

# Study finds beer industry's self-regulation ineffective at preventing advertising code violations

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In an evaluation of beer advertising code regulations aimed to encourage responsible advertising practices, new research from the *American Journal of Public Health* finds that content violations still occur and the current U.S. Beer Institute's self-regulation process may be ineffective.

Led by Thomas Babor, professor and Physicians' Health Services Endowed Chair in Community Medicine and Public Health at the UConn School of Medicine, researchers reviewed all alcohol advertisements that aired during the men's and women's NCAA basketball tournament games from 1999 to 2008. Current [alcohol advertising](#) is self-regulated by the [alcohol industry](#) in which the U.S. Beer Institute develops, updates and enforces the regulation codes. This study employed academic and [public health](#) professionals to rate the ads using both the 1997 and 2006 versions of the U.S. Beer Institute's guidelines.

Results showed that when experts reviewed the advertisements, code violations were prevalent. Between 35 percent and 74 percent of the ads had violations, depending on the version of regulation codes used and the scoring method applied. Furthermore, ads with content violations were broadcast more often than those without. Ads that violated the codes most often included content that appealed to young people and content in which [beer](#) drinking was associated with social success and [sexual attractiveness](#).

"The findings of this study are consistent with evidence from other research showing that alcohol industry self-regulation programs are ineffective at preventing content violations," Babor says. "Unless the alcohol industry insists on the use of standardized rating procedure by trained panels consisting of public health experts and members of vulnerable groups, it is unlikely that the high prevalence of content violations will be reduced."

Donna Damon, a research assistant in the Department of Community Medicine and Health Care, managed the study.

"An Empirical Evaluation of the U.S. Beer Institute's Self-Regulation Code Governing the Content of Beer Advertising" is scheduled to appear in the October 2013 print issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*, published by the American Public Health Association.

**More information:** [ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/ ...  
105/AJPH.2013.301487](http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.1136/ajph.2013.301487)

Provided by University of Connecticut

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