

# SOME OF THE WAYS THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY MARKETS TO LESBIANS AND GAYS

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## DIRECT ADVERTISING

*Ads in national magazines like The Advocate, Out and Girlfriends*

- 1992 - Benson & Hedges Special Kings ad in Genre was the first tobacco ad in a gay publication.
- 1994 - Benson & Hedges broadened the campaign to Out and other tobacco brands followed.
- 1994 - Virginia Slims targeted lesbians with carefully worded ads and sexually ambiguous imagery.
- 1995 - Parliament Light's "coded" ads appear in Out. They feature tradition male/female ads from Rolling Stone, Penthouse, Interview and other magazines were rendered sexually ambiguous by the computer graphic addition of a third person in the ads when they appeared in Out.
- 1999 - Top ad categories in gay newspapers: classified, bars and clubs, special events, HIV treatments, tobacco and alcohol. Top ad categories in Out magazine: tobacco, alcohol, HOV treatments, arrangements to sell life insurance (source: Mike Wilke, Gay Financial Network).

## INDIRECT ADVERTISING

*Advertising in mainstream magazines with high gay/lesbian readership. Also, ads in performance arts programs and publications, ads in alternative weekly newspapers.*

- A survey of readers of The Advocate and Out magazine found that subscribers other magazine picks included GQ, Vanity Fair, Entertainment Weekly, Time and Newsweek - all with heavy tobacco advertising. (source: Joe Landry, publisher of The Advocate and Out).
- 71% of gays attend live theater, compared to 21% of heterosexuals. Gays are five times more likely to attend a classical music concert and 4 times more likely to see a dance performance than straights. (source: March 1998, American Demographics magazine). Tobacco ads are pervasive throughout Playbills and other arts and exhibition programs.
- Alternative weekly newspapers such as Creating Loafing in Atlanta, The Boston Phoenix, the NY Press and Seattle's The Stranger have a gay/lesbian readership estimated to be as high as 25% (source: Simmon's Market Research). Tobacco documents indicate that Benson & Hedges turned to alternative newspapers to market Special Kings after first advertising the new brand in Genre. The document (DOCID=2044361631 at <http://www.pmdocs.com>) recommended advertising the brand in alternative weeklies because the primarily young male readership fit the Special Kings audience of "hip, trendy, image/status conscience" young adult male smokers who are "into cloths, music, liquor and nightlife."

#### **EVENT AND ORGANIZATION SPONSORSHIP**

- Tobacco companies sponsored 56 performing arts events and an organization, 44 AIDS events and organizations, 42 minority events and organizations and 24 visual arts events and organizations from 1995 - 1999. (source: Michael Siegel, Boston University School of Public Health). All these sponsorship categories have a high gay/lesbian interest - higher in most cases than the general public.
- RJR sponsored the 1999 Miss Gay US of A pageant in Indianapolis.
- Tobacco companies sponsored the gay/lesbian film festival in Atlanta in 2000.

#### **OUTREACH EFFORTS AND COMMUNITY PROMOTIONS**

- In 1994, Philip Morris was the number one contributor to the Gay Men's Health Crisis (\$150,000. RJR gave \$50,000. (source: Gene Borio, [www.tobacco.org](http://www.tobacco.org)).
- Philip Morris contributed more than \$14 million to HIV/AIDS efforts in the US since 1986.
- Philip Morris named lesbian activist Billie Jean King to its board of directors in 1999.
- The Human Rights Campaign listing of Fortune 500 Companies non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation list Philip Morris at #9 and RJ Reynolds at #155.