

Trinkets & Trash

Artifacts of the Tobacco Epidemic

Surveillance Update - December 2018

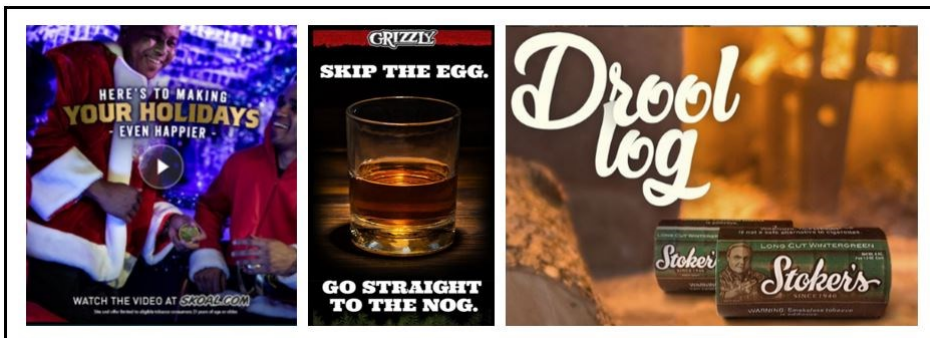
Trinkets & Trash is a surveillance project and archive that monitors tobacco industry marketing in magazines, direct mail, e-mail, websites, and other channels. Visit us online at trinketsandtrash.org. If you have examples you'd like to share, e-mail us at trinketsandtrash@sph.rutgers.edu. To join our mailing list, click [here!](#)

Tobacco Updates

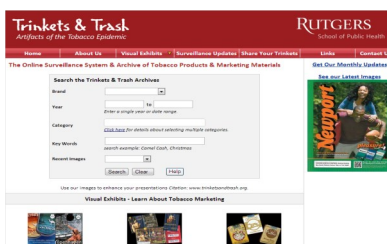
If you can't beat em, buy em. *Mark Ten* electronic cigarette and vape brand sent an [email](#) to users this month that it would cease the production and sale of its products on December 18, 2018. While the company recognized this decision would disappoint its loyal customers, they stated it is "based upon the current and expected financial performance of these products, coupled with regulatory restrictions that burden *Altria's* (the parent company of *Mark Ten*) ability to quickly improve these products." Low and behold, *two days later*, *Altria* announced a 12.8 billion dollar investment in industry leader *JUUL*. In a statement from *Altria* (which is also the parent company of *Marlboro* cigarette manufacturer *Phillip Morris International*) the corporation cited the purchase as a "significant action to prepare for a future where adult smokers overwhelmingly choose non-combustible products over cigarettes by investing \$12.8 billion in *JUUL*, a world leader in switching adult smokers." *JUUL* CEO Kevin Burns claimed the new partnership "sends a very clear message that *JUUL's* technology has given us a truly historic opportunity to improve the lives of the world's one billion adult cigarette smokers." As part of the merger, "*Altria* will provide *JUUL* access to its premier innovative tobacco products retail shelf space, allowing *JUUL's* tobacco and menthol-based products to appear alongside combustible cigarettes." Furthermore, "*Altria* will enable *JUUL* to reach adult smokers with direct communications through cigarette pack inserts and mailings to adult smokers via *Altria* companies' databases."

Smokeless tobacco brand features minorities and women in holiday promotion. *Skoal* sent an [email](#) to users that directed them to the brand's website to view a holiday video. The video features young African American men and women reveling in Santa Claus costumes and occasionally pinching a dip from a can of *Skoal*.

Tis the season for tobacco brand holiday greetings. While some brands opted to send users virtual stocking stuffers via email and social media, others sent seasonal well wishes right to users' mailboxes. *Stoker's* smokeless tobacco posted a "Drool log" on the brand's Instagram page imploring followers to "start a new tradition and celebrate with a new kind of log this Dipmas." *Swisher Sweets* asked users to get in the holiday spirit by "Share(ing) your *Swisher* with a homie." An [email](#) from *Grizzly* smokeless tobacco offered an off-beat eggnog recipe while *Virginia Slims'* holiday [email](#) included a festive recipe for a pomegranate fudge tart. Instead of a recipe, *Red Seal* smokeless tobacco included instructions on how "to save yourself the headache" of untangling Christmas lights in a [direct mailer](#). *Natural American Spirit* sent users greetings via email and direct mail. The [direct mail](#) featured a photo of company employees with happy holiday wishes "from our family to you." The [email](#) featured a photo of a handwritten letter signed by the "people of *Natural American Spirit*." Both directed recipients to go to the brand's website to view a special holiday video featuring select employees (who have recently re-located from Santa Fe, New Mexico to Oxford, North Carolina) who personally wish y'all a joyous holiday season.



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Tell us about any tobacco marketing we've missed

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