

E-cigarettes and HTPs are marketed to Vietnamese consumers through brand websites, despite not being allowed to be imported into Vietnam.

Banning their sales and marketing could protect consumers from targeted advertising.

Online Marketing of E-cigarettes and Heated Tobacco Products on Brand Websites in Vietnam

Background

Vietnam does not regulate the sale of e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products (HTPs). Vietnam Tobacco Corporation (VINATABA) is the only entity allowed to import e-cigarettes but is not currently. This study examined product characteristics and marketing strategies on e-cigarette and HTP brand websites targeting Vietnamese consumers.

Methods

- In Jan. 2023, seven websites (6 e-cigarette brands: BoldVape, CISOO, HEBAT, MotiPiin, Vapefly, & Vopoo and 1 HTP brand: HITASTE) specifically targeting Vietnamese consumers were identified
- 543 webpages within two clicks from the homepages of these websites were coded and analyzed

(Fashionable Appeal) *[Brand name] combines fashion with technology and is committed to becoming a fashion brand with style.*

(Innovation Appeal) *First Rebuildable Dripping Pod System*

(Luxury/high-end Appeal) *Elegant and brilliant design...has always maintained a maddening pursuit of sophistication, modernity, and individuality.*

(Responsible Marketing) *We are trying to protect children in every detail. You should use the LOCK mode, which can be very effective to prevent children from accidentally starting it.*

Results

- Advertising appeals, marketing messages, and promotion strategies were seen on all websites
- Top appeals used on all sites were luxury/high-end, fashionable, and innovation
- Top message categories used on all sites were responsible marketing or self-regulation and product safety
- The top promotion strategy was reference to the brand’s additional web presence on 6 of 7 sites
- Flavor descriptors were seen on 4 of 7 sites. The most prevalent flavors were concept flavor descriptors, fruit, mint/menthol, sweets, coffee/tea, and other non-alcoholic beverages on 4 of 7 sites
- Mechanisms for age-restricted site access were observed on 3 of 7 sites

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| Tobacco industry | E-cigarette & nicotine product industry | Pharma industry |
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| NO | NO | NO |
| NO | NO | NO |

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