

POINT OF SALE ADVERTISING

Point of sale (POS) advertising and promotion is sometimes exempted or not included in laws banning tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, despite the fact that the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) requires a comprehensive ban of all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.¹ POS advertising weakens the effectiveness of tobacco control laws, and exposes the population to tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. Youth are particularly vulnerable to POS advertising and promotion.

POS Advertising Exposes Youth to Pro-Smoking Messages and Creates Positive Attitudes Toward Tobacco Products and Brands.^{2,3}

- Tobacco products and advertisements are often placed near candy and children's items at the front of the store and on counter tops, encouraging children to see them as harmless everyday items.⁴⁻⁶
- Studies in Brazil and California found that stores visited frequently by adolescents have more tobacco advertising than stores less popular with adolescents.^{7,8}
- Youth exposed to stores with a high prevalence of tobacco advertisement believe that tobacco is easier to buy and overestimate the percentage of teens and adults that smoke.^{9,10}
- A United States study estimates that banning POS advertising and requiring cigarette packs to be kept out of sight can reduce adolescents' exposure to cigarette brand impressions by as much as 83%.⁷

POS Advertising Increases Youth Experimentation and Initiation.^{11,12}

- Studies have consistently found significant associations between exposure to POS tobacco promotions and smoking initiation or susceptibility to smoking.¹³
- Adolescents who frequent stores where cigarettes are widely advertised are twice as likely to start smoking.^{3,12}
- Higher levels of advertising, lower cigarette prices, and greater availability of cigarette promotions in stores predict smoking initiation among youth.¹¹
- The availability of sales promotions increases the likelihood that youth will move from experimentation to regular use.¹¹
- Adolescent exposure to pack displays is associated with increased intentions to smoke.^{3,9}

Exposure to POS tobacco advertising, including product displays, influences youth smoking, increases impulse tobacco purchases and undermines quitting attempts.



Cigarettes displayed with children's items in California, USA²⁵



Color branding for Dunhill cigarettes, New Zealand²⁶

POS Advertising Encourages Impulse Buying and Makes it Harder for Users to Quit.¹⁴⁻¹⁵

- An Australian study found that nearly 40% of individuals trying to quit smoking experience urges to smoke when they see cigarette advertisements, more than 60% impulsively buy cigarettes as a result, and 20% avoid stores where they normally buy cigarettes to avoid the temptation.¹⁵
- Interviews with former smokers in New Zealand found that tobacco displays cause them “physical and emotional cravings” that make quitting smoking more difficult.¹⁶

Tobacco Companies Win When POS Is Not Banned

- When one type of advertising is banned, tobacco companies increase other types of advertising.¹⁷
- The tobacco industry uses contracts and monetary incentives with retailers to ensure prime placement of their products and advertisements.¹⁸⁻¹⁹
- In 2006, the five major cigarette manufacturers in the US spent \$12.49 billion on all types of advertising and promotion. More than \$10 billion, or 85%, was spent on point of sale advertising and promotional allowances.²⁰

Comprehensive Bans Are More Effective Than Partial Bans in Reducing Consumption

- A study of 30 developing countries found partial bans were associated with a 13.6% reduction in per capita consumption, compared to 23.5% in countries with comprehensive bans.²³
- When only partial measures are in place, tobacco companies use creative tactics to circumvent partial measures. According to a British American Tobacco internal document: “The creation of advertising within regulatory restraints can serve as a goad to creativity. Prohibitions and limitations should not be allowed to discourage the cigarette advertiser, but rather exhilarate him. To be able to meet the new confining conditions... more effectively than one’s competitors is a challenge to creativity and ingenuity”.²⁴

Key Messages

- Point of sale advertising is a powerful form of advertising used by the tobacco industry to sell its products and is especially effective with youth and smokers trying to quit.
- Comprehensive bans of tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship are essential to reduce tobacco use.
- Tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship bans **must** include point of sale.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

We should have Marlboro (and other PM brands) positioned in the store to take advantage of the impulse shopper... Where are the best spots for promotional offers, POS, etc.? We are after intrusive visibility.”

– Phillip Morris¹⁴

Simply stated, the point-of-purchase is where the action is—it’s the retail environment. It’s a specific location in a store, it’s product display, and it’s in-store advertising. Importantly, and perhaps not so obviously, the POP is also in the mind of the prospective consumer.”

– RJ Reynolds²¹

In summary, the spend focus [for advertising] has shifted from Media, Outdoor and Consumer Promotions to in-store [POS advertising], contracting for display space, partnerships with retailers to build business, and international sponsorships.

– Phillip Morris Australia²²



POS advertising in Brazil implying sexuality and femininity²⁷

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