



# Brewers Association Marketing and Advertising Code

*Adopted: February 2008  
Amended September 2012*

## Introduction

The world's first beers were brewed more than 6000 years ago by Sumerians in an area referred to as Mesopotamia, and beer has held a respected position in nearly every culture and society since the dawn of recorded history. Brewing is an ancient art form. American brewers have a deep rooted respect for the traditions of beer and America has become a beer destination. American breweries have made the United States a world class example of brewing tradition, where brewers are innovative in their interpretation of classic styles while celebrating tradition and championing quality and diversity. Hundreds of types of ales and lagers are brewed, offering beer drinkers the unparalleled opportunity to responsibly savor the flavor and diversity of the American beer experience.

Beer is meant to be consumed responsibly, and brewers strongly oppose abuse or inappropriate consumption of their beers. In our culture, brewers are held collectively to a standard that reflects on each brewery individually and all breweries collectively. This document is intended to guide breweries and reflect the fact that brewers are responsible corporate citizens.

The term "beer" as used in this Code, covers all types of malt beverages. The Brewers Association encourages all with whom brewers do business to adhere to the law, as well as this Advertising and Marketing Code.

## Guidelines

1. Beer advertising **shall** portray beer in a socially responsible way. This can include depicting people enjoying their lives and socializing while beer is present.

Beer advertising and marketing materials **should not**:

- portray, encourage, or condone drunk driving.
- depict situations where beer is being consumed excessively, involuntarily, as part of a drinking game or dare.
- portray persons lacking control over their behavior as a result of consuming beer
- portray or imply illegal activity as a part of drinking beer

- or financial success or status without beer consumption.
  - claim or represent that individuals cannot solve social, personal, or physical problems without beer consumption
2. A Brewer's advertising **should** focus solely on communicating to adult consumers of legal drinking age.
- Advertising and marketing materials should only be placed in media where at least 70% of the audience is expected to be of legal drinking age. A media placement will be considered reasonable if the statistically valid audience composition data reviewed prior or placement meets the above percentage.
  - Downloaded content and content that can be forwarded to others by e-mail directly from brewer websites or from brewer placements on websites operated by others shall instruct those downloading or e-mailing that they should not forward the content to persons who are not of legal drinking age.
  - Brewers should require disclosure of a viewer's date of birth at the entry to their websites indicating that a brewers' products are intended only for those of legal drinking age.
3. Beer advertising and marketing materials **should not** disparage competing beers. Comparisons or claims distinguishing competing beers should be factual.
4. Beer may be advertised and marketed on college campuses or at college-sponsored events only when permitted by appropriate college policy. All other guidelines of the Brewers Association's Advertising Standards apply to college marketing.

## 5. Digital Media Guidelines

Where use of digital media applies Brewers **should** adhere to the following guidelines.

Digital media includes all beer-branded digital advertising and marketing placements made by or under the control of a Brewer. These include Brewer owned or controlled or third-party Internet and/or mobile sites, commercial marketing e-mails, downloadable content, SMS and MMS messaging, and social media sites.

Brewers should require disclosure of a viewer's date of birth indicating that Brewers' products are intended only for those of legal drinking age:

- at the entry to their websites
- at the point of download for permanent use media with or without access to a brewer's website
- with a third-party compliant digital media site

Brewers shall maintain Internet privacy policies that are publicly available on their Web sites. These policies will govern the collection of personal information from legal drinking age consumers on Brewer websites. Additionally:

- Brewers shall not collect information from viewers who identify themselves as under age.
- Brewers shall not sell the personal information they collect from legal drinking age consumers
- Brewers shall keep customer information secure
- Brewers shall employ opt-in, to receive communications from a Brewer, as well as an optout features in their communications with customers.

control of a Brewer shall be monitored for compliance of these guidelines.

Placements made by or under the control of the Brewer in digital media may only be made where at least 71.6% of the audience is expected to be adults of legal drinking age.

Product placement guidelines apply in digital media: at least 71.6% of the digital media audience should be confirmed to be adults of legal drinking age.

Brewers will use a consistent audience measurement source recognized by the advertising industry (such as, but not limited to, ComScore and Nielsen NetRatings) to determine whether digital media placements are reasonably expected to satisfy the Brewers Association Marketing Code

5. The Brewers Association's Advertising Standards shall apply to "product placement" of beer.

## **Complaint Resolution**

If the Brewers Association receives a complaint regarding the marketing practices of a Brewers Association member, they will refer that complaint to the member brewery for a response to the complainant. If this is deemed unsatisfactory, the Brewers Association Board will convene a panel of appropriate and unbiased industry participants for review and comment based on the above guidelines. The process for convening such a panel is contained in the Brewers Association Policies and Procedures.