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TOBACCO MARKETING UPDATE

Reducing Youth Exposure to Tobacco Advertising and Promotion

What's New in Tobacco Marketing?

Happy Earth Day from American Spirit!

American Spirit wants consumers to think the “organic” cigarette company cares about the environment with its cigarette butt recycling promotion in its Earth Day initiative. The company also wants consumers to think that this is a collaborative initiative using language in its Earth Day email ads like making “a positive impact on the planet—the common ground we all share.” The company also managed to tie—in its Earth Day Specialty Cigarette Packs launch!



2021 EARTH DAY SPECIALTY PACKS

Above: American Spirit email received 3/25/21 promoting its Earth Day cigarette packs

Below: American Spirit Earth Day email received 3/25/21



Above: Email received from American Spirit on 1/12/21

To continue its calculated showing of environmental concern, the company’s website has pages devoted to “Sustainability.” However, the content primarily contains individual “Eco-Friendly tips” (e.g., home water and energy conservation, recycling). The website does claim that “reducing cigarette litter” is a key company initiative. But, rather than

focusing on the harm from plastic and the growing/cultivating of tobacco, American Spirit deflects these facts and pushes individual actions rather than addressing corporate responsibility. This tactic to promote individual behavior aligns with the tobacco industry’s common messaging rhetoric to shift responsibility away from the tobacco companies and onto their customers.

Black and Mild's New Promotion is "Fly"

“Stay fly” states Black & Mild’s new promotional campaign in partnership with [Reshoevn8r](#), a popular sneaker cleaning company offering special sneaker cleaning products and services. It’s no secret that Black & Mild, (the John Middleton cigar brand and the second-largest manufacturer of large machine-made

cigars) has a history of targeting the African American community with its products, and this campaign is no different. Black & Mild’s current promotion is a direct tie-in to [“Sneaker Culture”](#) often associated with young Black males, sports, and hip hop.

Black & Mild promotional emails received 4/12/21 (below) and 3/18/21 (right)





TOBACCO MARKETING UPDATE

PUFF Bar Relaunches Website

In response to an FDA warning letter received in July 2020, Puff Bar took down its website, all US social media presence, and ceased US internet sales. However,

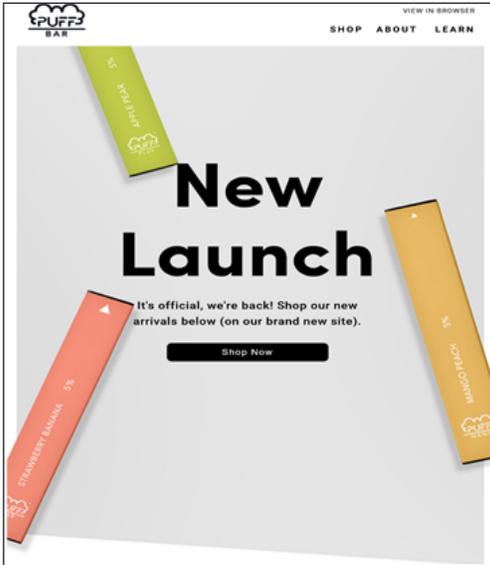
as of February 2021, Puff Bar is back with a new launch and a new claim that the Puff Bar devices contain tobacco-free nicotine.

Puff Bar seems to be trying to get around FDA’s tobacco regulations evidenced by its website fine print statement “All Puff Bar products listed on this website contain nicotine

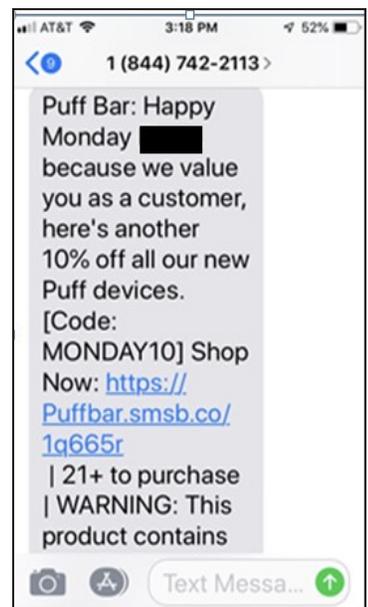
but do not contain tobacco or anything derived from tobacco. Puff Bar products are not intended for use with any tobacco product or any component or part of a tobacco product.”

Puff Bar is flooding consumers with emails ads and texts promoting its new launch and discounting its products.

Below are an email ad (left) and a text message (right) from Puff Bar on its relaunch offering discounts on its products (received March 2021).



Above: Screenshot of Puff Bar’s new website



California Newspaper Turns Down \$100,000 Big Tobacco Ad Buy and Confirms Commitment to Its Tobacco-Free Mission

The [Monterey County Weekly](#) made a difficult financial decision recently to turn down a **\$100,000 ad buy** from Big Tobacco. The newspaper takes ad dollars from many controversial adult products, but it draws the line on this “deadly and addictive” product and the industry’s use of “every legal and marketing strategy” to expand its customer base.

The tobacco industry has a history of creating an appearance of corporate responsibility and concern for the health and safety of the community. For example, John Middleton Co.’s website espousing its stance “to help end the systemic racism towards the Black community” and funding Black-owned businesses (Project Watch Vol. 43) illustrates this manipulative use of current social justice movements as a tool to silence community and marginalize tobacco control efforts by

making anti-tobacco activists appear out of touch with community needs. The American Spirit example in this edition of Project Watch also embodies this type of exploitation. Ultimately, the tobacco industry is trying to sell its products, and professed concern for the environment, partnering with “non-profits,” or providing sponsorships is solely a profitable means to promote products and brand recognition.

Several organizations around the country have taken a stand against accepting funds from the tobacco industry. We applaud the Monterey County Weekly for joining this growing list by refusing tobacco industry money, calling out the industry’s manipulative practices, and for declaring the newspaper’s commitment to a tobacco-free ad space.