

Researchers launch website that monitors the tobacco industry

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(Medical Xpress) -- A ground-breaking new online resource, called TobaccoTactics.org, has been launched by researchers at the University Tobacco Control Research Group.

Utilizing the same open software as Wikipedia, TobaccoTactics aims to provide up-to-date information on the [tobacco industry](#), its allies or those promoting a pro-tobacco agenda.

Launching a wiki as an academic resource tool is a first for the

University of Bath. But given [academia](#)'s current focus on knowledge exchange, TobaccoTactics is seen as a novel and innovative way to publish contemporary research.

In all there are nearly 500 profiles on the wiki from tobacco companies, the PR techniques they use to anonymous 'tobacco trolls'. The website explores how the industry influences and often distorts public health debates, using a whole raft of lobbying and public relations tactics.

TobaccoTactics is being launched in the middle of the public consultation on plain packaging, with one analyst predicting a "bare knuckle fight" from the industry. The wiki looks at the tactics the industry is using in the UK, and shows how it is revisiting many of the misleading tactics it employs to try and derail the legislation in Australia.

TobaccoTactics also collates examples from the tobacco industry's own internal documents, which illustrate how it operated in the past and might well do so in the future when it comes to fighting further restrictions on the marketing of its products.

Professor Anna Gilmore from the [Tobacco Control](#) Research Group said: "People may ask why the University of Bath has produced this pioneering wiki. To address the tobacco epidemic, it is necessary to examine its vector, the tobacco industry.

"Specifically, we need to explore how the tobacco industry influences public health, both directly through the promotion of products damaging to health, and indirectly through influence over public policy.

"TobaccoTactics will help the public monitor the industry, its allies and others promoting the pro-smoking agenda."

The researchers hope the wiki will become a vital instrument to monitor

‘tobacco industry interference’ of [public](#) policy, which is this year’s theme of the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Framework Convention on [Tobacco](#) Control.

Provided by University of Bath

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