

## Exploring the implications of data protection regulation for online alcohol marketing

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**Issues:** Online behavioural advertising (OBA) is a recent strategy deployed by alcohol advertisers which involves tailoring advertisements based on internet users' online activities. This approach relies upon the collection of large amounts of personal data and poses distinct challenges for regulators.

**Approach:** This paper builds on reports, case studies and Government sources to assess the implications of data protection and privacy regulation for the control of online alcohol marketing, including OBA.

**Key findings:** Overall, two data protection regulations with significant implications for online alcohol marketing were identified. The European Union's *General Data Protection Regulation* and Canada's *Consumer Privacy Protection Act* are two key statutory regulations which include provisions that limit the collection and use of data for the purpose of advertising. Key provisions include: 1) the ability to deny access to personal data, and 2) the requirement that businesses provide the public and government access to the algorithms used for OBA.

**Discussion and conclusions:** Data protection regulation can address some of the challenges associated with regulating online alcohol marketing. OBA and other forms of digital alcohol marketing are much less transparent, and therefore more difficult to monitor and regulate, than traditional marketing. Thus, provisions which provide greater transparency around how algorithms collect, and target advertisements will assist with regulatory efforts. Further, OBA poses distinct risks for young people and those with alcohol use disorders because advertisements. Thus, providing avenues to limit personal data collection, may assist with minimizing alcohol advertisements targeted at vulnerable groups.

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