

Trinkets & Trash

Artifacts of the Tobacco Epidemic

Surveillance Update - May 2016

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

SXSW lights up. Our tobacco control friends in Austin, TX attended the South by Southwest Music Festival and found all kinds of tobacco promotions and events. *Grizzly* hosted a “den,” on right — and made festivalgoers fill out a survey to enter. *Marlboro* offered cheap packs, coupons, lighters, and a movie ticket to users at the festival bar. *Swisher Sweets* gave out [free samples](#) to smoke on their balcony, and held a party with a live band and brand cocktails. *Acid* [premium cigarillo](#), a Swisher brand, passed out t-shirts and hats. Meanwhile, *Red Seal* sent us an [email](#) inviting us to check out the schedule of their Shed at cother events — enticing us with a [free hat](#).

We're not Big Tobacco. *Red Sun* the “extreme nicotine” cigarette, introduced in our April update, sent us [direct mail](#) with FAQ to assure us the brand is owned by a “small, fiercely independent” company. They also claim to only use high grade tobacco, leaving the “stems and dust for the ‘Big Tobacco’ brands.” Yeah, right. *Blu* went through a [website](#) redesign and [discontinued](#) their Premium 100 kit, but their products are more or less the same. And *Juul*, you're not fooling us by changing your flavor names to de-scriptions like “[Virginia Tobacco](#)” — you're just the same e-cig as ever.



Cigarette clickbait. Sometimes it seems like tobacco companies will do anything to get users on their website. *Skool*, for example, sent us an [email](#) to buy a can with a “Win Win” code (below) to redeem online for a chance at different prizes. *Blu* [encouraged](#) us to enter a sweepstakes via Twitter to visit Los Angeles and star in a professional photoshoot as part of their “You and Blu” cam-paign. *Marlboro* continued their “[Stand for a Million](#)” project, telling us to hop on the website to promise to plant a tree. They also featured [videos](#) on unique food and dining experiences and began a [contest](#) to win a trip to the American West. And *Virginia Slims* introduced us to their “Ambassador of Chic,” a jewelry designer, along with instructions for “DIY” (do it yourself) jewelry.

Tobacco control changes and successes. Despite the deluge of advertising we discuss every month, there is good news to be found from research on tobacco use among adults. The CDC published [statistics](#) from their National Health Interview Survey showing that American adult cigarette smoking dropped in 2015 to 15.1 percent, compared to 16.8 percent in 2014. The report indicates a nearly 10 percentage point decline from 1997. A Reuters/Ipsos [poll](#) of 9,765 American adults found that e-cigarette usage rates this year were similar to 2015, while increasing numbers of respondents expressed negative views of e-cigarettes. We'll see how the [FDA regulations](#) announced this month affect these numbers.



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