

Premium Alcohol Brands - UK - January 2011

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What is this report about?

This report focuses specifically on premiumisation in the alcohol market. Despite the current economic downturn this remains perhaps the key driver of future growth in a mature UK alcohol market. This report is unusual in that it is primarily delivered in PowerPoint format (available to download separately). The PowerPoint presentation contains the detailed brand analysis, which is much easier to follow in the more visual format.

What have we found out?

- In spite of the economic downturn, alcohol producers should continue to invest in premium brands. For example, 66% of UK adults say they prefer quality to quantity when drinking and the 'tax escalator' means that drinks brands must justify their rapidly increasing price tag.
- Premium lager brands need to more effectively communicate their taste benefits as over 8 in ten consumers consider "that a brand tastes better" to be the key determinant in whether an alcohol brand is premium or not. Currently lager advertising fluctuates between being overly masculine or at the other end of the scale, overly abstract, whereas cider brands such as Magners have been much better at communicating their taste credentials.
- Better branding of good quality European wine can help consumers to navigate through a highly fragmented and confusing market. For example, 45% of wine drinkers think a premium wine brand should be "a guarantee of quality" but there are few wine brands that are familiar to consumers beyond Wolf Blass and Hardys.
- Jack Daniel's is surprisingly considered the most premium alcohol brand, in spite of others being seen as better quality. This is a reward for creating a trendy brand for aspirational, young C2DE drinkers, largely due to its bottle design. While, it has added depth to this image by consistently communicating its rich Tennessee heritage over the past few decades.
- There is a significant opportunity to market more niche Scotch malt brands as premium products. For example, despite being only the 20th biggest advertising spenders in the spirits category in the past three years, Glenfiddich is considered by consumers to be the joint second most premium spirits brand.
- Rich heritage is a crucial means of communicating brand quality. It is the main reason why Guinness is considered more premium than all other lager and cider brands, and with its implied traditional artisanship means that whisky/whiskey brands are particularly romanticised.

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EMEA: +44 (0)20 7778 7151
Americas: +1 (312) 932 0600
APAC: +61 (0)2 8284 8100