

Drinking in the Home - UK - June 2013

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“Lower-alcohol drinks tend to be cheaper, because of lower taxation, and are often lower calorie. Both factors should make them attractive to people drinking at home, helping to retain users at a time when people are cutting back on spend.”

– Chris Wisson, Senior Drinks Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- Why are consumers cutting back on alcohol?
- How can you appeal to 18-24-year-olds?
- How can usage in underperforming in-home categories be boosted?
- What will the impact of the likely tighten in advertising regulations be?
- How will the tax escalators introduced impact this sector?

In recent years, the continued squeeze on budgets has meant that many consumers have switched from drinking in the on-trade to the cheaper off-trade channel. However, the off-trade has also come under pressure in recent years as consumer confidence has suffered, wages have stagnated and living costs have risen. The government's tax escalator, which remains in place for all types of alcoholic drinks except beer, for which it was removed in March 2013, continues to push up the price of alcoholic drinks ahead of inflation, adding to pressure on the market.

The resulting impact on the off-trade market has been a slight increase in value sales to £15.2 billion in 2012, which masks an underlying sustained drop-off in volume sales in most categories. Many consumers are feeling the pinch and are now reducing how often they drink at home, though some still appear to be willing to spend a bit more for better quality. While the off-trade market continues to be more resilient than the on-trade due to typically lower prices, brands are having to work increasingly hard to win over price-conscious drinkers.

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