

3

MEDIA LITERACY



Times Square without advertising

Words to know

Sponsors are people who help pay for events, shows, magazines, performances, games, etc. A lot of times, in exchange for helping to pay for an event, the people putting on the event will put the sponsors' logo or name on material. It's advertising by another name!

Venues are the places where events happen. They can be civic centers, arenas, theaters, church basements, school gyms, city sidewalks—any defined place where an event could happen.

A **demographic** is a particular piece of the human population. This is usually used for research studies, or census, but can also be used in an advertising campaign. Women might be considered the demographic, or target audience, for a particular brand of clothing, for example.

Product placement is when a company pays money to have their product used by someone influential. It can be on a TV show, in a movie, in a youtube video, or even in person (do you think _____ [basketball player] has to pay for his Adidas?)

Because there are so many advertising messages in our world, sometimes the messages can seem invisible. To really see all of it, sometimes you might need to look at just the advertising and block out everything else. This exercise can help you do that.

First, some background...

Sponsorships are a popular way to pay for events. Along with looking for *sponsors*, some *venues* sell space (like a billboard on the wall, or a page in the program) to advertisers.

Often, the way that advertisers and sponsors decide whether to give money to an event is by looking at who will attend the event, and figuring out whether the attendees might be in their *demographic*.

That's why you don't see many ads for makeup at basketball games—people who go to sports games are mostly male, and mostly don't buy makeup. It's a complicated system, and there are people who make their whole careers figuring out what would encourage people to buy a particular product.

But the end result is that the event and the advertiser can become connected in people's minds—like how the Superbowl is now connected to beer commercials.

It can also seem like the event supports the advertiser, when actually it's the other way around. For example, a particular brand of wine advertised during a cooking show might make it seem like the cooking show host chose that brand, or supports it. But actually the wine brand has paid the tv network to have their commercial air at that particular time—so that you might associate a show that you like to watch with their wine.

The same thing happens within shows, too... it's called *product placement*: imagine a TV show that shows a person drinking a beer, or wearing a hat with a beer logo on it. If you can see the brand name of the product, the company has almost definitely paid for it to be there.

The alcohol industry spends over \$6 billion dollars a year on advertising. The Federal Communications Commission does not have any guidelines about where and when companies can advertise alcohol, so the stations currently rely on their own policies—and the alcohol companies' policies—about their ads.

[suggested graphic: the difference between a million and a trillion, a trillion and a billion]

If you're interested in learning more about how alcohol advertising affects youth, a great resource is the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, on the web at www.camy.org

Alcohol Advertising Placement

Operation: Library Lookout

This two-part activity will help you get a grasp on what kind of ads kids see in your school library.

Part 1: Research

Estimated Time: Flexible (10-15 minutes per magazine)

Number of Participants: Min 1, Max 20

Materials needed:

- School library
- Tally sheet
- Pens or pencils
- Sticky notes (optional)
- Calculator (optional)

Roles needed:

- Library liaison
- Time keeper
- Paper minder
- Researchers

Action:

- 1** Go to your school library. Talk to the librarian, and make sure to get permission! You're going to do a survey of the magazines that are on the school shelves.
- 2** Look at each page carefully. Fill out a Library Lookout Survey Ticket for each magazine you look at.
- 3** When you're done, gather the group together and add up your findings. You can use the Event Survey Ticket Total form, if you want.

Library Lookout Survey Ticket

Publication Reviewed: _____ Volume _____ Issue _____

Date of Review _____ Surveyor _____

Publication category (check all that apply)

- Research (Books & Literature, Industry, Travel, etc.)
- Business & Finance
- Hobby or Interest (Cars/ Trucks/ Boats, Animals/Pets, Crafts, Cooking, etc.)
- Activity (Games, Puzzles, etc.)
- Computers/Electronics
- Lifestyle (Entertainment, Celebrity, Health, Beauty, Fashion)
- Family (Home/Garden, Parenting)
- Travel
- Other

Target Population of Magazine (check all that apply)

- Men
- Women
- Teens
- Kids

Now look through the pages and look for pages with alcohol advertisements on them. This could be for different kinds of alcohol themselves, or people wearing branded clothing, or something else! Tally the advertisements below

Alcohol advertisements tally:

_____ Alcopop	_____ Half Page	_____ Alcohol logos on clothing or products
_____ Beer	_____ Other	_____ Other notable ads
_____ Liquor	_____ Ads w/cartoons	Description: _____
_____ Wine	_____ Coupons/discounts/sales	_____
_____ Other	_____ Cover/back page ads	_____
_____ Full Page		

Notes: _____

Library Lookout Event Survey Ticket Total

Collect everybody's tally tickets. Add them up and write the totals below.

How many TOTAL magazines did your group look at? _____

What were the TOTAL numbers of each of these that you looked at? _____

Publication category (check all that apply)

- Research (Books & Literature, Industry, Travel, etc.)
- Business & Finance
- Hobby or Interest (Cars/ Trucks/ Boats, Animals/Pets, Crafts, Cooking, etc.)
- Activity (Games, Puzzles, etc.)
- Computers/Electronics
- Lifestyle (Entertainment, Celebrity, Health, Beauty, Fashion)
- Family (Home/Garden, Parenting)
- Travel
- Other

Target Population of Magazine (check all that apply) TOTAL

_____ Men _____ Women _____ Teens _____ Children

TOTAL Alcohol advertisements tally:

_____ Alcopop	_____ Half Page	_____ Alcohol logos on clothing or products
_____ Beer	_____ Other	_____ Other notable ads
_____ Liquor	_____ Ads w/cartoons	Description: _____
_____ Wine	_____ Coupons/discounts/sales	_____
_____ Other	_____ Cover/back page ads	_____
_____ Full Page		

Notes: _____

Alcohol Advertising Placement

Operation: Library Lookout

Part 2: Considering Results

Estimated Time: 30-60 minutes

Number of Participants: Min 1, Max 20

Materials needed:

- Large note paper
- Tape
- Markers

Roles:

- Facilitator
- Note taker
- Time keeper

Action:

- 1 Review your collected responses with the group. You can use the discussion questions below as a way to start the conversation.
 - How do you think these ads affect the people who look at the magazine?
 - Is there any difference in the amount of ads between different target populations? How about the kind of product advertised in each target population?
 - Are any activities associated more strongly with alcohol than others?
 - What kind of assumptions do advertisers make about their target population and alcohol use? Are these assumptions accurate? Do they make use of any stereotypes?
 - Who else should know this information?
 - What are the ways we can share this information with them (there is a decision-making flowchart on page ___ to help with this)?

Evaluation

What was your experience doing this activity? Thumbs up? Thumbs down? Why?

Before you did the activity, what did you expect the answers would be?

What surprised you?

What was the easiest part of the activity? The hardest?

If you were going to do the activity again, list one thing you could do to make the hard part a little easier?

If you could summarize what you learned from this activity in two words, what would the words be?

Would you change anything about this activity?

Taking it Deeper (optional discussion questions)

Materials: large paper and markers

- Can you imagine a world with no alcohol advertisements? Which magazines would be most impacted? Would there be any negative effects on magazines or on society in general? What would be the positive effect of that kind of change?
- 1 Brainstorm a list of ways to change the number of alcohol ads in magazines. Don't worry about whether or not your group can take this on—just think of any ideas at this point.
- 2 Now circle the items that you feel like your group can take on. Refer to the star chart [Erica: this is the “spiciness/difficulty guide” that we were talking about] for ideas.
- 3 Choose one or two of these activities. Make an action plan using the action plan worksheet on page ____.

If you're having trouble coming up with some activities that your group can do, here are a couple of possible projects:

- Tape a paper flap over the alcohol ads in your school library make sure to just put tape on one edge, so that the ad is still visible by lifting the paper. Write an article for your school paper about the project.
- Hold a press conference with the results of your survey project (how-to on page ____).
- Write a letter to the editor with the results (how-to on page ____). Use the results to tell your senator or representative about how alcohol advertising affects youth.

Alcohol Advertising Placement

Operation: Event Sentinel

Choose an event and survey the alcohol advertising that you see. Some possible events are sporting events, concerts, shows, fairs, festivals, plays, and more!

Name of Event	
Type of Event	Date
Location	Surveyor

Outside the event:

- Major Alcohol Sponsors (on banner/event sign)
 Major Non-Alcohol Sponsors (on banner/event sign)

Alcohol brands outside event _____

Count: billboards, wall signs, sidewalk signs, vehicles, others _____

Inside the event:

Alcohol brands inside event _____

Count: wall signs, scoreboards, paper products/cups, vehicles, banners, other _____

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is alcohol for sale at the event? If yes, number of "age of sale" signs? _____ Alcohol industry "age of sale" signs _____ State/Prevention groups "age of sale" signs _____ Other "age of sale" signs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there special prices or deals offered (2 for 1, reduced price for certain brands, etc.)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do other products for sale (souvenirs, t-shirts) feature alcohol advertising or logos?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are clerks/staff wearing alcohol brand apparel or gear? What brands?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lighted/animated alcohol display? What brands?
		TOTAL SHEET

Alcohol Advertising Placement

Operation: Media Watch

Before you start, it might be helpful to think about TV & Radio in general. Here are some suggestions of different types of shows (some shows blend more than one of these elements together).

In the boxes next to the genre, make your best guess about which age group the show is supposed to appeal to (Kids, Teens, Women, Men, Families—and sometimes there will be more than one!):

	Kids	Teens	Women	Men	Families
Episodic (<i>Law & Order, ER, 24, Radio Drama</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Movie of the Week (<i>Jessica Savage Story</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Miniseries (<i>Roots, Rome</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Family Friendly Specials (<i>The Oscars, variety shows</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Reality (<i>Survivor, The Apprentice, Extreme Makeover Home Edition</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Game shows (<i>Wheel of Fortune, Who Wants to be a Millionaire</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Daytime Soaps (<i>All My Children, Young and the Restless</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Children's (<i>Sesame Street, Dora the Explorer</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cartoons (<i>Flintstones, SpongeBob</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Music TV (<i>Includes music videos, documentary-style shows</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Music Radio (<i>Music interspersed with DJ banter</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Talk (<i>Oprah, Dr. Phil, Dr. Laura</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Courtroom (<i>Peoples' Court, Judge Judy, Court TV</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
News (<i>Local, National, 24-hr networks</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sports	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Magazine (<i>Entertainment Tonight, Dateline, 60 Minutes</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Lifestyle (<i>HGTV, Lifestyles of the Rich & Famous, Cooking shows</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Religious (<i>700 Club, TBN shows</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sci Fi/Fantasy (<i>Battlestar Galactica, Lost, Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Promos	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Infomercials	<input type="checkbox"/>				

(categories adapted from "The Different Types of TV Shows and Movies," by Mike Flanagan. California Video Production. April 8, 2008. <http://www.videosymphony.com/blog/?p=59> Accessed March 27, 2009.)

Choose a television or radio show to watch or listen to. Prime-time and evening shows are especially good for this activity.

Who do you think the intended audience is for each of kind of show? Think about when the show airs (daytime, afternoon, evening, prime time, late night) and what kind of audience is likely to be watching. Try to imagine beyond your experience and think about different age groups. When are elementary school students likely to be watching TV or listening to the radio? How about working adults? Elders?

Name of show

Times observed: _____ am/pm to _____ am/pm

Length of show

Show audience
You can figure this out by 1) looking at the main characters of the show and what kind of situations it's about. For example, does the show have <u>mostly</u> :
<input type="checkbox"/> Married/committed couples <input type="checkbox"/> Single adults <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Teens <input type="checkbox"/> Kids

Target Population of show (check all that apply)
<input type="checkbox"/> Men <input type="checkbox"/> Women <input type="checkbox"/> Teens <input type="checkbox"/> Children

TOTAL NUMBER OF ADVERTISEMENTS

Number of alcohol advertisements

- _____ Alcopop
- _____ Beer
- _____ Liquor
- _____ Wine
- _____ Other

Other

- _____ Ads w/cartoons
- _____ Discounts/sales

Other notable ads description

Notes: _____

Brands advertised: _____

TOTAL SHEET