



Women's Perception Of Beer And Its Advertising

Exploratory Research Group™





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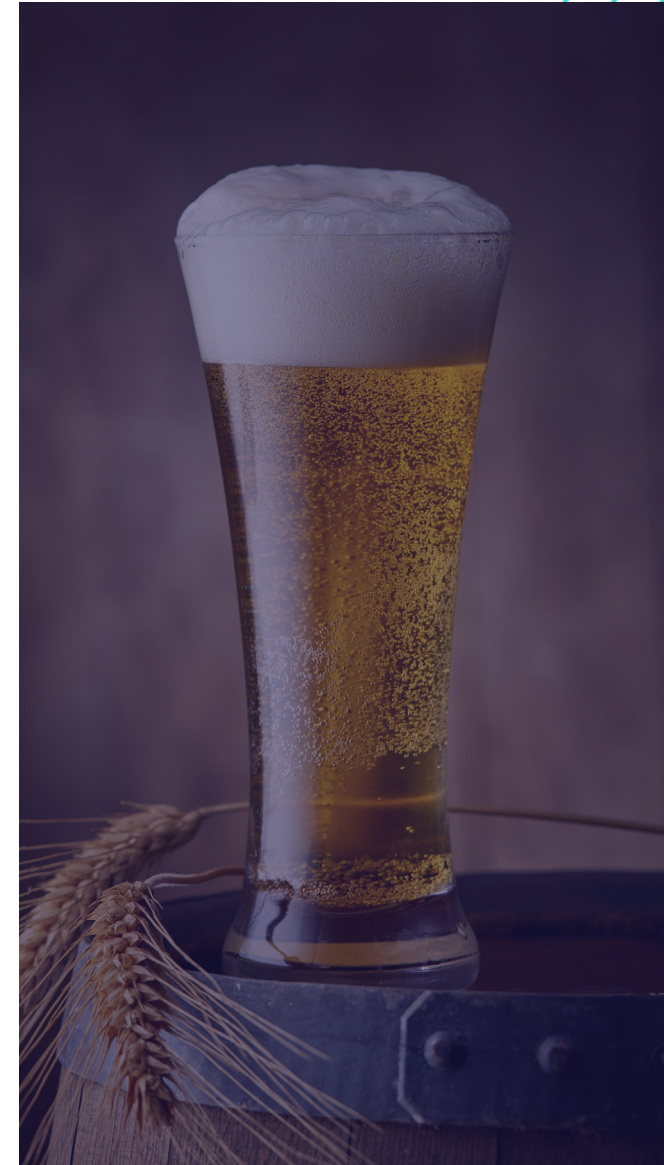
Background & Objectives

Background & Objectives

The beer industry is a male-dominated category, so what does that mean for branding and marketing communication when trying to expand reach and interest among women? With the recent rise in craft beers, the market is more segmented and major players are looking for new product and/or brand opportunities to innovate.

Recently beer companies, such as Anheuser-Busch and Guinness, are beginning to think outside of the box in regards to creative and product line offers. Anheuser-Busch has created a specific product, Lime-A-Rita, targeted towards women giving them a unique opportunity to step beyond the beer category and compete with wine and spirits by providing an alternative to the traditional margaritas. On the other hand, Guinness has taken a look at their branding/marketing and developed a campaign to make their brand ageless across all demographics. They are achieving this through creating stories that consumers can understand and relate to by connecting back to the core brand values. Connecting through emotional storytelling is a key differentiator for Guinness through their “Made of More” campaign.

This research will focus on understanding how the branding/marketing communication is resonating with women to provide clients with foundational knowledge of elements that appeal towards women in the beer category. In addition, the learnings and themes from the qualitative research will be used to provide a framework for the Agile A&U study, which will help quantify the themes of the qualitative research.





Which branding and marketing elements should clients keep in mind during the creative development process for US female beer consumers, while also identifying any red flags that may exist with the current creative formats?

- Understand the consumer through exploring motivators/barriers, usage habits, and attitudes, while understanding unaided expectations for branding and marketing messages within the beer category .
 - Topics to explore: Brands that are resonating/connecting
 - Picture and/or video upload of an ad that personally resonates and discuss elements or pieces of the creative that are particularly appealing
- Focus on specific branding and marketing elements of current top of mind consumer beer ads to understand areas for refinement or red flags
 - Topics to explore: Identify themes or common verbiage used to describe the category, brand connection, why doesn't a brand speak to you, effects of emotional stories, broadly appealing
- Create a tagline and/or overall campaign idea for a new brand of beer



Methodology

Methodology

Exploratory Research Group™

This study was conducted online where respondents answered open-ended questions and follow-ups posted by a trained moderator. This technology fosters a dynamic qualitative discussion where respondents are easily able to interact with others in the group.

Qualitative research is based on a small number of individuals and provides a rich source of information useful in understanding a given subject matter or population, in confirming existing knowledge or suppositions, and in providing direction for planning and strategy. Caution should be used in generalizing the findings to a larger population..

# of Groups	Total Respondents	Days in Field	Recruit to Report (in days)
1	34	2	8

Audience

Gender	Female
Age	25-40
Ethnicity	Capture
Household Income	Capture
Marital Status	Capture
Employment	Capture
Region	Capture
# Beers Consumed P2W	2+
Brand Purchased P2W	Capture
Style Purchased P2W	Capture



Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Key Findings	Implications
<p>A red flag in the current advertising format is too heavy of a focus on young people partying. Millennial women do not connect to the characters and do not relate to the brand.</p>	<p>Brands should consider showing female-centric situations, such as motherhood or a girl's coming of age story. There is white space in featuring women celebrities or a female protagonist to better connect to Millennial women.</p>
<p>While women love trying new beers, they typically have a preferred brand that they reach for in-store. A recommendation from a friend, an eye-catching package, or a sale may tip the scales in favor of a new beer or brand.</p>	<p>Featuring relatable characters and female-centric situations may encourage switching behavior by conveying a sense of 'suggestion from a friend' or increased trust that this brand/beer is for them.</p>
<p>Respondents consider advertisements to be most impactful when they balance product description with emotion.</p>	<p>Beer brands should develop advertisements that convey the equities of nostalgia, humor, happiness, or poignancy. These emotions should be folded into a narrative arch, as women connect to emotional stories that go beyond a simple description of the beer.</p>



Detailed Findings

“

I love beer and trying new beers. I love being able to come home after a long day, sit outside with my family, and enjoy a nice, cold one.

Age 29, Bud Light, Michelob Ultra-Light, Pabst Blue Ribbon

Beer Is Relaxing

Millennial women like beer as a delicious way to unwind.

- Respondents enjoy the way beer tastes, and like that there is an endless variety of flavors and styles to test out. The carbonation is particularly refreshing and satisfying.
- Beer is seen as relaxing and is a way to de-stress. There is less risk of getting too drunk with beer, since it is seen as milder and easier to drink than hard liquors.
- Some Millennial women view beer similarly to a hobby. They try out new beers and are always on the hunt for a different style or brand. They find the variety exciting and engaging.



UnWind With Family And Friends

Beer is primarily enjoyed at home to relax, not to facilitate partying.

- Most respondents drink beer at home with their significant other or spouse after work in the evening.
- While they may go out with friends to a bar or get after-dinner drinks, they do not view beer as a partying beverage.
- Beer is also viewed as a good drink to have at family gatherings to loosen tensions and encourage everyone to relax.
- Women will have a few beers on the weekend as well, especially when it is nice outside and they can:
 - Grill out
 - Hang out with their family on the porch or deck
 - Entertain outside

“

Generally I drink with my husband. We enjoy beer after work and throughout the evening during the week. I do drink with friends and family, too. But that is usually on the weekends.

Age 38, Bud Light, Corona Extra, Michelob Ultra-Light, Samuel Adams

“

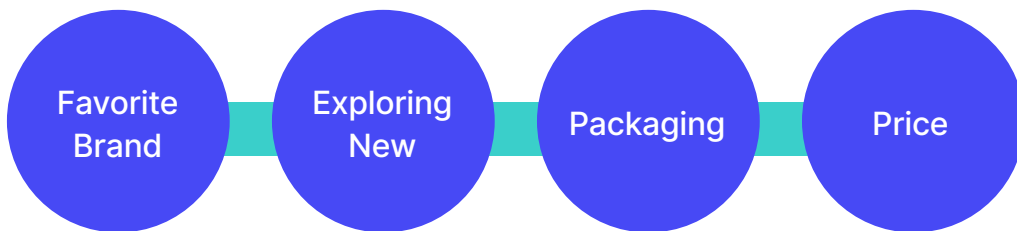
I generally drink beer in the late afternoon and evening. There isn't a specific day, just whenever I'm craving it.

Age 29, Corona Extra, Goose Island, Other

Have Some Brand Loyalty

Most women have a favored brand, but are willing to experiment.

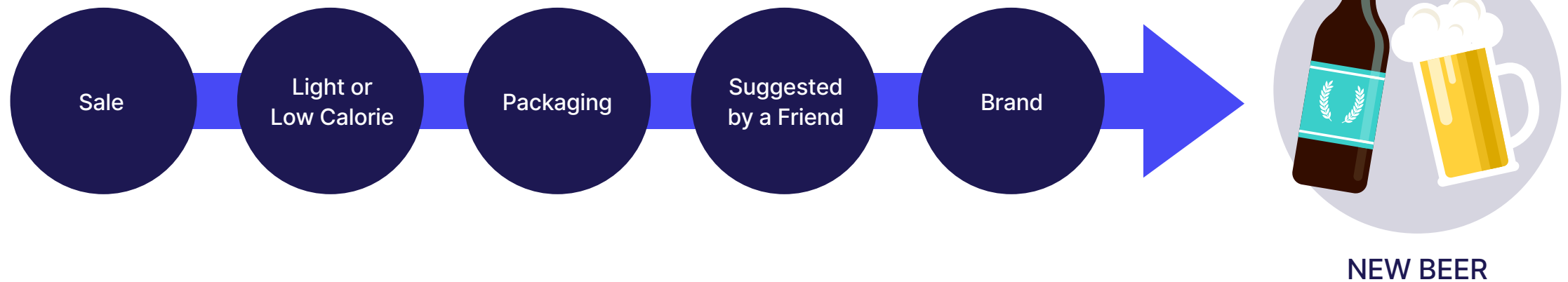
- Despite having a preferred brand that they know and trust, women will occasionally try out new brands in-store or at a friend's house.
- Price point is also important, since respondents have trouble justifying expensive beer.
- A few participants take packaging into consideration. A colorful or unique package may catch their eye in the aisle. Some also prefer bottles over cans.



Switching Factors

In-store factors and recommendations can trigger switching behavior.

In-store, a sale, low-calorie option, or attractive packaging may cause Millennial women to try a different beer. They may also switch based on a recommendation or if their brand releases a new style.



“

I might try something new if there is a sale or if someone I knew tried it and liked it. Or sometimes if I like the label or color enough, I might pick it up.

Age 37, Bud Light, Sierra Nevada, Samuel Adams

Relaxing And Refreshing Equities Resonate

Respondents can name brands that resonate with them, but struggle to name brands that do not.

Brands That Resonate

Corona, Coors, and Budweiser are named as the brands that consistently have good advertising.

- Corona shows relaxing beach scenes
- Coors reminds them how refreshing beer can be
- Budweiser does a good job having cute and emotional commercials

Brands That Do Not Resonate

Respondents cannot think of a specific brand that does not resonate with them; the advertisements do not stick in their mind and are forgettable, or are considered too generic.

“

Budweiser, because of the humor that is often displayed in the commercials... that is like my personality.

Age 34, Bud Light, Coors Light, Budweiser, Heineken

“

Some brands don't put thought into their advertisements. A lot of beer commercials are just a cold glass and beer being poured into it.

Age 32, Bud Light, Coors Light, Budweiser, Corona Extra, Michelob Ultra-Light, Heineken

Varying Degrees Of Resonance

Current advertising trends focus heavily on partying or relaxation.

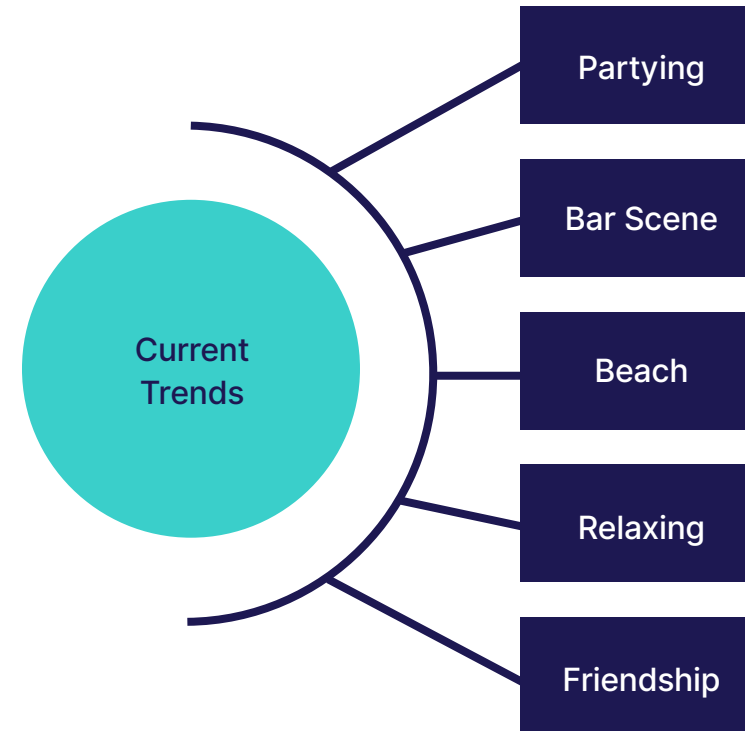
The current category themes that respondents notice are:

- Ads that appeal to men with masculine topics or sexy women
- The club, party, and bar scene
- Friends drinking socially
- People relaxing on the beach

These themes have different degrees of resonance with respondents. They appreciate relaxation and friendship equities, but struggle to connect with young partiers.

Category wording is similar, with the following being called out as the most common:

- Refreshing
- Enjoy
- Drink
- Friends
- Relax



Connection Is Mixed

Personal connection to beer advertising is hit or miss.

- Respondents tend to be neutral or have a moderate connection to the beer advertisement category.
- Certain past ads stand out to them, especially if they are emotional or featured a relatable situation (like relaxing on the beach). However, other ads do not stick in their minds, and are easy to forget.
- Some respondents claim that they do not connect to beer ads and instead go based on taste and quality of the product.

“

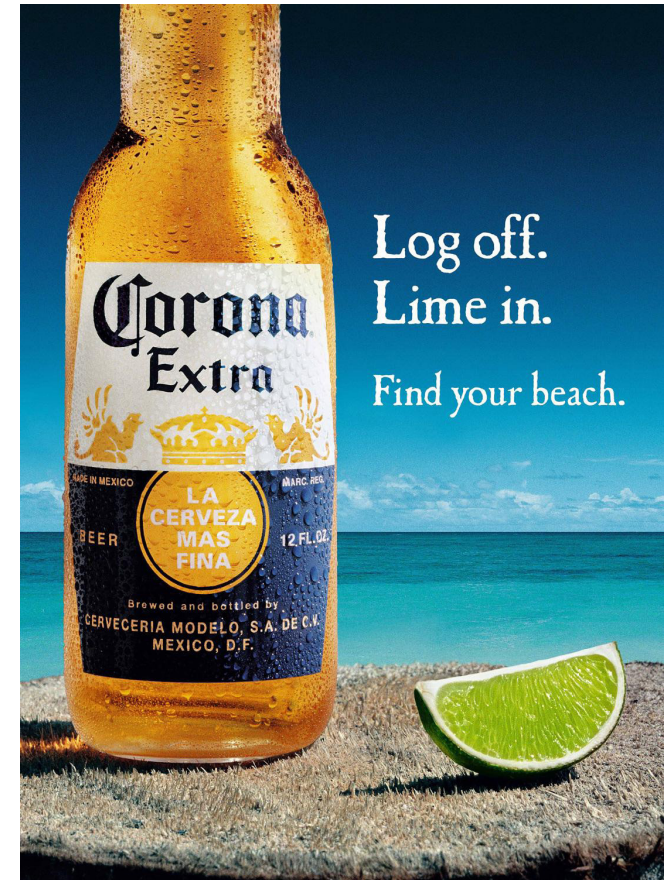
It really depends on the ad, but something like the Budweiser lost dog commercial really resonates with me. The opposite is true as well; if I hate the ad or think the company is just phoning it in, I'd be less likely to try their product.

Age 37, Bud Light, Coors Light, Budweiser, Heineken



Past Favorite Ads

Advertisements that focus on emotion or show relaxing imagery are remembered fondly.



“

I think I would like to see more women involved in advertisements for beer. Beer is always seen as a man drink, and girls that enjoy it never get to see really clever commercials that are for women.

Age 29, Bud Light, Michelob Ultra-Light, Pabst Blue Ribbon

Elements Lacking Connection

Millennial women struggle to connect to classic beer ad tropes.



Partying

While they appreciate seeing characters letting loose with their friends and family, simply showing a bar scene or club hopping does not resonate with Millennial Women.

Since they are more likely to enjoy a few drinks at home or at a dinner out, they do not find the situation to be relatable.

Particularly mothers and older respondents feel this misses the mark.



Characters Not Relatable

In addition to the party scene, respondents dislike when advertising focuses only on young, very attractive characters.

- They feel that this is unrealistic and overdone.
- They feel disconnected from brands that message to this type of person.



Marketed to Men

Women already feel that beer is targeted to men, and advertising that features scantily clad women or only male characters reinforces this perception.

- Many remembered ads that show a male protagonist or a male-focused storyline.

Elements With Best Connection

Emotional story-telling resonates with respondents more than a simple product description.



Emotion

Millennial women look for emotion in advertising, as it encourages them to be invested in the storyline and remember it later.

Emotions can be happy, nostalgic, sad, or touching, as long as they are poignant.

A clear example of this is the Budweiser 'Puppy Love' Superbowl ad, that many women remember even years later.



Narrative

Advertising that tells a story is preferred to ads that present just a description of the beer or vague imagery and classic bar/club snapshots.

- The story helps to connect the emotional aspects to the branding and clearly present the equities.
- Ads can include product description, but a story frames it in a way that resonates differently.



Women-Focused

Since women feel that beer ads are geared to men, women-specific scenarios, messaging, and characters are highly appreciated.

- Mothers would like to see ads that show how beer is for parents, too.

“

A beer ad should either be clever or exert some emotion. If a company is confident in its beer, it can afford to make a statement that isn't about beer.

Age 37, Bud Light, Coors Light, Budweiser, Heineken

Women-Focused Narratives

Women's campaign ideas focus on relaxation and emotion.

- Women build their campaigns around the elements they find most powerful in current advertising:
 - Emotions, such as humor or nostalgia
 - Women relaxing with friends and family
 - A clear storyline
- Parents create ads that show mothers taking a break from their daily routine.
- If women's ad features a celebrity, they typically choose a leading actress or female comedian.
 - However, some feel that a 'normal person' would be strongest lead.
- They would have their ads play on television and the internet, in video format. This is the best fit and the easiest way to have their stories come to life.

“

I would have an advertisement that focuses on parenthood and how challenging it can be dealing with kids. A tagline would say something like 'mommy needs a time out, beer time!

Age 29, Corona Extra, Goose Island, Other

“

I see a woman going through different stages of her life. I see her turning 21, her graduating from college, her getting married. In the background there is a beer, with the slogan 'with each big event in your life enjoy a beer.

Age 37, Bud Light, Budweiser, Corona Extra



Supplemental Findings

Supplemental Findings

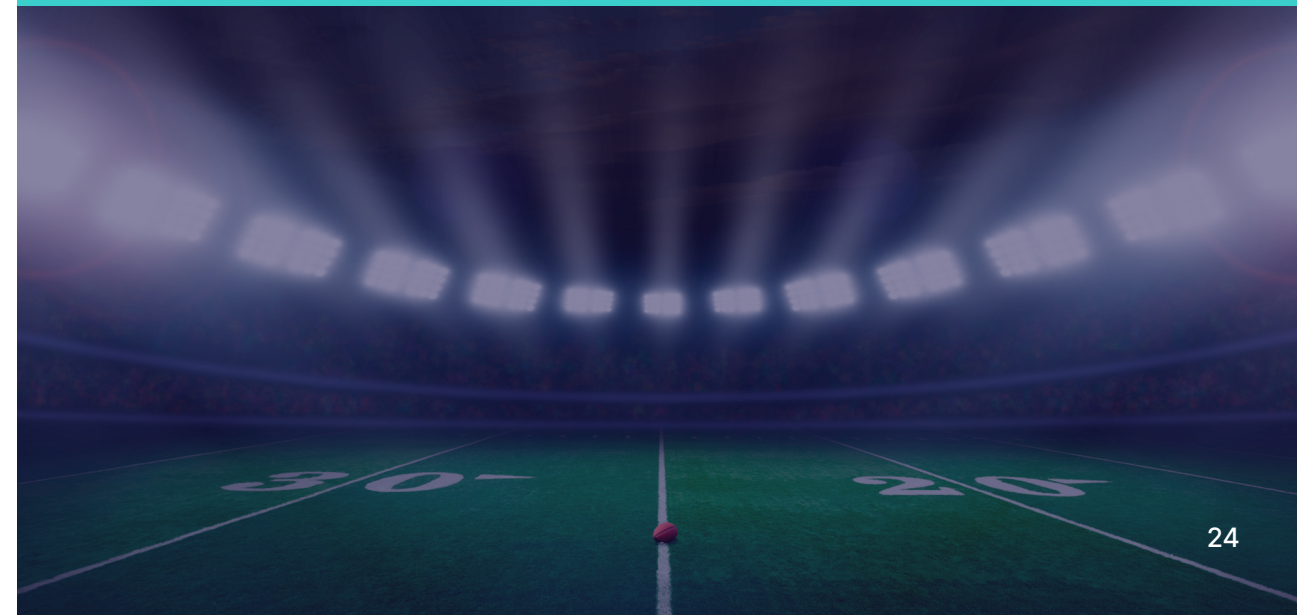
Sporting event sponsorship does not elicit a strong reaction.

- Most respondents enjoy when a beer brand sponsors sporting events, but it is not a must-have.
 - They like seeing partnerships with local venues.
 - Sometimes they are able to taste test new beers or take home free merchandise.
- Some respondents do not care either way if a brand sponsors events or not.
- Sporting events that are adult-focused are considered the most appropriate, but some mention that music festivals or other local events might be a good option as well.

“

I think when beer brands sponsor sporting events it's fine, since beer and being a spectator sort of go hand in hand. I wouldn't want them to sponsor a school event or anything like that.

Age 34, Bud Light, Michelob Ultra-Light





Appendix

Appendix: Sample Demographics

Gender	
Female	34

Ethnicity	
African American	8
Asian	2
Caucasian	22
Hispanic / Latino	4

Region	
Northeast	5
South	15
Midwest	9
West	5

Age	
25	3
26	1
27	1
28	3
29	5
30	1
31	4
32	1
33	1
34	7
36	2
37	4
38	1

Household Income	
\$0 to \$19,999	2
\$20,000 to \$29,999	2
\$30,000 to \$39,999	4
\$40,000 to \$49,999	7
\$50,000 to \$59,999	3
\$60,000 to \$69,999	5
\$70,000 to \$79,999	2
\$90,000 to \$99,999	3
\$110,000 to \$119,999	2
\$120,000 to \$129,999	1
\$140,000 to \$149,999	1
\$150,000 to \$249,999	1
\$250,000+	1

Appendix: Sample Demographics

Employment Status	
Full-Time employee	22
Homemaker	7
Retired	1
Self employed	3
Unemployed	1

Marital Status	
Never married	6
Married	20
Divorced	3
Separated	1
Living with Partner	4

Number of Beers	
5 or more	23
4	6
3	4
2	1
1	0
0	0