

# COLLEGE

Your key to the elusive college market.

# AGE

#2 1/03

## Letter From the Publisher

Welcome to *College Age*, the Jansen Media's guide to the latest in buying trends for college students and the twenty-something demographic. Nationwide, our editorial staff is connected to the country's brightest and most informed college-age researchers who actively monitor changing habits, interests, and trends at their designated university or college campus. *College Age* is published bi-monthly and sent to book-sellers and college marketing professionals who are interested in the do's and die's of reaching the elusive college and twenty-something markets.

*College Age* is dedicated to demystifying the stereotypes and barriers that manufacturers and businesses constantly face when trying to understand the priorities and attitudes of Generation X in America. We combine first-hand student reporting and exclusive survey information to see through the fallacies and overgeneralizations that are commonly prescribed to college students and twenty-somethings. *College Age* is the only source for these survey results, making our publication an invaluable

resource to those who wish to flourish in reaching the Gen X market. This publication is designed to see beyond the tired images that are supposed to be hip among young people. We understand what Gen Xers want because we go to the source. Don't remain part of the fatally unaware – get an inside edge by going to the source, *College Age*.

In this issue, we examine the most current trends in alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, automobile buying, and box office and movie rental spending among Gen Xers. Read what drinks are most popular among young people. Find out what types of automobiles are most popular and what kind of advertising is most effective in reaching the youth market. Finally, get the latest on how often college students are going to the movies, how they determine what to see and miss, and how movie companies are missing out by not actively targeting the college-age audience.

Mark Jansen  
Publisher  
[mjansen@jansenmc.net](mailto:mjansen@jansenmc.net)



### *College Facts of the Month:*

*College students in the United States spend almost \$200 billion a year, according to findings from the 360 Youth/Harris Interactive College Explorer Study. College students average \$287 per month for discretionary items, defined as "spending on anything other than tuition, room/board, rent/mortgage, books/school fees."*

*If the nation's student body were to form its own "College State," it would be the fourth most populous state exceeded only by California, New York and Texas.*

*A college student's lifelong earning power is \$650,000 more than a non-college student.*

*Only six states have over 200,000 college students: California, Texas, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York.*

*85% of all students do their own laundry. SMRB '00*

*71% of students are employed either full or part-time. SMRB '00*

### **CollegeAge Staff**

**Publisher: Mark H. Jansen**

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## Staying Afloat in the Beverage Industry

### Twenty-somethings Set Their Sights on the Exotic and Luxurious

BY HELEN HO

**A**dvertising Age reports that in 2001, Anheuser-Busch gained \$18.85 for each dollar it spent on advertising. Revenue per ad dollar for the top two carbonated soft drink companies, Coca-Cola and PepsiCo, floated at roughly \$8.30. Judging from the plethora of new drinks in supermarket aisles and new ad campaigns from leading beverage companies, one would think that the multi-billion dollar beverage industry is going strong. Yet we discovered just the opposite: these are signs of a struggling market.

Every year, about three million twenty-somethings reach prime drinking age. But beers and ales have slowed down and liquor companies are pressed to find something appealing to its new generation of consumers.

Young drinkers like change, and alcohol makers have cashed in on their tastes by offering malt drinks as an alternative to beer. The alcoholic, pop-textured drinks are often fruit flavored and lighter on the palate than beer or hard liquor. Dubbed "malternatives" or "malt alts," these drinks have flooded the market and have gained status as the trendy "other" drink for hip young clubgoers and partiers.

The flavored malt beverage volume has more than doubled in supermarkets since last year. Led by Smirnoff Ice, which makes up the largest chunk of market share for malts, the malternative craze may look exciting, but only makes up a tiny four percent of the \$8 billion beer industry. Marketers are looking to back malt drink advertisements with over \$350 million in upcoming (continued on page 3)

# COLLEGE AGE

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Apr.....	Fall Fashion Reviews Career Predictions & Attitudes Winter Excursions & Christmas Wish List	Oct.....	Annual Student Travel Survey Annual Beverage Survey & Taste Test Annual Computers & Electronics Survey
June....	Annual Fragrance & Hygiene Survey Annual Music Retailing Survey Annual Footwear Review & Survey	Dec.....	Annual Outdoor & Adventure Survey Annual Health & Fitness Survey Spring Fashion & Sportswear Reviews

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## Staying Afloat in the Beverage Industry

Twenty-somethings Set Their Sights on the Exotic and Luxurious

(continued from page 1) campaigns, but industry specialists are wary.

Statistics have shown that the demographic to capture is young, white males. They are two times more likely to drink than the average citizen. While these youths respond best to sports, sex, and innovation, malt alt ads don't seem to be geared as strongly to males as the typical beer ad is.

While Skyy Blue commercials use sex as their selling point – their ads feature scantily clad women sunbathing in the snow with their drinks – most malt drink ads focus on the carefree lifestyle of the Gen X partier. One Bacardi Silver slogan predicts, “Your night just got more interesting,” as a young male drinker dances with a girl. Most ads, however, focus on the drink itself. Stolichnaya's malt alt, Citrona, features ice-cold bottles of the drink. The slogan is simple enough: “Tonight we drink Citrona.”

Despite a 61 percent growth in volume since last year, industry specialists believe that the malt drink market looks dreary. Morgan Stanley's William Pecoriello tells Advertising Age, “for alternatives to grow, they need to generate stronger repeat intention among males.”

It's doubted that malt drinks will dramatically boost the beer market. In fact, industry analysts note that brand loyalty will decrease due to the immense amount of choice consumers have between so many different drinks available to them. Analysts believe that alternatives will continue to hold its role in the beer industry, but that growth will slow down and eventually peter out in two to three years. With a girly persona, higher prices, and sweeter flavors that prevent drinkers from drinking many at a sitting, the malt alt has been dubbed the wine cooler of the '00s.

Also cashing in on the trend of fruit-flavored liquor are companies that aren't often associated with liquor. Some carbonated soft drink makers, for example, have introduced non-alcoholic cocktail mixes. Intended to boost restaurant sales, industry powerhouses are taking a side route that allows them to reach the new generation of drinkers.

Water and fitness beverages are also undergoing a huge change. Water is the largest non-alcoholic beverage after carbonated soft drinks. Led by PepsiCo's Aquafina and Coca-Cola's Dasani, the competitive market is trying to appeal to its consumers in new, innovative ways. Enhanced water has flooded

supermarket shelves: Glaceau's VitaminWater has different blends of vitamins and flavors, while its SmartWater contains electrolytes intended to boost brainpower. Other focuses are on minerals, doses of caffeine, fiber, herbal solutions and fruit flavors.

Sports-drinks are now merging with the bottled water market. The \$3.6 billion sports-drink market is growing ten times faster than carbonated soft drinks, and of this market, Gatorade has a share of 86 percent. Fitness waters such as Gatorade's Propel and Clearly Canadian's Reebok Fitness Water, are sports-drinks in water form. This enables sports-drink companies to market their fitness water as gender/flavor-neutral drinks; their ads feature both male and female athletes, of all ages, benefiting from the enhanced water.

So many drinks fill the shelves. The beer market produced 206 million barrels last year, and Aquafina and Dasani produced 146 million and 127 million cases, respectively. With such a huge volume of beverages and so much money pouring into advertising, how is the industry marketing its products?

The market is stale. Dr. Pepper president Jack Kilduff says, “consumers... want new, unique, refreshing and smooth-to-the-palate soft drink products.” Focusing on peer-to-peer influence and creating new flavors of soft drinks and their diet counterparts, the industry is working on capturing (and keeping) the elusive college market.

Mountain Dew, mainly focusing on the extreme sports market, is a major skateboarding tour sponsor. Other mainstream ads contain rocking beats and extreme car and bicycle stunts, relying on the strength of peer-to-peer marketing. Perhaps most noticeable about Mountain Dew is its new campaign for Diet Mountain Dew, which features the same stunts but for “tamer” sports, such as golf.

Gatorade Fierce, aimed for consumers aged 20 and up, has a campaign featuring sports greats like Derek Jeter battling gargoyles with the aid of the new power drink. New flavored carbonated soft drinks are aimed at 12 to 24 year-olds. Vanilla Coke TV spots focus on curiosity and investigating new drinks from long-standing companies.

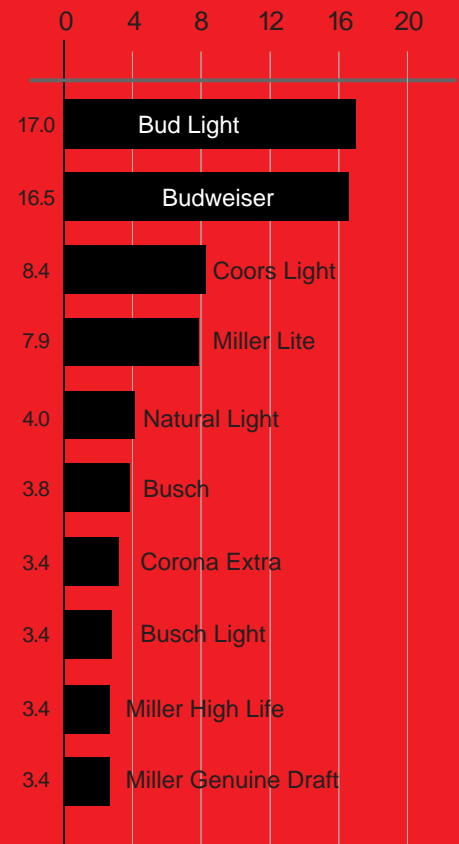
In many cases beverage preferences are established before college. This is why soft drink companies are willing to donate score boards for high school athletics if their product is the exclusively served drink at events, or why beer (continued on page 4)

Share of Total Market		
	1990	2000
Colas	71.3	60.5
Lemon-lime	9.7	10.5
Citrus	6.6	10.1
Pepper-type drinks	5.5	20.4
Pepsi-Cola	17.6	13.6
Sprite	3.8	6.6
Mountain Dew	3.9	7.2

Source: Beverage Digest 2002

## TOP 10 BEERS

PERCENTAGE



Source: beveragedigest.com

## TOP-10 CSD Companies

2001 Rank	Companies	2001 Mkt Shr	2000 Mkt Shr
1	Coca-Cola Co.	43.7	44.4
2	Pepsi-Cola Co.	31.6	31.4
3	Dr Pepper/Seven Up (Cadbury)	15.6	14.7
4	Cott Corp.	3.8	3.3
5	National Beverage	2.2	2.1
6	Big Red	0.4	0.4
7	Seagram	0.3	0.3
8	Red Bull	0.1	<0.1
9	Monarch Co.	0.1	0.1
10	Private Label/Other	2.2	3.6
	Total Industry	100.0	100.0

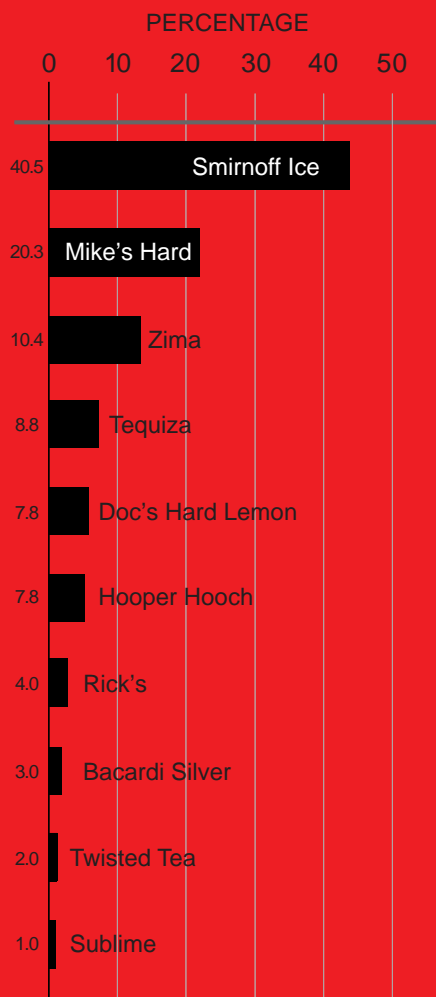
Source: beverage-digest.com

## TOP-10 CSD Brands

2001 Rank	Brands	2001 Mkt Shr	2000 Mkt Shr
1	Coke Classic	19.9	20.4
2	Pepsi-Cola	13.2	13.6
3	Diet Coke	8.8	8.7
4	Mt. Dew	6.9	7.2
5	Sprite	6.5	6.6
6	Dr Pepper	6.2	6.3
7	Diet Pepsi	5.3	5.3
8	7UP	1.9	2.0
9	CF Diet Coke	1.7	1.7
10	Barq's root beer	1.1	1.1

Source: [beveragedigest.com](http://beveragedigest.com)

## TOP 10 MALT DRINKS

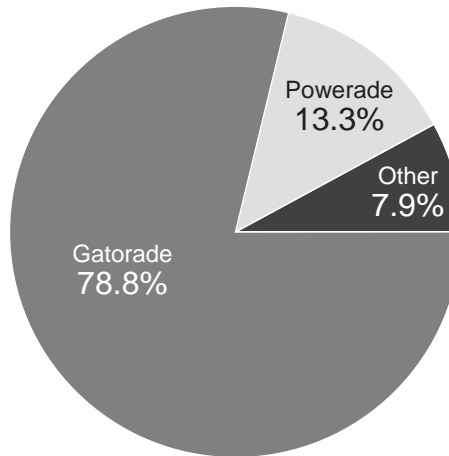


Source: [beveragedigest.com](http://beveragedigest.com)

## Staying Afloat in the Beverage Industry

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### MARKET SHARE FOR SPORTS DRINKS



(continued from page 3) companies sponsor sports and music events geared for teens. Advertising campaigns like Snapple's Teen Spirit, which focuses on bottle puppets acting out humorous "real-life" situations, are prevalent over television screens, billboards and print ads. John Sicher of Beverage Digest writes, "all of [a consumer's] life stages" can be reached by mainstream marketing.

It is this use of mainstream marketing that is the cause of immense controversy regarding alcohol advertisements. Televised liquor commercials reach 67 percent of all American households that have a television. The clear use of young models and inappropriate targeting has been a major concern of MADD: Mothers Against Drunk Driving, an organization pushing for certain standards to be upheld in liquor ads. The group wants to prohibit cartoon and celebrity sponsorship and has pushed for the industry to use actors over the age of 30 for their commercials. If MADD gets its wishes, the commercials will only air during shows where the majority of audience members are over the age of 21. Yet, while the liquor industry may have a problem in subtly targeting youths and teens, non-alcoholic marketers don't.

Such is seen in the introduction of Coca-Cola's line of Hundred Acre Wood juices for children, Gatorade's All\*Star's line for pre-teens, and the expansion of Capri-Sun's juice pouches into Big Pouches for older teens. Carlene Robinson of Coca-Cola North America tells AdAge, "teens are the real priority because they are the future consumers." Teens, in fact, make up about a

quarter of the American population.

There is immense competition to get in on the teen market. While Coca-Cola and PepsiCo struggle with each other, Coke sponsoring the World Cup and Pepsi touted by celebrities like Britney Spears, Dr. Pepper has created two new drinks: Deja Blue water to compete with Dasani and Aquafina, and Red Fusion to compete with Vanilla Coke and Pepsi Blue. Carbonated soft drink companies are harking to today's teen trends for their marketing moves.

While Gen X culture reverts to retro styles and fashions from the past, so has the beverage industry. Soft drink companies are relaunching old sodas to remind their consumer that drinks from the past can still be trendy today. Note the relaunch campaign of Fanta, Coca-Cola's fruit-flavored carbonated soft drinks. With an unforgettable jingle by "The Fantastics," the campaign uses modern Latino-based rock beats and sexy singers to promote the freshness of the drink.

Yet it is the Latino trend that Coca-Cola has used that other marketers are latching on to with vigor. While minorities make up a small percentage of the entire American population, the industry has noted that Blacks and Hispanics account for one-third of the country's teenage population. They also note the fact that Black teens are leading trendsetters and the Hispanic population is swiftly increasing its influence.

Focusing again on peer-to-peer marketing, the industry is funneling millions of advertising dollars into minority-targeted advertisements. In fact, Coca-Cola has shifted its priorities and has placed minorities high on their list. Dr. Pepper's 2002 advertising campaign involves salsa and break dancing to appeal to minorities. Other companies are testing out new, exotic tropical flavors to try and specifically target the ethnic market.

While the market undergoes changes to suit America's sweet-tooth, college-aged consumers are experiencing the aftershock of campaigns mainly targeted to teens and pre-teens, whose spending habits form the basis of buying preference later on in life.

*College Age produces one annual survey per year focusing on specific industries and evaluates trends in the 18-34 year old educated market. Single copies of College Age are available for only \$79 or an annual subscription of six issues are available for only \$149. Send check or money order to JMC, 4124 W. Oakton St., Skokie, IL 60076. ■*

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and 1,000's of others...

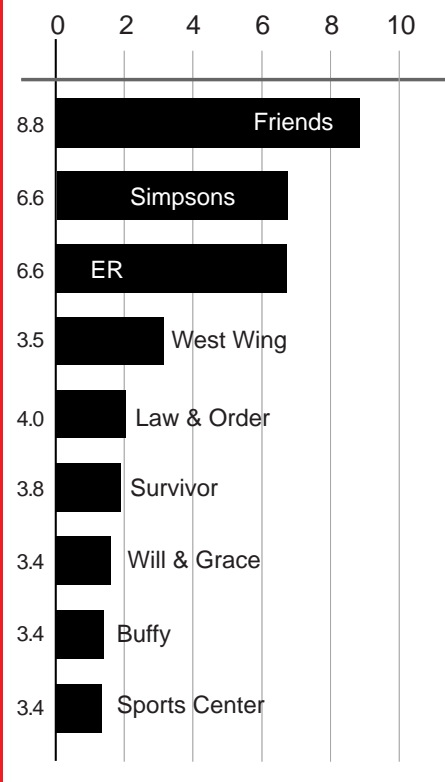
## College Television Stats:

**Own a television: 69%** *Ampass '97*

**Watch 10 or more hours of TV each week:**  
74% *SMRB '00*

**How many hours of tv do you watch each week? Average: 12.5 hours** *CMB '02*

### TOP Television Shows 2001-2002 AS A PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS



*CMB '02 - 1,267 college students between the ages of 18-34 were surveyed as to what their favorite television show was.*

## College Video Rental Stats:

**How many movies do you rent each month?**  
Average: 4.0 *CMB '00*

**Rented a video last week: 35%** *Harris Inter '01*

**67% of students owned a VCR** *CMB '94*

**29% of students owned a VCR** *Ampass '97*

**81% of students owned a VCR/DVD**  
*Harris Inter '01*

# Annual Entertainment Survey '02 To See or Not to See?

BY MARINA GOLDBLATT | STEPHANIE RICH | HELEN HO

**M**otion picture corporations are tediously working to provide today's college students with a variety of action, comedy, romance, and dramatic films. More than ever, collegians have become increasingly more important as consumers and, hence, more valuable to the movie industry. So why do movie retailers place advertisements targeting alternate age groups and miss out on greater revenue opportunities? And what's the strongest evidence that film studios should target young college students?

The Newspaper Association of America's 2001 Movie Market Study found that 18-to-24-year-olds make up 22 percent of moviegoers. Twenty-two percent of the \$8.4 billion the movie industry grossed in 2001 amounts to a large amount of revenue.

Dan Kandell, an Advertising Assistant for Miramax Films, agrees that the college audience is a strong market. "[We] do really great business on or near college campuses," Kandell says. He also comments on Miramax's marketing strategies.

"We do [advertising] all across the board," Kandell says, "But because we're Disney-owned, we're the first company to take a stance against marketing [unsuitable material] to children and young adults. We've been very conscious as to what is being advertised and to whom."

Kandell remarks that "kid" movies, such as *Shrek*, target 8-to-12-year-olds, leaving a large number of films, such as R-rated and comedy flicks, to target young adults between the ages of 18 and 30.

"This is a majority of our business," Kandell says.

According to surveys conducted by Paul Kagan Associates, college students attend an average of three movies per month, purchasing 42.6 million movie tickets monthly. Recent CMB survey data supports this statistic. Verifying this data, a survey by JMC shows that they go to the movies 3.2 times

a month and rent an average of 4.0 movies per month.

"College students are important when consuming demographics," Larry Gerbrandt, Chief Content Officer for Paul Kagan Associates says. "[College students] establish buying patterns, which carry into adulthood."

The Motion Picture Association of America's survey backs up Gerbrandt's theory that establishing connections with collegians is important to building long-term customers.

According to the survey, 62 percent of adults with some college education are frequent or occasional moviegoers, compared with 47 percent of adults who have only completed high school.

Gerbrandt also says age groups vary in focus levels because specific ages are more crucial to the entertainment industry than others. Most involved with the industry agree that the most important factor in marketing is deciding when to target college students.

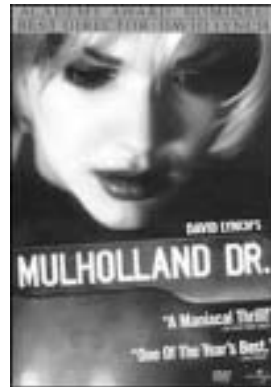
"It depends on the movie," Gerbrandt comments.

"When the film is appropriate we target that demographic," says Kandell.

Steve Elzer, Senior Vice President of Corporate Communications for New Line Cinema, says that the focus of advertising is sometimes placed elsewhere. Because active, educated individuals such as college students and college graduates already generate revenue at the box office, motion picture corporations feel the need to promote to other age groups.

But what attracts college students to films?

Although motion picture corporations and advertising agencies don't release their annual budget used in advertising for college students, they do explain the various methods used to actively and beneficially reach the college market. According to the Newspaper Association of America's 2001 Movie Market Study, daily newspapers place ahead of magazine, radio, Internet advertisements and weekly newspapers when a variety of moviegoers were asked to name the single-most influ-



## Annual Entertainment Survey '02

Too See or Not to See?

ential factor in choosing a movie. Specific to the college market, advertisers identify on-campus flyering, which targets places such as the student union or local hangouts, and exclusive premieres as successful promotion techniques.

According to a similar survey, opinions are divided as to the success and failure of movie reviews on college students.

"If they're movie reviews from publications that students respect, that tends to sway opinions greatly," says Kandell. Elzer agrees. He believes that movie reviews help students determine whether to view a specific film or not.

"College students are savvy and sophisticated." He says, "They are influenced by reviews and

papers, especially those from their peers. In that respect, reviews are helpful in making decisions and guiding students into certain respects."

Gerbrandt holds a different view. "Movie reviews are not as important as word of mouth." College students thrive on conversation and debate, and film publicity relies primarily on whether or not the movie becomes a successful conversation piece.

When attempting to reach college students, motion picture studios and advertising agencies keep in mind the appeal of the film in relation to college students' financial status.

"We understand their limited financial status," Elzer explains. Kandell agrees that money is crucial in determining how successful a specific movie will be in the college market. However, other factors play greater

roles in targeting college students, especially since college students have much more to spend than many realize. Family members, for instance, pay for many of their expenses, and college students become first-time credit card users while in college, providing them with a little extra

cash to go to restaurants and the movies.

Of course, a typical student with a part-time job and a credit card can only afford so many movies in a month.

Considering the number of movies that are playing these days, college students are quite selective about which ones they spend their money on.

"It's definitely the appeal of the film, such as who is in it and what it is about," Kandell says. "Plus, the type of market or publication, where it's located, and what college students want and like is demographical-

ly different nationwide." He explains that college students' desires are drastically different from university to university, causing national advertisements to change based upon various lifestyles and trends.

"For example," he says, "In Minnesota, independent films are huge, but in other universities in other states, independent films are a minority amongst others." In addition, Gerbrandt says studios look at

how similar films have performed in the past when deciding how to target students.

So what does it all mean? Despite their limited funds, college students manage to continue playing the entertainment game.

They successfully build the demographic bridge within the entertainment industry – thereby becoming the primary focus of advertisers nationwide.

When movie studios win over the college audience, they are making a solid investment for the future.



**62% of adults with some college education are frequent or occasional moviegoers compared with 47% of adults who have only completed high school.**



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## College Movie Ticket Sales Stats:

*Went to a movie in the last 90 days: 67% SMRB '00*

*Went to a movie last year: 86% Harris Inter '01*

*Went to a movie last year: 91% Harris Inter '02*

*How many movies do you attend each month? Average: 3.0 CMB '94*

*How many movies do you attend each month? Average: 3.2 CMB '02*

### Students at the Box Office:

#### Total Tickets Sold to Students 18-34 Years Old

1994	511million to 14.2 million students
2001	588 million to 15.3 million students
2002	607 million to 15.8 million students

#### Percentage of Total Box Office Purchased by Students 18-34 Years Old

1994	43%
2001	39%
2002	38%

*Above figures represent average movie viewership of 18-34 college age students as per CMB in their respective year's survey.*

### CMB Conclusion:

*Though the movie industry is seeing unprecedented gains at the box office in recent history with over 1.6 billion tickets sold during 2002, the total percentage of tickets sold to students has decreased slightly since 1994. Student tickets sales over all have increased since 1994. But as a percentage the ever broadening movie going audience, especially influenced by increases in minority audiences, has diminished the overall movie purchasing power of students.*

*According to surveys conducted by Paul Kagan Associates, college students attend an average of three movies per month, purchasing 511.2 million movie tickets annually. This would be based on a population of 14.2 million students.*

*Harris Interactive maintained that students between the ages of 18-24 represented over \$720,000,000 in movie ticket sales during 2001 and over \$887,000,000 during 2002.*

## Which Type of Vehicle Do Students Plan to Purchase in 2001-02?

Car 78%  
Motorcycle 4%  
Truck 4%  
Van 4%  
Other 8%

Source: CMB 2001

## Ford Leading Vehicle Owned by Students

Owned by 18% of college students recently polled, Ford is the most popularly owned automobile among college students. Three other manufacturers along with Ford in combination make up about half of vehicles owned by students; they are Chevrolet (11%), Honda (10%) and Toyota (10%).

Source: Student Monitor 2003

## SUVs Still on the Rise

25% of college students car shopping this year plan on buying an SUV. This is up 7% from last year, when 18% said they were planning on purchasing an SUV.

Source: Student Monitor 2003

## How Many Students Own A Car?

62% own a car Source: CMB 1994

69% own a car Source: Student Monitor 1999

68% own a car Source: Student Monitor 2000

54% own a car Source: CMB 2000

61% own a car Source: AMPASS 2000

67% own a car Source: Student Monitor 2001

37% plan to buy a car within the next year Source: CMB 1994

39% plan to buy a car within the next year Source: CMB 2000

87% plan on buying a new car when graduate Source: SMRB 2000

73% have access to a motor vehicle Source: SMRB 2000

# Auto Makers Tickling America's Funny Bone

BY JILLIAN HEFFRON | KIM STRAUB

Today's automobile advertising spotlighting reliability, humor, and progression following the turbulent events of 2001 seems to be creating a more approachable image of automobile corporations to the average buyer. No more are consumers being slammed with the typical car ad (shiny new car with various luxury features whipping smoothly around a glistening curve, cue hyperactive shouting, price signs, lease deals and low APRs.)

Advertisers have discovered what Gen Xers respond to – reassurance.

In the past, car commercials have been rated among the least favorite of all types of commercials, despite the fact that the automobile industry

spends more on advertisements than any other industry. Many attribute this to the fact that consumers have been bombarded with the same type of ads for so many years. Car advertisements have been so conceptually similar in the past that it was nearly impossible to differentiate one make and model from the rest. Now eyes glaze over when a car commercial comes on or a billboard passes by.

All that has changed. Greater emphasis is now being placed on the right car for each consumer's lifestyle. Automakers know this, and they want to show their customers that they aren't paying \$30,000 for just a source of transportation. They are buying more than that; they are buying an image.

Next to buying a house, automobiles are one of the most important purchases a person will make.

In the most recent CMB survey, two-thirds of those polled already own a vehicle. Of those who do not, 30 percent plan to purchase one after leaving college or within the next twelve months.

With campaign slogans such as the plain and simple "At Ford, We Care," some car companies are stressing reliability over appearance. Especially after September

11th, corporations are realizing much of the consumer appeal for car buyers in 2002 is related to safety and warranty. Hyundai, Ford, and Kia are three of the companies tapping into this marketing technique.

Other automobile manufacturers seem to think looking forward in 2003 is the answer. Concept models for Toyota, Mazda, and Subaru confirm a new generation of "sports wagons" is going to make a big bang in the Generation X consumer market. Toyota ads promote the new Matrix as "inspired by hot rods, SUVs, and Darwin." The future, not the past, is in

mind here. According to Motor Trend magazine, "the days of conspicuously consuming, over-capacitized, under-utilized



Nissan Xterra

sport/utilities are numbered. Fun-to-drive, surprisingly useful, four-door sport wagons will be the next craze of young or young-minded buyers who value style, cargo capacity, performance, and price."

Ford isn't the only company stressing innovation. With catchphrases such as "New thinking ahead" in their promotions, Nissan is using this to their advantage as well. Their Sentra is described as "Roomier. Sportier. A lot more fun," to consumers who want something that is both exciting and realistic.

The motto for the Altima, "Affordable luxury. Exhilarating ride," suggests that this car is for young adults who are just starting their careers and want something that will fit a professional image, but still



Mitsubishi Eclipse GT

be exciting.

The Xterra, clearly marketed at Generation X, is made for people looking for something cutting-edge, affordable and dependable. It claims to be "Everything you need. Nothing you don't." Nissan is aware that Gen Xers are cynical of mass consumerism and largely reject the consumerist belief that more is better. They want a product that incorporates pragma-

## Auto Makers

Tickling America's Funny Bone

tism, and the Xterra, with the X pointing directly at this market, plays on this.

Mitsubishi draws in young consumers with their commercial for the Eclipse by appealing to the interests of what young people like to do. One of their television commercials features a carload of young and hip club-goers on their way to a night on the town. The girl in the front seat catches the excitement and grooves to the techno music pulsing from the car.

The Spectra is another model that focuses on these desirable qualities by tempting con-



BMW 3 Series Convertible

sumers to "Express your natural, radiant, show-off self in a brand new Spectra four-door hatchback sedan."

Volkswagen is going for a more laid-back

approach. They know that Gen Xers want advertisements to serve a purpose – to be entertaining – and they make sure that their commercials serve this purpose. Humor is one of the main ingredients in this winning recipe. The commercials depict people who are so in love with their Jetta's that they want to show everyone the cool features. In one Jetta commercial, a twenty-something man ecstatically wakes his friend up at 7 a.m. to show him his Jetta by honking his

horn outside. The commercial's conclusion states "your friends will love it, and that's what matters most, doesn't it?"

Marketing research on Generation X has shown that Gen Xers respond best to humor and irony, something that Volkswagen is using to its advantage.

In 2001, Jacques Duval and Denis Duquet, co-authors of the yearly Auto Guide publication, named Volkswagen the most popular car manufacturer "across the board." The Jetta is the best-selling European car in

America. In addition, the Jetta, the Passat, and the New Beetle were named as three of Road and Track's six Best Buys in 2002.

With figures steadily increasing for companies capitalizing on young adults' positive reception of the latest ads applying humor,

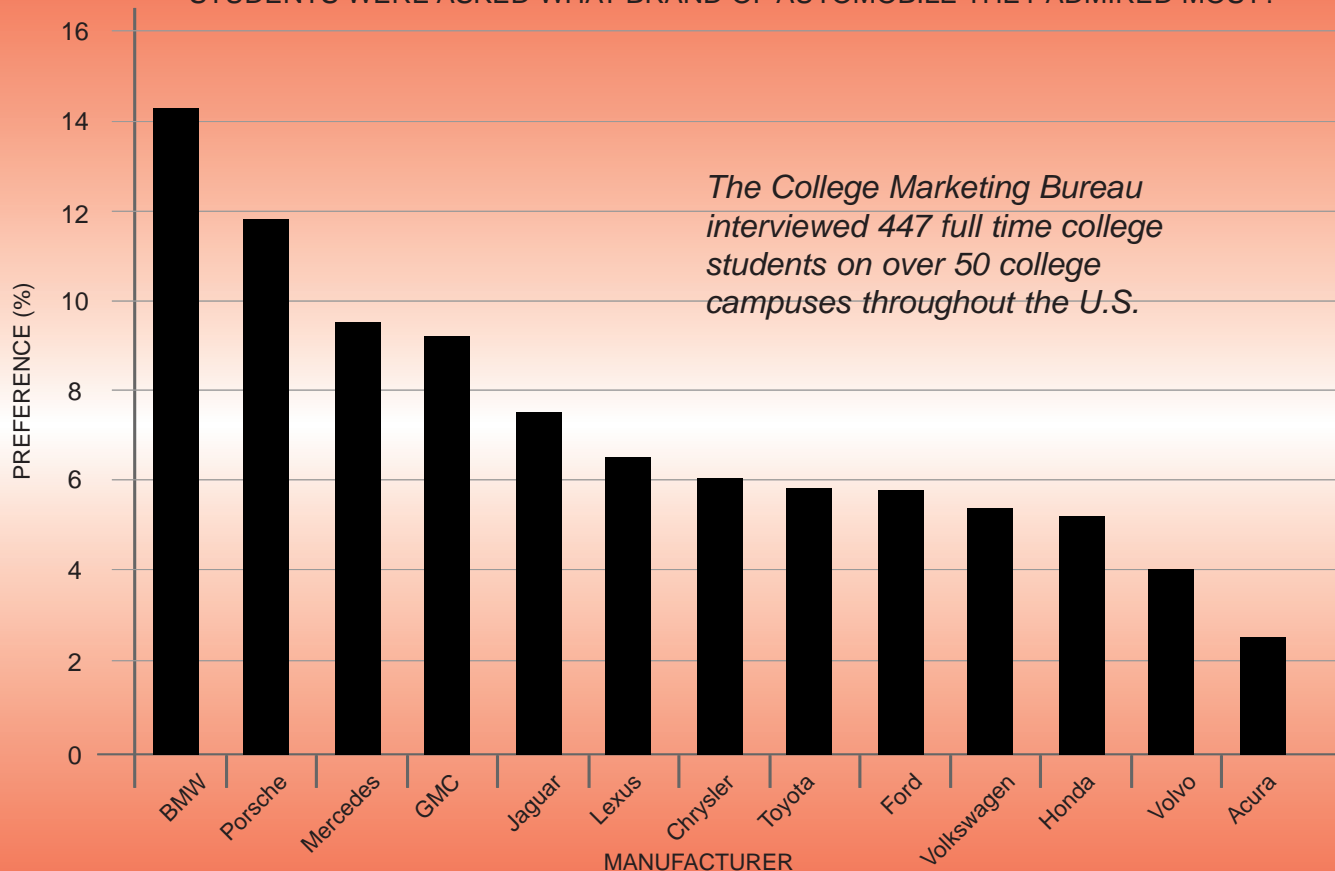


Volkswagen Beetle

modernism, and reliability, it is clear that auto marketers have at last mastered the perfect technique of targeting the elusive twenty-something population.

*College Age produces one annual survey per year focusing on specific industries and evaluates trends in the 18-34 year old educated market. Single copies of College Age are available for only \$79 or an annual subscription of six issues are available for only \$149. Send check or money order to JMC, 4124 W. Oakton St., Skokie, IL 60076. ■*

### STUDENTS WERE ASKED WHAT BRAND OF AUTOMOBILE THEY ADMIRER MOST?



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