Our Responsible Marketing Code
Our Responsible Marketing Code

Every colleague across HEINEKEN is in the business of creating memorable brand experiences for our consumers. A brand is more than a logo or a clever strapline... it’s what people think of when they hear our name. It’s everything the public knows, trusts and loves about us. And for that very reason, brand reputation is hard won, but very easily lost.

We value above all else, the experience our customers have with our brands, and that experience starts before they’ve even tried one of our beverages. It begins with our brand marketing and communications. It begins with you.

We need to ensure that we’re always talking about our brands in the right way, in the right place and at the right time. And we need to do all of that in a responsible way, so that our brands are enjoyed in the way they’re intended. That’s why we have the Responsible Marketing Code. It’s here to protect our brands, but more importantly, protect and respect society and our consumers.

This Code replaces the existing Rules on Responsible Commercial Communication and Rules on Digital Commercial Communication. It merged the two and is written in simple terms, with plenty of examples of how things work in the real world. It’s very clear about:

- The challenges we face as a business
- The questions we need to ask ourselves and the checks we need to meet, before our marketing and communications can be shared

The Responsible Marketing Code is for everyone internally but it also needs to be shared and explained to our customers and with anyone involved in the marketing and sales of our brands. That’s why it covers everything from point of sale to sporting event sponsorships, social media and much more.

Please make The Responsible Marketing Code part of the way we all do business, so that we can continue to live by our values – respecting individuals, society and the environment.

Thank you.

Jan-Derck van Karnebeek
Chief Commercial Officer

Sean O’Neill
Chief Corporate Relations Officer
How to apply The Responsible Marketing Code

As one of the world’s leading beer and cider producers, it’s no surprise that we talk to millions of consumers, colleagues, customers, clients and suppliers everyday. So it’s important that our communications not only reflect the passion and respect we bring to our work, but the fact that we take our responsibilities seriously.

The majority of our consumers sensibly enjoy our beers and ciders, but there will always be a minority who misuse them. So our communications need to be clear about whom our products are for, and how to enjoy them in a responsible way.

The Responsible Marketing Code (The Code) goes to the heart of our “self regulation” commitment. It’s about being legal, decent, honest and truthful in the way we market our brands so that both as a company and as an industry, we can help address social issues such as drinking & driving, underage drinking and problem drinking.

About The Code: Importantly, it doesn’t serve to summarise or substitute national, regional or international laws, policies or codes, which must always be upheld. It does however replace The Rules of Responsible Communication and The Digital Rules of Commercial Communication.

It explains the HEINEKEN approach to self-regulation. It’s not here to curb your creativity – it’s here to protect us.

How we’ll use it: The Code will help safeguard our brand reputation and our freedom of expression in all of our consumer-facing branded activities for Heineken® and across all our other company owned or controlled family of alcohol brands.

Where we’ll use it: The Code covers all sorts of communications channels, the most common being: packaging, point of sale, signage, trade promotions, sponsorships, advertising, digital and social media. But as we know, new channels and technologies are being created everyday, so they’ll be covered by The Code too.

Who’ll use it: Please share this with your teams and the agencies you work with. It’s all of our responsibility to ensure The Code isn’t just a piece of paper filed away in a drawer, but in the way we all do business. Compliance is essential.

* Terms in bold are defined in the glossary section of this document
Compliance

Adhering to The Code isn’t a “nice to do”. It’s a must do. We all need to ensure we’re doing business in accordance with the laws and regulations that govern us, while also being able to bring our brands to life in the HEINEKEN way.

Everyone involved in the marketing and sale of our branded products, is responsible for implementing The Code and must ensure:

- All correspondence regarding complaints received from (non) governmental organizations, consumers or official complaint bodies about a particular commercial communication, activity or event, is properly addressed and stored.
- All complaints in relation to commercial communication, trade marketing and sales should be registered for audit purposes.
- Annual training on this Code is conducted for all those involved in marketing and selling our brands.
- When in doubt, involve Legal and Corporate Relations.

The Marketing Director is accountable for compliance with The Code within his/her OpCo. The Regional Marketing Director or Global Brand Director are then responsible for any branded activity agreed on a regional or global level – for instance a modern retail agreement with a regional supermarket chain or a sponsorship deal for a global event.

Any difficult cases or potential departures from The Code should first go through Legal and Corporate Relations. Written approval is then needed from the relevant Director before any activity gets underway.

Please read The Code carefully, discuss it with your colleagues and with your external agencies, so that we all have a common understanding and implement our marketing and communications in a consistent and effective way.
Principle 1: We do not primarily appeal to minors

Explanation
We’ve been creating memorable brand experiences for over 150 years. Our brands have personality and tell great stories, but we need to take care that this engaging content primarily appeals to customers aged over 18 and of Legal Purchase and/or Drinking Age (LPDA). Our brands’ marketing and communications shouldn’t primarily appeal to minors.

By minors, we mean anyone under the LPDA. If the LPDA is set below 18 years of age or is absent, we consider everyone under the age of 18 a minor. If alcohol beverage marketing and communications have stronger appeal to minors than adults, they are deemed to “primarily appeal to minors”. This means we need to take care to never use objects, imagery, styles, symbols, music, characters (real or fictitious), games, gaming equipment or other items with primary appeal to minors. Some markets have specific lists of objects, settings and situations that can’t be used and we’ve included an External References in each chapter with details on where to find that information.

It’s about making sensible choices not only during the creative and development process, but when deciding on promotions and prizes, as well as activation locations. It also means we encourage our customers not to sell our products to minors. We actively talk to them so they avoid selling our alcoholic beverages to minors. And it’s about understanding that styles, interests and trends constantly change. What appeals to minors today, might be different tomorrow, or might be different from one place to the next. We need to be ever mindful of this.

Objects, imagery, styles, symbols, music, characters (real or fictitious), games, gaming equipment, or other items that appeal primarily to children or adolescents cannot be featured in our brands’ communications, events or activations.
Principle 1: We do not primarily appeal to minors

Do...
- Ensure any characters featured in our marketing or communications is and appears to be over 25 years of age except if local legislation or regulations explicitly states otherwise. Please also make appropriate effort to do the same if using user-generated content i.e. a consumer photo.
- Take extreme care when including any gaming references in your marketing, communications or promotions, particularly any gaming reference that appeals to minors.
- Remember, our brands are world famous and consumers may want to post content to our owned or paid communications channels. We need to make clear our “house rules” or terms and conditions to govern the type of content that’s appropriate, and then actively moderate those channels. Any inappropriate content needs to be removed and the reason for its removal explained to our consumers.
- Avoid content that could be associated with schools or children’s media.
- Immediately get in touch with your Legal team if you’re aware of any complaints about our marketing or communications.

Ask yourself...
If at any point you’re not sure if your work complies with The Code, then try answering these three simple questions. All of your answers should be YES. If you answer NO to any of these questions then unfortunately your content isn’t compliant and you’ll need to make changes.

1. Even though the celebrity in your communication is over 25 years old, does he/she look older than 25 so won’t be mistaken as a potential role model for minors?
2. Is the language in your communications the sort of language you wouldn’t expect to hear or read from minors?
3. Is the location of your activation or event somewhere that’s predominantly visited by minors (at least in the last three months)?

Why do we care?
- Many children want to emulate the actions of adults and influencers in their lives. We believe this should never include behaviours related to alcohol consumption.
- We have a long history of encouraging responsible consumption and we take this role seriously. In 2012, HEINEKEN co-authored the Responsible Marketing Pact (applying to all EU Member States). For the first time, the pact included a blacklist of creative features known to ‘primarily appeal to minors’, which we’ve agreed to never use in our marketing and communications.
- Social media has become an increasingly important communications channel for all ages – including but not limited to minors. Conversations in social media travel at enormous speed so require extra sensitivity around the context and location of our activity.

External references
Responsible Marketing Pact, 2014
Principle 2: We actively restrict exposure of our branding to minors

Explanation
We want to ensure that our marketing and communications reach an age-appropriate audience, which is why we put controls in place to restrict who can see our owned or paid-for branding or branded activity. We work with the 70/30 Rule. It means our content is featured in places where at least 70% of the total audience is restricted to above the LPDA.

When it comes to digital media channels like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, we can restrict viewers to above the LPDA or 18+ by using the channel owner’s own functionality. In other channels we rely on third-party audits to get a picture of the audience demographic. And occasionally when the right data is not available, we have to use our own common sense.

We have three methods for restricting content to above the LPDA or 18+.

1. Our preferred method is Age Gating – a screening process requiring visitors to provide their date of birth at the point of registering. It uses the channel’s own functionality to restrict access for underage users and we think it offers the best user-experience, as restricted content is then never shown.
2. If Age Gating is not possible, Age Verification is the next best option. It pro-actively asks visitors to provide “proof of age” (date of birth). It not only works on digital channels like a website, but can also be applied during events by screening visitor IDs.
3. If neither Age Gating nor Age Verification are possible, please use Audience Verification. If you can prove that 70% of the channel audience is over the LPDA or at least 18+, then you can use the channel. The same applies to promotional materials in outlets, print, outdoor and sponsorships. If less than 70% of the audience exposed to our message is above the LPDA, the message should not run.

If you can’t comply with any of the three age-check methods, or are in any doubt, please always consult Legal and Corporate Relations.
Principle 2: We actively restrict exposure of our branding to minors

Do

- Know and comply with local and regional codes, policies or legal commitments.
- Always check if channels or venues have their own policies for restricting alcohol content to minors.
- Use registered user-base or third-party audited data as the most trusted sources for verifying an audience’s age.
- Evaluate audience composition regularly. If a channel fails to meet the 70% threshold for three consecutive months, please remove or hide all branded content until the 70% threshold is once again achieved again for three consecutive months.

Ask yourself

If at any point you’re not sure if your work complies with The Code, then try answering these three simple questions. All of your answers should be YES. If you answer NO to any of these questions then unfortunately your content isn’t compliant and you’ll need to make changes.

1. Does your content comply with local laws, regulations and OpCo or regional commitments for restricted access?
2. Do you feel comfortable that you’ve taken every appropriate action to ensure a minor is not exposed to your message?
3. Can you say: “I feel confident I would pass an external, independent audit on the audience composition that my brand is exposed to”?

Why do we care?

- We understand the negative effects that consumption of alcohol has on minors which is why we actively minimise exposure in certain environments by ensuring that at least 70% of the audience is over the LPDA or 18+
- By better targeting our advertising and brand messages to the audience that buys and consumes our products, we spend our marketing budgets more effectively.

Restricting exposure doesn’t just apply to communications... it applies to every contracted activity where we secure branding or branded activity. For example not allowing minors at brand controlled activations.
Principle 3: We’re always legal, ethical and truthful

Explanation
Our HEINEKEN brand values are all about enjoyment of life; respect for individuals, society and the environment; and having passion for quality. That same ethos should carry through all of our marketing and communications. In respecting individuals, society and the environment, our communications and marketing should be legal, ethical and truthful. That way, we can ensure we’re communicating in the right way, without breaching any laws, regulations or industry codes of conduct.

By laws, we not only mean advertising and alcohol laws, but also those related to gaming and promotions, privacy and intellectual property rights (including trade mark, copyright and portrait rights). And these laws and regulations will vary by country and region.

In this social age, we need to pay special attention to the laws and regulations around personal consumer data, privacy and security too. Any marketing that involves storing consumer data must have clear data privacy statements that our consumers are encouraged to read and opt-into (with the option to opt-out in the future). And for that same data, we need to provide adequate security and ensure we only keep it for the time as outlined to consumers.

When we talk about ‘ethical’ and ‘truthful’ we mean communicating transparently and never making any false statements about our product benefits. All branded content should be distributed in a transparent way so we never conceal the identity or origin of the brand.

Whenever our employees or agency colleagues participate in discussions (including online), they should be conducted in an open way and they should identify themselves as belonging to our company or an affiliated agency. They should never pose as a consumer to make comments supporting our brands, or to disparage our competitors.
Principle 3:  
We’re always legal, ethical and truthful

Do
• Always consult Legal when running a competition, regardless how small the prize. Especially if it involves retaining personal data of consumers.
• Take extra care when developing sponsorship or events platforms where our branding might be secondary in the overall communication.
• Always use brand controlled accounts when engaging in online conversations on behalf of the brand.
• Make sure all ownership and access rights on third party digital accounts and databases, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, CRM databases, etc, is controlled by HEINEKEN. Even if day-to-day management is the job of an agency or third party.

Ask yourself…
If at any point you’re not sure if your work complies with The Code, then try answering these three simple questions. All of your answers should be YES. If you answer NO to any of these questions then unfortunately your content is not compliant and you’ll need to make changes.

1. Do we adhere to all local copyright, intellectual property rights and gaming laws?
2. Would an individual recognise that the communication or activation is coming from one of our brands?
3. Would you be happy to in public defend your concept as legal and truthful?

Why do we care?
• Sustainable growth hinges on each of us living by our values of enjoyment, respect and passion.
• We’re a performance-driven company that’s passionate about our business and achieving our goals. This means seizing opportunities and building our business on a daily basis with fairness, integrity and respect for the law.
• We can only strive for future success if we combine our expertise and passion, with a pledge to take our corporate and brand values seriously.

We always respect the local laws and never hide our brand’s identity or authorship of content.

External references
- Internal HEINEKEN Employee use of Social Media Policy
- GCU Bold vs Crazy Social Media Guidelines
- ICC Framework for Responsible Marketing Communications of Alcohol
- ICAP Guiding Principles
- National and regional self-regulation codes
- Brewers of Europe: Responsible beer advertising through self-regulation
- Beer Institute Advertising and Marketing Code
- Portman Group (UK) : Code of Practice
Principle 4: We advocate drinking responsibly, driving responsibly and general safety

Explanation
Here at HEINEKEN, we’re focused on making life more enjoyable. It’s one of our core values, with each of us committed to bringing joy to our consumers through the responsible promotion of our products and the sponsorship of events that are important to them. The key is creating positive experiences by encouraging our consumers to enjoy our products in moderation – never exceeding their limits.

Our communications and marketing should show that drinking in moderation is cool and aspirational. That’s why we never make alcohol content and product strength the primary benefit or the main theme of our marketing or communications. And we never associate our products with drunkenness – it’s not how we want our products to be enjoyed.

There are situations when alcohol shouldn’t be consumed. For instance drinking and driving don’t mix. We actively avoid association between these activities, instead promoting safe transportation options (like taxis). A clear, relevant and pre-approved responsible drinking or responsible driving message should feature on appropriate marketing and communications such as packaging or outdoor features.

Responsible consumption isn’t just about not drinking and driving, it extends to the operation of potentially dangerous machinery, or consuming alcohol before or during a potentially hazardous activity.

And it’s about having options – so we actively look for opportunities to ensure our low alcohol and non-alcohol products are available.
**Principle 4: We advocate drinking responsibly, driving responsibly and general safety**

**Do...**
- Always include a responsible consumption message in all relevant brand promotions (including packaging and at events and activations).
- Actively monitor owned and brand-controlled digital channels for content our consumers might post about irresponsible consumption or hazardous behaviour. If we see it, we need to act on it, by removing the content and/or responding to it.
- Ensure that sampling opportunities are offered in an appropriate way by trained brand ambassadors who are 25 years of age or older. For instance, we believe in refusing service to people who appear intoxicated or are driving, or are under the LPDA, even if their parents have consented.
- Set aside a percentage of your communications and marketing investment that’s dedicated to the responsible drinking message. Then make sure you comply with it.

**Ask yourself...**
If at any point you’re not sure if your work complies with The Code, then try answering these three simple questions. All of your answers should be YES. If you answer NO to any of these questions then unfortunately your content is not compliant and you’ll need to make changes.
1. Does the branded activity avoid suggesting that the product has a health or sedative benefit?
2. If the concept was real, would everyone featured be safe from harm, both for themselves and others?
3. Would you be happy to see your partner or a family member behave this way?

**Why do we care?**
- Beer and cider are products enjoyed by hundreds of millions of people around the world. For many adults those products are consumed in moderation as part of a healthy, balanced lifestyle.
- We want consumers to share our belief that moderate, responsible consumption is aspirational and that overconsumption not only may damage the individual, but also the people around them.
- For some occasions and some people, it’s better not to drink at all.

**External references**
- Relevant Back Label Rules and Guidelines (Usually OpCo and Brand-specific)
- Local laws
Principle 5: We do not associate our brands with anti-social behaviour or overconsumption

Explanation
People may make a connection between alcohol and violent or aggressive behaviour. It’s true that alcohol can lower people’s inhibitions and some people may use this as an excuse for doing things they wouldn’t normally do. Binge drinking and excessive consumption are not aspirational and are deemed dangerous behaviors.

For all of these reasons, our brands must never encourage or accept these behaviours. Our marketing and communications should always show that moderation and abstinence are positive aspects of responsible consumption. And any campaigns, competitions, promotions or samplings should never encourage or challenge our consumers to drink rapidly or consume a set number of units.

Do...
- Prepare a detailed risk-assessment of any branded activity, identifying how you intend to avoid any association with anti-social behaviour.
- Be prepared to see social media conversations where people are talking about our brands in ways that other people may consider anti-social. Please take part in regular social media listening and agree a moderation approach to help manage discussions.
- Ensure that brand ambassadors and agencies are trained on how to recognise and flag anti-social behaviour (especially at events or sampling opportunities).
- Consider whether content or topics may be considered harmful to others or cause distress.
- Take extra caution when reviewing sponsorships or Point of Sale at venues where the activities that occur there could be seen as violent or aggressive.
Principle 5: We do not associate our brands with anti-social behaviour or overconsumption

Ask yourself
If at any point you’re not sure if your work complies with The Code, then try answering these three simple questions. All of your answers should be YES. If you answer NO to any of these questions then unfortunately your content is not compliant and you’ll need to make changes.

1. Has my activation or sponsorship avoided any direct or symbolic links with violent, anti-social or aggressive behaviour?
2. Would you be comfortable defending the branded activity as safe?
3. Would you be happy for your partner or friend to participate in the events or activities that your brand’s content is suggesting?

Why do we care?
- Anti-social behaviour is not only bad for our brands, but bad for society – creating dangerous or unsafe environments for our consumers.
- Bravado, illegal gambling, aggression and violence are negative behaviours that are directly at odds with the positive story our brands and products have to tell.

External references
- GCU Bold vs Crazy Social Media Guidelines

Our brands should never be associated with anti-social, violent or illegal behaviour.
Principle 6: We never claim that consuming our brands leads to social or sexual success or enhanced performance

**Explanation**
At the simplest level, alcoholic drinks are often used to set the tone for an occasion. For instance in many Western cultures champagne is synonymous with celebration, or in China a couple will symbolise their love for each other by linking arms to drink wine on their wedding day. Whilst alcohol does form part of the social life of many cultures and plays a rich and positive role in society, we need to take care in how we represent those social environments and occasions in our marketing and communications.

For instance, we would avoid featuring consumption of our products as contributing to or enabling sexual or social success (helping someone gain a promotion, wealth, friends, possessions, popularity) or giving someone better mental or physical capabilities. We also never display nudity in our marketing and communications.

**Do**
- Present our brands (in any aspirational marketing or communications) as complementing and reflecting good living, social accomplishments or good taste, rather than causing them.
- Take extreme care when exploring concepts that feature adult relationships or have a theme that could be interpreted as sexual. Our brands should never be presented as enabling sexual success or performance.
- Keep the boundaries of good taste in mind.
Principle 6: We never claim that consuming our brands leads to social or sexual success or enhanced performance

Ask yourself…
If at any point you’re not sure if your work complies with The Code, then try answering these two simple questions. Both of your answers should be YES.
If you answer NO to either of these questions then unfortunately your content is not compliant and you’ll need to make changes.
1. Would you feel comfortable watching the communication or promotion with your manager, parents and/or grandparents?
2. In my communication or event, is it clear that alcohol is not the cause of social or performance success?

- HEINEKEN respects all people, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, nationality, religion and sexual orientation – it’s part of our DNA. Our values will stand for nothing if the stories we tell to the outside world don’t mirror our internal culture. We believe in selling our brands for the right reason. We don’t want to make our consumers believe that they need to drink our beers and ciders to feel better, or to obtain social and sexual success.
- Presenting our products as an enabler for sexual and social success or as a performance-enhancer is specifically prohibited by EU legislation, local laws in several countries and most regulatory bodies.

We never present our products as an enabler for sexual success, a better social life or as a physical or mental performance enhancer.

External references
- Brewing a Better World
- Local laws
- National and regional self-regulation codes
- Brewers of Europe: Responsible beer advertising through self-regulation
- Beer Institute Advertising and Marketing Code
- Portman Group (UK) - Code of Practice
Principle 7: We are committed to our brands being part of a healthy lifestyle

Explanation
Today, scientific research shows that moderate alcohol consumption may have some health benefits. Despite this information being publicly known, we only use it in our corporate communications that have no commercial benefit or intent. We never communicate this message in our branded content or activity.

In a similar vein, we never make positive health claims about alcohol content or suggest a drink is preferable to another because of alcohol content. Even though alcohol content can have an impact on taste, a product’s strength should never be presented as the primary benefit, or as the main theme of the communication. What we can do is talk about the lower alcohol content of a drink compared with similar drinks in the category.

We also avoid suggesting that a drink’s relatively low alcohol content means that it can be consumed in larger quantities or in circumstances where a stronger alcoholic beverage might be inappropriate. So although drinking low content alcohol beverages can fit into a more responsible drinking pattern, never suggest that doing so is a way to avoid alcohol abuse.

We will never show or suggest the consumption of alcohol by women who are pregnant.

An increasing number of consumers want to make informed choices on alcohol strength. That’s why our products should have specific and factual alcohol strength labelling in-line with current labelling policies and local laws. We never try to obscure the alcohol content of our products.

The same applies to non-alcoholic 0.0% variants that carry the name of our beer and cider brands and which are packaged in a similar fashion. We must clearly display the 0.0% message or logo to distinguish these products from those containing alcohol.

These brand variants may lead with and communicate the benefits of no alcohol but always in a way that positions them as an adult drink – not for anyone under the LPDA. They should also comply with local regulations as well as the other principles in this code, except only those principles related to enhancing performance or (functional) benefits of any kind. These variants should only be sold via channels frequented in majority by adults and should be placed next to the beer and alcohol category. Where there is no such category, they should be displayed high shelf, price premium vs. big CSD brands and where possible next to adult flavours (like tonic, ginger, bitter lemon etc.).

All other 0.0 % malt-based beverages in our portfolio (e.g. Malta, Fayrouz, Green Sands, etc) can be marketed, sold and displayed according to local regulation and practice governing the Consumer Soft Drink category.
Principle 7: We are committed to our brands being part of a healthy lifestyle

Do
- Be open and transparent about the alcohol content of our products and the amount of alcohol people are consuming. For instance at events don’t use and/or serve drinks in a way that could confuse or mislead people about the amount of alcohol they’re consuming.
- When listing the alcohol content of a drink, always do it in a simple way and not part of a creative idea (e.g. a tagline).
- Consult Corporate Relations and Legal, when talking about the product’s benefits in relation with moderate consumption.

Ask yourself
If at any point you’re not sure if your work complies with The Code, then try answering these three simple questions. All of your answers should be YES. If you answer NO to any of these questions then unfortunately your content is not compliant and you’ll need to make changes.
1. Is my communication free of any suggestion that the product has a health or sedative benefit?
2. Is my communication free of an association between pregnancy and drinking?
3. Is it clear that alcohol content isn’t used as the primary benefit of the product, or as the main theme of the communication?

Why do we care?
- We’re a market leader in beer and cider and we want to act like a leader. It’s incredibly important to us. We don’t want people to drink more... we want them to drink responsibly.
- Responsible drinking doesn’t mix with: encouraging consumers to drink more because of low alcohol content, or emphasising high alcohol content as a product benefit.

External references
- Relevant Back Label Rules and Guidelines (OpCo and Brand-specific)
- Local laws

The alcohol content (ABV) of our products is never presented as the primary benefit of the product, or as the main theme of the communication.
## Principle 8: We are progressive about cultural context and its evolution

**Explanation**
We are a global company, under scrutiny everywhere for our behaviour and the standards we set in every market we operate. The world changes in the blink of an eye, and we have to be nimble and progressive so that we remain culturally relevant and respectful. For this we need to regularly review our activities and communications against both cultural trends and our business attitudes towards what is acceptable.

Our branded activities are often associated with events, places and moments of cultural relevance too, such as UCL and music events. The things we choose to be associated with say something about us; like our values and what we believe in, so we’re extremely careful about what we sponsor, avoiding anything that could be considered dangerous or violent.

For our bigger brands, we need to take a global perspective, ensuring what we’re trying to say is relevant and understood in the context that we intended. We’re respectful of:

- Gender and diversity, and are sensitive to the cultural context of these. We portray the characters and individuals that appear in our commercial communication positively, with respect and with decency. We do so regardless of their gender, race, religion or age.
- The environment and seek opportunities to include our Brewing a Better World programme in our branded activities.
- Animals and animal welfare, and we actively role-model positive stories about the human-animal bond.

We regularly monitor consumer conversations on social media about our brands, knowing when to respond, ignore or remove conversations based on a pre-agreed framework with Legal and Corporate Relations.
Principle 8: We are progressive about cultural context and its evolution

Do

- Align with the Brewing a Better World sustainability programme.
- Listen to global and local cultural trends (e.g. diversity, animal welfare) that could create negative associations for our brands.
- Agree on a process for monitoring social media conversations, before launching any activity, so that you know when to ignore, respond or remove comments by consumers.
- Establish Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with external agencies / partners that manage social media listening. Please agree on minimum levels of listening, reporting cycles and the time required to activate any changes (e.g. if you need to manage a crisis scenario).
- Ensure you have Q&As prepared in advance for any communication or activations for both positive and negative responses from the public or special interest groups.

Ask yourself...

If at any point you’re not sure your work complies with The Code, then try answering these four simple questions. All of your answers should be YES. If you answer NO to any of these questions then unfortunately your content is not compliant and you’ll need to make changes.

1. Does the activity show respect for the environment, animals and people?
2. Are our actions consistent with long-term sustainability and welfare as championed by our Brewing a Better World agenda?
3. Do both men and women interpret the communication in a positive way?

Why do we care?

- From the very beginning, HEINEKEN has been driven by a desire to create a successful and sustainable business that, more than just achieving financial success, makes a positive contribution to society.
- The use of animals in advertising poses challenges from a brand as well as reputational point of view. This means that we need to be more alert and sensitive to the role of animals in our sales and marketing activity.

- We've exercised extreme caution when associating ourselves with dangerous sports (including horse-racing, ultimate fighting and motorsport) and seek to ensure that we include responsible consumption messages prominently.
- As a result of Brewing a Better World, our Company is now rated one of the most sustainable global corporate citizens - something we’re very proud of and continue to build on.

When your brand is going to be associated with venue sponsorship – proceed with extra caution and consult Legal and Corporate Relations.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 1:
A global lager brand, Redstar, created a TV commercial in 1964 that featured a cartoon of a Dragon delivering Redstar to every household. The spot was done as a cartoon using a very famous illustrator who’d gained popularity because of some other cartoons done at the time. The TV commercial then proceeded to air in the New Year period for the next 20 years. In 2014, Redstar’s agency recommended bringing back the commercial and running it on YouTube to commemorate the commercial’s 50th anniversary.

Given the commercial is from 1964, there might be issues with the intellectual property rights. Even if this wasn’t the case this brand is in breach of The Code because it features a cartoon that primarily appeals to minors. While this ad might have been legally compliant when it was created in 1964, cultural principles and laws have changed over time.

This activity specifically breaches Principles 1, 3 and 8 of The Code.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 2:

Happy Apple, a local cider brand, runs a summer campaign asking their consumers to submit an Instagram picture of themselves enjoying a refreshing Happy Apple Cider using the hashtag #Apple. They showcase all Instagram pictures tagged with #Apple on the campaign page of the Happy Apple website with the line: “Apple, the world’s most refreshing cider”.

The brand was contacted by someone from Saudi Arabia, who heard from a friend, that his Instagram image was on the Happy Apple Cider website. He not only felt the brand had used his photograph without his specific permission, but he felt deeply offended, because as a Muslim his beliefs mean he would never associate himself with alcoholic beverages.

There are several issues with this branded activity relating to the potential risks of automatically displaying user-generated content on our brands’ website. This issue is made much worse through the use of a very generic hashtag (#Apple) that’s likely to be used by people for content unrelated to our brand. This content could easily feature people without their permission, for instance people under 25 years of age or those who haven’t given their consent to use their images.

This activity specifically breaches Principles 3 and 8 of The Code, and could potentially breach Principles 1, 4, 5 and 6 depending on the nature of the content featured under the hashtag.
Examples of how to apply The Code

**Example 3:**

Fresh&Blond, an IPA beer with a target audience of 24-35, launched a new brand website. They added an age verification mechanism asking the user if he/she is above the legal drinking age. The webpage includes a timer that displays the exact date a user needs to have been born on, in order to be over 18. To continue into the site, the user has to click either an image of a milk bottle or a picture of a freshly drafted glass of the Fresh&Blond IPA.

This example is in breach of The Code, because even though the website uses an age verification mechanism, it doesn’t restrict access, because it displays the exact date you need to have been born on in order to continue into the site. It also uses a milk bottle image that is synonymous with childhood.

This example specifically breaches Principles 1 and 2 in The Code and also breaches local laws and policies in several of our markets.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 4:

A local bar negotiates a new contract with a brewer and agrees to sell an increased range of the brewer’s beers. As part of the negotiation, the bar owner agrees to some new signage featuring the Blue Chill brand on the outside of the venue. The proposed location for the sign will make it clearly visible. The local area is home to schools and a playground, and the sign will be visible from these locations.

Even though the sign doesn't primarily appeal to minors... a large portion of the intended audience (possibly more than 30%) are under the LPDA (school children). Blue Chill and the bar owner should find an alternative place for the NEW sign to limit visibility from the schools and schoolyards.

This example breaches Principle 2 of The Code and also breaches local laws and policies in several of our markets.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 5:

A European brand team has failed to get their latest TV ad approved, and with a big retail promotion starting in a few weeks, don’t want to cancel or move their media buy. As a result, they look for an opportunity to ‘steal with pride’. The same brand is also sold in South America where the brand has had enormous success with a locally produced TV ad. The European team contacts their colleagues in South America asking to use the same ad. After working with Legal on securing all the permissions and copyright, the team also asks their South American colleagues to confirm that the ad complies with the company’s Responsible Marketing Code. The South America team confirms that it was checked and approved by the local Corporate Relations and Legal team. As a result, the European brand team fast-tracked the TV ad and supplied it to the agency for airing.

This example could breach Principle 1 of The Code, because even though the ad was checked by the South American Corporate Relations and Legal teams, local regulations in Europe can differ. The ad could, for instance, feature a skate park, which is specifically blacklisted in the EU Responsible Marketing Pact.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 6:

Hopalita launches a campaign that features characters being challenged to take part in a series of daring and potentially dangerous tasks, such as juggling razor sharp knives, handling venomous spiders and breaking into an abandoned warehouse. Activations of this campaign recreate nightclub scenes for consumers to participate in. Once successful completed, they’re rewarded with a kiss from the hostess and a free 50cl bottle of Hopalita, which the hostess opens between her thighs. While some people saw these activations as exciting, some participants felt unsafe.

This example breaches The Code because it clearly promotes anti-social (juggling with knives) and even illegal behaviour (breaking and entering). The reward of a kiss makes it seem that consuming Hopalita leads to success sexual success. Giving away an opened 50cl bottle at an event doesn’t encourage moderate consumption.

So this example breaches Principles, 4, 5 and 6 and also breaches local laws and policies in several of our markets.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 7:

The market-leading cider brand, Cut Apples, decides to launch a new smaller format SKU called Half Cut Apples, in order to capture new drinking opportunities. The brand claims there are more suitable moments to have a smaller amount of cider, and the campaign features messaging such as ‘Get Half Cut Now’ and ‘We declare war on mid-week boredom’. Many of these messages were also targeted around drive-time radio shows in an effort to encourage purchase as people travelled home.

The first issue with this activity is the product name. In some countries, the expression ‘half cut’ is used to describe a degree of intoxication. So a communication like ‘Get Half Cut Now’ can be interpreted as ‘Get Drunk Now’. In addition, the messaging around mid-week boredom could easily be interpreted as meaning that the alcoholic content (and its strength) can lead to enhanced performance or overcome shortfalls in one’s social life. Finally, the activation encourages overconsumption.

This example breaches Principles 4, 6 and 7 of The Code as well as local laws and policies in several of our markets.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 8:

River, a popular mainstream lager brand, introduces a line extension to capture more 21-30 year old male drinkers. They develop a new variant in the form of a strong, blonde ale. They name the product River Wild and market it with the tagline: River Wild will put some hair on your chest.

Although alcohol strength is not mentioned specifically, the name and tagline of the beer suggest a high ABV, that's presented as a functional benefit (i.e. to make you more masculine).

As such, the branded activity is in breach of Principles 7 and 8 of The Code.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 9:

The nation’s favourite bock, Jan-Kees, signs a 4-year sponsorship agreement to be the title sponsor of a national horseracing event. After several years of bad accidents where horses were killed and riders were injured, Jan-Kees was attacked in social media for supporting what people now believed to be a barbaric sport.

Pro-animal rights advocacy groups have campaigned against the brand and now consumers are posting messages of disgust on the Facebook page of Jan-Kees. While the number of individual complaints are still relatively low, it’s clear that general sentiment about this event has changed since the initial agreement was signed.

While this example of branded activity was not initially in breach of Principle 8 of The Code, the changing cultural context requires the brand to review the sponsorship. The brand team should also consider a review of pouring rights at the racetrack.
Examples of how to apply The Code

Example 10:

Hilltop Dark Stout has a long history of positioning the brand as a confident and masculine choice for 30-39 year old men. Its creative work has often featured stories about what manhood is meant to be about. Due to a decline in advertising effectiveness, the brand team holds a creative agency review. One of the pitching agencies presents some new ideas based on the current positioning. In an idea for a film, the agency is proposing the storyline of a man who wakes up in an unfamiliar bed. As he listens to the sound of a woman singing in the shower he realises that he's handcuffed to the bed. Reviewing his situation further, he discovers the woman’s underwear, which to his shock, is several sizes larger than he expected. The video ends with the sound of the bathroom door being opened and the endline: ‘Real men drink Hilltop’. The agency specifically demonstrates that they have avoided any sexually explicit visuals or sexual success scenes.

The agency’s idea should not be approved because it’s in direct conflict with Principle 6. While the agency believes they have avoided any issues, the reasonable outtake by consumers will be the opposite. It’s also very likely to be in breach of Principle 8 due to its insensitive treatment of the female character. This example is also in breach of local laws and policies in several of our markets.
### Glossary

**Age gating**: A website screening process based on visitors to provide their date of birth for their user profile at the point of registering for the website/platform.

**Alcohol brands**: Brands where one or more of the variants in the distributing country include an ABV (alcohol by volume) of 0.1% or more. It covers non-alcoholic variants of beer and cider brands but not soft-drinks or malted beverages without an alcoholic variant.

**Alcohol content or ABV**: Alcohol by volume (ABV) is a standard measure of how much alcohol is contained in an alcoholic beverage. It’s expressed as a percentage of total volume.

**Age verification**: Proactively asking visitors to provide “proof of age” (date of birth) on websites or at events by screening IDs.

**Audience verification**: Determining if 70% of a channel’s audience is over the LPDA or at least 18+.

**Branded activity**: All of our consumer-facing or customer-focused marketing and sales activities.

**Brewing A Better World**: Launched in 2010, it’s our long-term approach to creating a shared, sustainable value for our Company, society and the planet. It forms the basis of the sustainability priority within our global strategy, covering: protecting water resources, reducing CO2 emissions, sourcing sustainably and advocating responsible consumption.

**Company owned and controlled**: All of the brands in our OpCo portfolios (including those we license) as well as any brands we own but license to others (or manage through a joint venture).

**Legal Purchase and/or Drinking Age (LPDA)**: The youngest age a person is legally permitted to purchase and/or drink alcoholic beverages within a specific country. This varies from country to country. NOTE: If the local LPDA is below 18 or absent then use 18 as a minimum.

**Primarily Appealing to Minors**: When something has a greater appeal or is more attractive to consumers below LPDA.

**SLAs**: A service level agreement – a contract between a service provider (either internal or external) and the user that defines the level of service expected from the service provider.

**70/30 rule**: When 70% of the audience is reasonably expected to be adults above LPDA. Communications or marketing shouldn’t appear on the chosen media channel if more than 30% of the audience is known or reasonably expected to be below LPDA.