

**News Release**  
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## **Alcohol Ads Outnumber Responsibility Ads 226 to 1**

*In 2002, responsibility ads plummeted while alcohol product ads soared*

**Washington, DC** - Alcohol industry "responsibility" advertising on television declined substantially in 2002 from 2001, while alcohol product advertising increased significantly over the same period, according to a [new study](#) by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) at Georgetown University.

"Responsibility" ads have as their primary focus a clear, unambiguous message warning against driving after drinking, encouraging use of a designated driver, advising viewers to drink responsibly, or informing them about the legal drinking age of 21.

In 2002, the number of "responsibility" ads dropped by 46% from 2001 levels, while the number of alcohol commercials increased by 39%. Industry spending on responsibility advertising also fell dramatically - down 57% from 2001.

"This minimal amount of responsibility advertising does little to reinforce the messages of parents and teachers who are trying to prevent underage drinking. Our children need to receive a more balanced message about alcohol," said Jim O'Hara, CAMY executive director.

Key findings from the study include:

**Television responsibility advertising was cut in half in 2002 while alcohol advertising on television increased substantially.** For every responsibility ad that aired in 2002 there were 226 alcohol product ads. In 2001, the ratio was 1 to 88. For every dollar spent on responsibility ads in 2002, the industry spent \$99 on product ads. In 2001, the ratio was \$1 to \$35.

	2001	2002	% change
Number of responsibility ads	2,379	1,280	-46%
Number of product ads	208,909	289,381	+39%
Spending on responsibility ads	\$23,217,900	\$10,043,997	-57%
Spending on alcohol product ads	\$811,166,400	\$990,225,497	+22%

**Youth were 128 times more likely per capita to see an alcohol product ad on television than an alcohol company-sponsored responsibility ad.** Underage youth ages 12 to 20 were 400 times more likely to see an alcohol product ad than an ad discouraging underage drinking, and 188 times more likely to see an alcohol product ad than one against drinking and driving.

In fact, less than half of all youth saw responsibility ads. Alcohol industry ads about the legal drinking age reached approximately 37% of youth ages 12 to 20, who saw an average of 1.7 ads. Industry ads about drinking and driving reached approximately 38% of youth ages 12 to 20, who saw, on average, 3.6 ads. In contrast, product advertising reached 90% of youth ages 12 to 20, who saw an average of 281 ads in 2002.

**Adults were 97 times more likely per capita to see an alcohol product ad on television than an alcohol company-sponsored responsibility ad.** Adults 21 and older were 280 times more likely to see an alcohol product ad than an alcohol company-sponsored ad about underage drinking, and 148 times more likely per capita to see an alcohol product ad on television than an industry-sponsored responsibility ad about drinking-driving.

Almost three-quarters of adults 21 and over saw responsibility ads. Alcohol industry ads about the legal drinking age reached approximately 60% of adults 21 and over, who saw an average of 2.3 ads. Industry ads about drunk driving reached approximately 53% of adults, who saw an average of 5 ads per person. However, product advertising reached 96% of adults 21 and over, who, on average, saw 404.5 ads.

**Of 59 alcohol marketers advertising on television, only four placed responsibility ads in 2002.** Adolph Coors, Co.; Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.; SABMiller PLC and Diageo PLC were the four parent companies whose brands placed responsibility advertising in 2002. Of these, Anheuser-Busch placed the most responsibility ads, yet in 2002 Anheuser-Busch still spent 45 times more on product ads than on responsibility ads and placed 89 times more product ads than responsibility ads.

The Center's findings come eight months after the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (IOM) published recommendations on reducing underage drinking, including a call for a national media campaign targeted at adults and designed to "animate and sustain a broad, deep, societal commitment to reduce underage drinking."

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