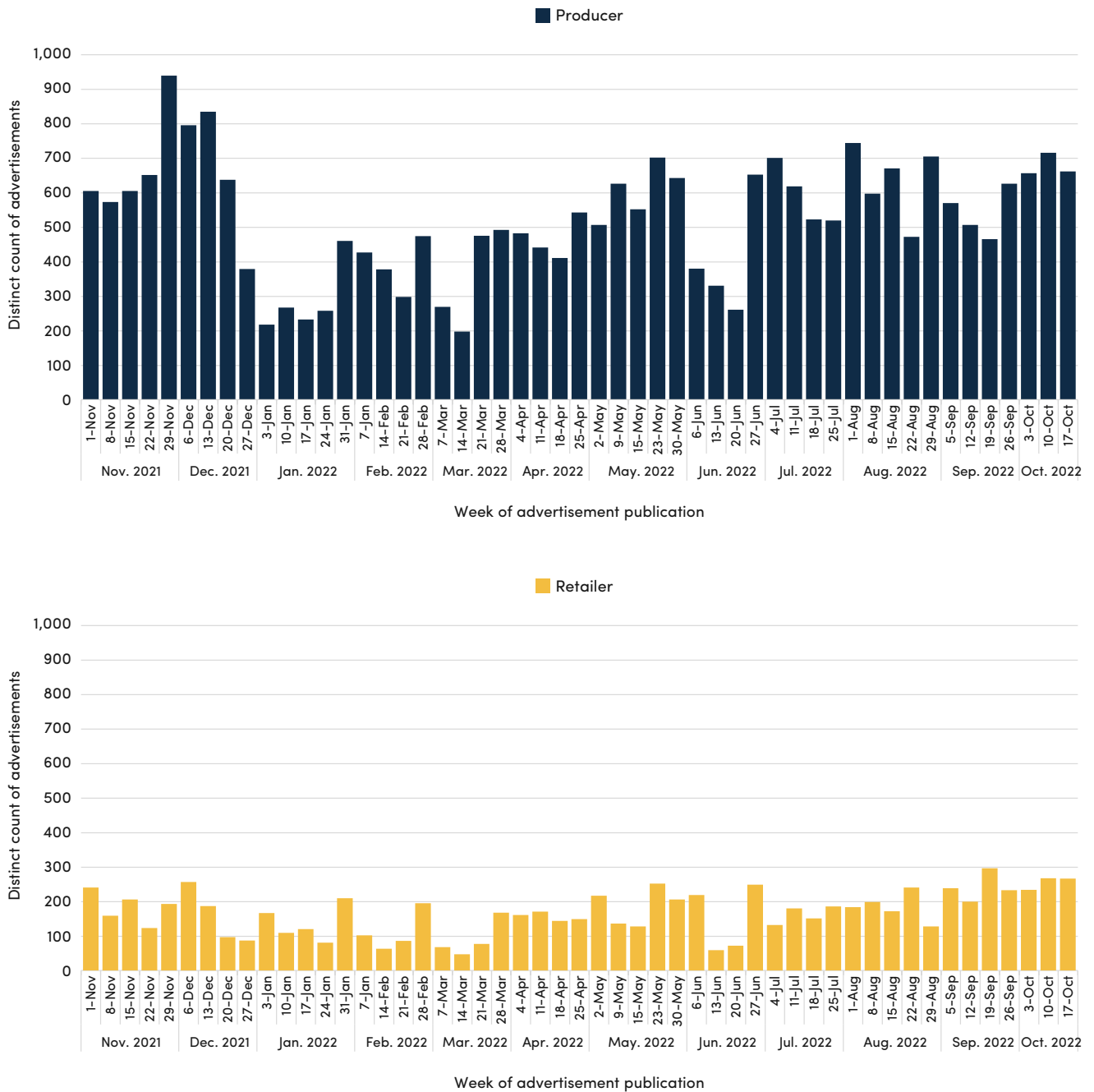




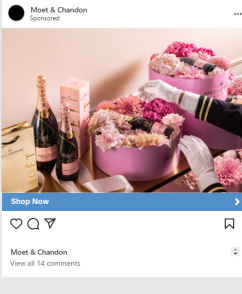


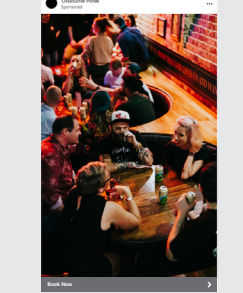



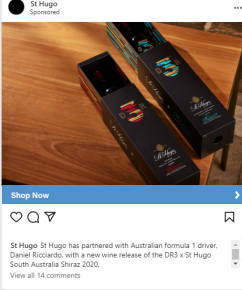



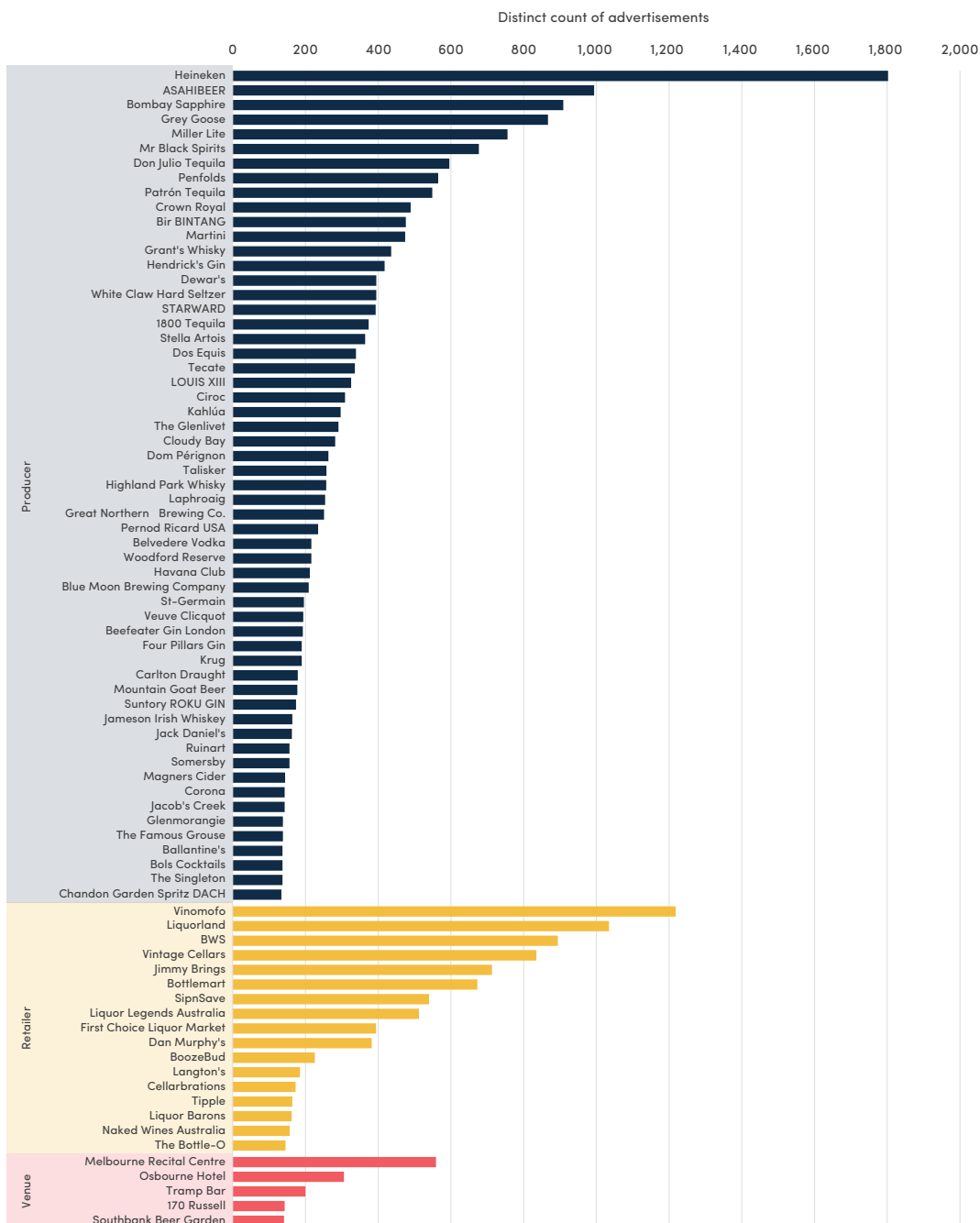
Table 1. Seasonal peaks of alcohol advertising

| FINANCIAL QUARTER/ PEAK | DESCRIPTION | EXAMPLE - RETAILERS | EXAMPLE - PRODUCERS | EXAMPLE - VENUES |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Q4 2021: December peak | Most new advertisements appeared in December, with the holiday season and New Year's eve being major themes in advertising content. |  |  |  |
| Q1 2022: Feb & March peak | Advertisements during this period included content related to seasonal festivities such as the end of Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, and the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras festival, as well as content related to the end of summer more generally. |  |  |  |
| Q2 2022: May & June peak | The AFL and State of Origin was a common theme in advertisements in early June, although much of the advertising during the May-June period was generic and focused on sales or general brand messaging. |  |  |  |
| Q3 2022: August peak | Peaks in advertising in August featured advertising of new wine releases, and cross promotion with Father's Day and localised events and holidays. |  |  |  |
| Q4 2022: October peak | Advertising in October included cross-promotion with springtime events such as Melbourne Cup, Halloween and Oktoberfest; venues particularly tied in with these events. Advertising by producers and retailers also included advertising of new wine releases. |  |  |  |

Who ran the most alcohol advertisements?

Heineken ran the most alcohol advertisements, with 1,802 distinct alcohol advertisements over the 12-month period – an average of 150 distinct advertisements per month. This figure includes advertisements that were run worldwide (including Australia) and targeted for the Australian market specifically, in both English and foreign language. Vinomofo and Liquorland ran the second and third most alcohol advertisements, with 1,218 and 1,035 distinct alcohol advertisements over the 12-month period, or 101 and 86 per month on average respectively. Bars, venues and clubs had fewer distinct advertisements compared to producers and retailers (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Number of distinct advertisements by advertiser, separated by market category



OWNERSHIP OF COMPANIES RUNNING THE MOST ALCOHOL ADVERTISING

Multinational producers are responsible for the most distinct advertisements captured on the Meta platforms. The 10 alcohol producers with the highest number of distinct advertisements on Meta platforms over the 12-month period are owned by Bacardi Limited (2,325 advertisements), Heineken N.V. (1,802 advertisements), Diageo (1,762 advertisements), Asahi Group Holdings (994 advertisements), Molson Coors (756 advertisements), and Treasury Wine Estates (565 advertisements; Table 2). This represents 30.2% of all advertisements distributed over the 12-month period by alcohol producers on the Meta platforms.

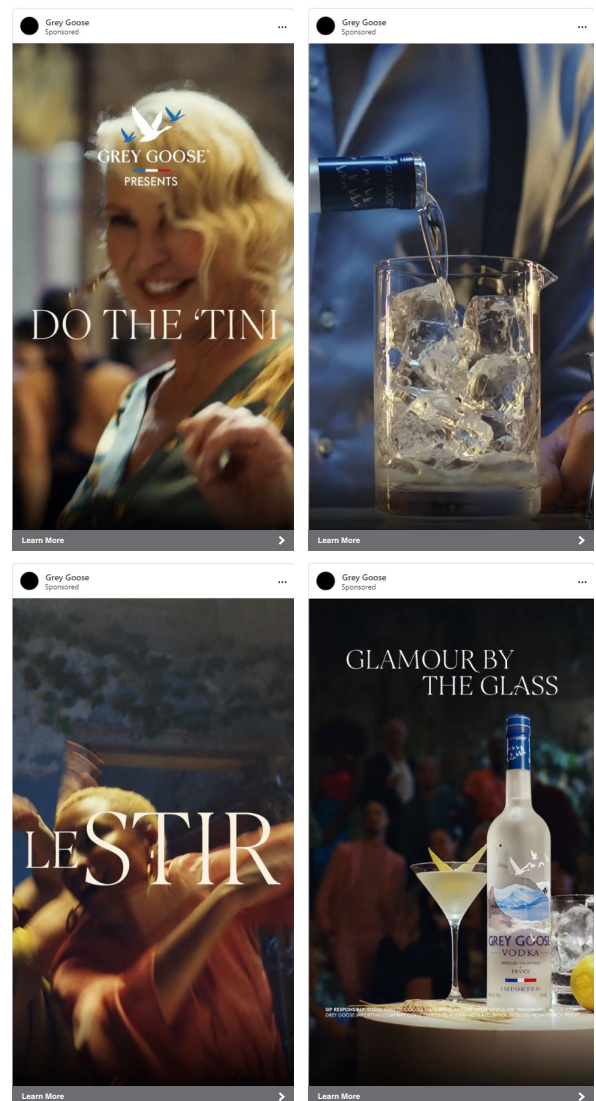
Brand advertising among these companies often used emotional appeals that focussed on intangible brand imagery such as fun or sophistication rather than functional product benefits including price, taste or accessibility. For example, Grey Goose’s ‘Vive Le Martini’ campaign (images below) positions the brand as high-end, elegant, and timeless.

Table 2. The ten alcohol producers with the highest number of distinct advertisements, by company ownership

| TOP 10 PRODUCERS | |
|--|-------|
| Heineken (Heineken N.V.) | 1,802 |
| アサヒビール ASAHI BEER (Asahi Group Holdings) | 994 |
| Bombay Sapphire (Bacardi Limited) | 909 |
| Grey Goose (Bacardi Limited) | 867 |
| Miller Lite (Molson Coors) | 756 |
| Mr Black Spirits (Diageo) | 677 |
| Don Julia Tequila (Diageo) | 596 |
| Penfolds (Treasury Wine Estates) | 565 |
| Patron Tequila (Bacardi Limited) | 549 |
| Crown Royal (Diageo) | 489 |

| | | |
|-----------------|--------|-------|
| Bacardi Limited | Diageo | Other |
|-----------------|--------|-------|

Images: Example of emotional appeal in Grey Goose ‘Vive Le Martini’ marketing campaign captured on Meta platforms



RESULTS

Almost all retailers responsible for the most distinct advertisements captured on the Meta platforms are owned by larger holding companies. The 10 alcohol retailers with the highest number of distinct advertisements on Meta platforms over the 12-month period are owned by Coles Group (2,264 advertisements), Endeavor Group (1,989 advertisements), Vinomofo (1,218 advertisements), Liquor Marketing Group (1,213 advertisements) and Hotel & Tourism Management Pty Ltd (512 advertisements; Table 3). This represents 82.7% of all advertisements distributed over the 12-month period by alcohol retailers on the Meta platforms.

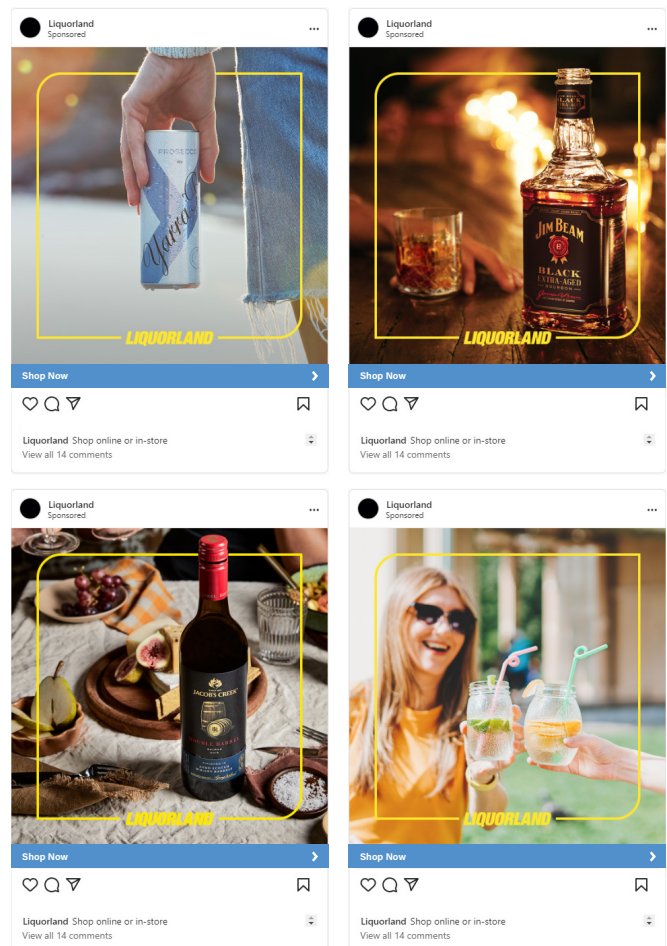
Advertising among these companies often used consistent advertisement formats that are quickly and easily replicated across products and build brand recognisability. This templated design allows advertisers to produce a high number of publication-ready advertisements quickly. For example, Liquorland advertisements (images below) use various product images outlined by a thin, rounded yellow rectangle with the logo at the bottom.

Table 3. The ten alcohol retailers with the highest number of distinct advertisements, by company ownership

| TOP 10 RETAILERS | |
|---|-------|
| Vinomofo (Vinomofo) | 1,218 |
| Liquorland (Coles Group) | 1,035 |
| BWS (Endeavour Group) | 894 |
| Vintage Cellars (Coles Group) | 835 |
| Jimmy Brings (Endeavour Group) | 713 |
| Bottlemart (Liquor Marketing Group) | 673 |
| SipnSave (Liquor Marketing Group) | 540 |
| Liquor Legends Australia (Hotel & Tourism Management Pty Ltd) | 512 |
| First Choice Liquor Market (Coles Group) | 394 |
| Dan Murphy's (Endeavour Group) | 382 |

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|------------------------|-------|
| Coles Group | Endeavour | Liquor Marketing Group | Other |
|-------------|-----------|------------------------|-------|

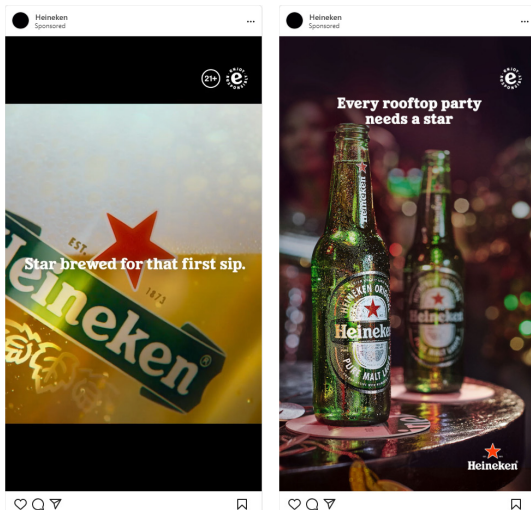
Images: Example of consistent advertisement formats replicated across products advertised by Liquorland



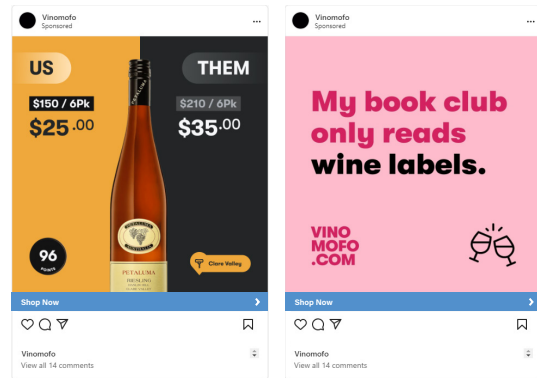
Box 3. The alcohol producer and retailer with the highest number of distinct advertisements on Meta platforms



Heineken published 1,802 distinct advertisements in the 12-month period of data collection, most advertisements were in video format rather than static images. Advertisements included both English and international, localised variations in foreign language (they have been collected from the 'Australia' section of the Meta Ad Library).



VinomofO published 1,218 distinct advertisements in the 12-month period of data collection, with advertisements having a consistent format and layout (although, colour palette varies by season). The same product will often appear in various layouts, which could indicate A/B testing for optimisation.



Discussion

There are copious amounts of alcohol advertising online, which can be algorithmically targeted to consumers in harmful ways.

Over a one-year period, we observed more than 39,000 advertisements from a subset of alcohol-related accounts on Meta platforms alone. This does not account for alcohol advertising on other leading social media platforms, such as YouTube, Snapchat, Twitter and TikTok, which are even more challenging to monitor because they do not provide meaningful transparency that enables independent observation and monitoring of advertising on their platforms.¹³ Online alcohol marketing also extends beyond social media platforms, for example, advertising disseminated via websites, apps and email. The most popular online alcohol retailers in Australia sent 1,496 alcohol marketing emails to a single email account over a 3-month period in 2021.¹⁴ This means that many forms of online alcohol advertising remain completely hidden from view.

The methods that we have developed enable us to gather insights into the amount and type of content being distributed by alcohol advertisers on Meta platforms (with future analysis to provide more rigorous insights into the content of alcohol advertisements collected). However, what remains largely unknown is how often people are exposed to these advertisements (for example, one advertisement might be shown 100,000 times over a two week period) and the ways in which people are being targeted with alcohol advertising on these platforms. This is because Meta, like other digital platforms, refuse to provide information on targeting, spend and reach of advertisements (with the exception of political advertisements – which demonstrates technical feasibility in providing this information).¹³ Nor is meaningful information provided about the role that the underlying advertising algorithms play in targeting advertising (i.e., for ‘optimising’ targeting of advertising outside of targeting criteria selected by advertisers).

Failing to provide information about how alcohol advertising is targeted online is a problem because of concerns about how this marketing can be targeted in harmful ways – for example, where harmful and addictive products like alcohol are targeted to people with high alcohol use, or who are recovering from alcohol addiction or dependency. Additionally, there is currently little to ensure that children and adolescents are not being targeted with alcohol marketing when online. Nor is there any means by which to stop their personal data being collected to optimise marketing algorithms. Research indicates that this occurs.¹¹

Leaked Meta documents have indicated that Meta has gathered psychological insights on almost 2 million children in Australia and New Zealand to sell targeted advertising.¹⁵ This included monitoring children in real-time to identify their current mood, including when they feel ‘overwhelmed’ and ‘anxious’, to sell targeted advertising.¹⁵ Research has also found Meta tags children and young people as interested in harmful products such as alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food,^{16, 17} and approves sponsored content promoting these harmful products to be targeted at children.¹⁷ Recent research by VicHealth with adolescents and young people found that Australian adolescents were being targeted with alcohol advertising when they were on social media platforms.¹¹ The research also found that 194 advertisers had uploaded data they collected on 83 young participants, generating 787 advertising ‘interests’ for targeting advertising to these adolescents and young people online.

Greater transparency about the marketing disseminated through digital platforms, and the marketing algorithms used by digital platforms to target people with this marketing, is essential for holding companies accountable for harmful marketing practices.¹³

Social media advertisements are becoming intrinsically linked to online sale and delivery of alcohol.

We found that the majority of alcohol advertisements on Meta platforms contained a direct link to the advertiser's website through call-to-action buttons, with two-thirds of alcohol retailer advertisements collected containing a 'Shop Now' button, prompting the purchase of alcoholic products. In this way, alcohol advertising on social media integrates advertising with retail, meaning social media platforms are now playing a role in significantly expanding alcohol availability.¹²

This increases the capacity for alcohol advertisements to create harm, by adding a direct portal to the point of alcohol purchase. Further, the rapid expansion and advertising of online alcohol delivery services can see alcohol delivered to homes in under an hour (point of consumption). This is a concerning development as it creates a frictionless system for promoting and distributing alcohol via digital platforms by reducing the space and effort between the emotional stimulus (advertisement) and rational response (to buy or not), which may prompt more impulse buying and alcohol use.

FARE's 2020 Annual Alcohol Poll found the majority (70%) of rapid alcohol delivery users drank at risky levels, including 38% who drank more than 10 standard drinks on the day of delivery.¹⁸ Similarly, research conducted in New Zealand found that during the COVID-19 pandemic (when many rapid delivery services were being heavily promoted), purchasing online alcohol was associated with heavier drinking. Furthermore, approximately three-quarters (73% females and 78% males) of respondents who had used online delivery services reported seeing advertisements for online delivery at least daily.¹⁹

More needs to be done – better measures are needed to reduce the amount of alcohol advertising in the community and to hold companies accountable for their marketing practices.

It is evident that better measures are needed to reduce the amount of online alcohol advertising our communities are exposed to. Online marketing of alcohol remains largely unregulated and is mostly governed by industry-developed and -led voluntary codes, which are inadequate, ineffective, and lack transparency and accountability. It is well documented that the alcohol industry's current voluntary marketing code (the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code Scheme) is ineffective at reducing the exposure of alcohol advertising to people most at risk of harm from alcohol use, including young people.²⁰⁻²³ This is unsurprising as alcohol companies have vested commercial interests, whereby the maximisation of profits and shareholder returns (for public companies) is their primary goal, which naturally opposes measures that effectively restrict marketing practices.

These commercial conflicts are similarly demonstrated by digital platforms, which receive significant revenue from their marketing services. Digital platforms have demonstrated that without legal and regulatory measures that set standards for protecting people from harmful marketing practices and ensure transparency and accountability in digital marketing practices, they will continue to promote harm through their platforms.²⁴

²⁵ Most pressing here, is the facilitation of marketing by companies to algorithmically target harmful and addictive products like alcohol to those most at risk of harm, including people with addiction or dependency and children.¹⁵⁻¹⁷

The community also wants to see better measures to reduce the amount of online alcohol marketing. In 2022,

DISCUSSION

FARE and VicHealth conducted a brief online survey of 220 Australians who were trying to reduce their use or consumption of harmful and unhealthy products (alcohol, gambling and unhealthy foods), or were trying to remain that way.²⁶ Most participants (83%) agreed that online marketing makes it more difficult for them to reduce their use or consumption of these products and 26% of participants stated unprompted that they want to see better regulation of online marketing for these harmful products.²⁶ Of the 157 people who indicated they were trying to reduce their use of alcohol specifically, 91% were concerned about online marketing for alcohol and 89% wanted to see less or no alcohol marketing online.²⁶

In FARE's 2020 Annual Alcohol Poll of the Australian community, 86% of Australians agreed that alcohol advertising should not be shown to children on social media and 76% of Australian parents of children under the age of 18 years supported the introduction of regulation that would stop social media channels from collecting children's data to target them with advertising about addictive products like alcohol.¹⁸

Conclusion

With digital connection becoming ever more important in our everyday lives, it is crucial that digital environments are safe and supportive of health for everyone. At the moment, the community is inundated with alcohol advertising online. Moreover, alcohol advertising online is not only promoting alcohol use, and potentially targeting those most at risk of harm, but also acts as a direct portal to the sale and delivery of alcohol. Limited transparency about online alcohol marketing makes it difficult to hold companies accountable for their marketing practices, and alcohol-industry developed codes are failing to protect the community from highly targeted alcohol advertising online. Better measures are needed to reduce the amount of alcohol marketing online and to ensure that alcohol marketing is not targeting people in harmful ways.

Citation information

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