

## Alcohol companies bombard social media users with over 1,000 ads per month pushing sale and rapid delivery

New research released today by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) proves the damaging levels at which alcohol companies are bombarding Australians with “Buy Now” digital ads that simultaneously promote, sell, and arrange delivery of alcohol into people’s homes – in just a few clicks.

The research, conducted by The University of Queensland, collected data from 56,579 advertisements over a period from 21 October 2021 to 2 June 2023 (inclusive) from the Meta Ad Library.

It was found that the majority (83.8 per cent) contained a button encouraging people to engage with the advertisement, and over a third of alcohol advertisements (39.2 per cent) contained a button that directs people to an online platform where alcohol is sold.

For alcohol advertisements with a ‘shop now’ button, almost nine in 10 (89.4 per cent) directly linked people to alcohol sale. Almost a quarter (21.5 per cent) of advertisements using the ‘learn more’ button directly linked to alcohol sale.

Associate Professor Nicolas Carah, Chief Investigator on the report said, “The research shows the clear objective of alcohol advertisements to drive the sale and rapid delivery of alcohol into people’s homes.

“Nine out of 10 retailers posting ads with buttons linking to websites included options for rapid delivery of their products.”

Previous research from FARE has established a direct link between the rapid delivery of alcohol and higher risk alcohol use. A 2020 national survey found nearly three in four people sold alcohol with rapid delivery drank alcohol at higher risk levels on the day of delivery.

Caterina Giorgi, CEO of FARE, said the data released today further highlights the concerning gap between existing regulations on alcohol sales and the online advertising environment.

“Every phone is now a bottleshop and laws relating to privacy, marketing and the sale of alcohol have not kept pace with the changes that we are seeing in the online environment.”

“At a time when alcohol induced deaths are at their highest rate in a decade, we need governments to be doing more to help to keep families and communities healthy and safe.”

Alex Bagnara, whose friend died last year at the age of 46 from alcohol-related organ failure, said better controls are needed to protect people most at risk.

“Alcohol companies would often send my friend push notifications with special deals and reminders when he was in a really vulnerable state,” Ms Bagnara said.

“They would deliver him alcohol with little or no vetting. I am sure that there were times when he was sold alcohol online, while already intoxicated. More needs to be done to hold alcohol companies to a higher standard when it comes to marketing and selling alcohol online.”

Ms Giorgi added, “It is absolutely devastating to see the ways that alcoholic products cause so much harm to so many families and communities across the country. Every person that dies because of alcohol is a life cut tragically short,” Ms Giorgi said.

“Urgent action is needed to address the unchecked expansion of alcohol delivery, including limiting deliveries to before 10pm, ending aggressive data-driven marketing tactics and introducing a two-hour safety pause between when an order is made and when alcohol is delivered.”

-ENDS-

**Interviews are available with: FARE CEO Caterina Giorgi, Associate Professor Nicolas Carah and Lived Experience advocate Alex Bagnara.**

**Media outlets are requested to promote help-seeking information when reporting on alcohol and other drugs, in line with the [Mindframe National Guidelines](#).**

**Suggested wording relating to this media story:** *If you or someone you know needs support, please call Lifeline 13 11 14, the National 24/7 Alcohol and Other Drugs Hotline 1800 250 015 or 1800RESPECT 1800 737 732.*

**Media contact:**

Joanna Le

[media@fare.org.au](mailto:media@fare.org.au)

0429 291 120

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The **Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)** is the leading not-for-profit organisation working towards an Australia free from alcohol harms. We do this through developing evidence-informed policy, enabling people-powered advocacy and delivering health promotion campaigns.

FARE has been working with communities across the country to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians for 20 years. To learn more about us and our work visit [www.fare.org.au](http://www.fare.org.au).