

When Brazil's Alcohol Brands Win the World Cup, Youth and Public Health Lose



Why it Matters Now

As Brazil chases its first World Cup title in 24 years, alcohol brands are chasing the next generation of consumers. The industry has built a massive marketing offensive around the tournament, embedding products into the national team, its official channels, football idols, fan culture and digital streaming channels popular with young people.

This is not merely a commercial matter, but one that has serious public health consequences. There is strong and consistent evidence that alcohol marketing leads young people to consume alcohol earlier and more heavily, with football serving as an especially powerful vehicle to glamorize products and distract from health risks. In Brazil, heavy consumption among adolescents is rising, with adolescent girls now consuming more than boys.

The evidence below, collected from social media, illustrates how this strategy plays out across Brazilian football culture.



Source: [brahmacerveja](#) and [mrancelotti](#) Instagram / Tá Liberado Acreditar campaign

What the Data Say

- **6 billion:** the number of people projected to be reached across all media during the 2026 World Cup—the largest global reach in the tournament's history (FIFA).
- **3.3 billion** alcohol brand impressions—385 million of them to children—were delivered to U.K. viewers by broadcasts of just 13 matches of the 2018 World Cup (BMC Public Health).
- **The link is causal:** Applying the same scientific criteria used to establish that smoking causes cancer, researchers conclude that exposure to alcohol marketing is one cause of underage and heavy alcohol consumption (JSAD).
- **5x:** Brazilian adolescents who had a favorite alcoholic beverage brand were five times more likely to have consumed beer in the past month (Revista de Saúde Pública).
- **100,000+ deaths per year** in Brazil, or 12 deaths per hour, are attributable to alcohol consumption (Fiocruz).
- **10,000+ deaths** could be prevented and R\$2.1 billion saved with a 20% reduction in alcohol consumption (Vital Strategies and ACT Health Promotion).

What is Canary?

Canary is a real-time media monitoring and reporting service that harnesses AI and expert analysis to identify emerging threats in digital environments.

Findings

Holding fan events centered around alcohol

- **Arena N°1** fan events in five cities target 600,000+ people across the tournament, with Brahma open bars at the center with Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) endorsement. (Source: [brahmacerveja](#))
- **Smirnoff**, named "official vodka supporter" of the tournament, is sponsoring a São Paulo fan venue—the Arena Brasileira—for the entire World Cup (June 13–July 19), with alcohol as a centerpiece.



Source: [arena.brasileira](#) and [ronaldo](#) Instagram

Using football idols

- In addition to longstanding Brahma ambassador Ronaldo, the beer brand secured Brazil's national team manager, Carlo Ancelotti, for its "Tá Liberado Acreditar" campaign, directly linking an alcohol brand to the highest level of football leadership. This joint content garnered significant engagement, with one Instagram post alone drawing 221,000+ likes and one campaign video shared to YouTube gathered 12 million+ views. Official Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) channels also published Brahma's ads, erasing the line between football federation content and alcohol advertising and reaching its followers young and old.

- **Itaipava** beer centered its World Cup campaign on Ronaldinho, one of the most idolized figures among young Brazilian football fans. Campaign content cross-posted to the star's Instagram audience of 78 million followers shows him juggling a football while pouring beer, directly linking athletic skill to alcohol.



Source: [itaipava](#) and [ronaldinho](#) Instagram

Appealing to young people

- AB InBev's newly launched **Flying Fish**—a sweet, flavored beer with a can that resembles soda—is promoted as the World Cup's official flavored beer, with a meme-driven, Gen Z-targeted campaign fronted by creators on TikTok, YouTube and Meta platforms.
- **Cachaça Seleta** designed its bottle into a Panini World Cup-style sticker card—imagery associated with a deeply anchored tradition of children collecting World Cup stickers in albums—embedding the brand into youth and family culture.



Source: [flyingfish.br](#) Instagram



Source: [cachacaseleta](#) Instagram

Additional Context

Beer: A Marketing Loophole as Wide as the Pitch

Brazil's alcohol marketing restrictions apply only to beverages above 13% alcohol by volume, which leaves beer—the country's most consumed alcoholic drink—largely uncovered. Instead, beer advertising is self-regulated, which has been shown to be an ineffective approach, with violations common and penalties weak. During the [2006 World Cup](#), a study found that the five beer advertisements most appealing to Brazilian teenagers violated numerous principles of the self-regulation code. The result is that, in practice, beer brands have free rein to run the kind of massive, football-linked campaigns documented here, with no meaningful restrictions on content, placement or audience.



Source: [Brahma](#) Youtube / *Tá Liberado Acreditar* campaign

Digital-First Broadcast Marketing Appeals to Youth

A recent Canary! report on Coca-Cola's marketing tactics during the FIFA Club World Cup observed that brand logos in broadcasts and in-stadium displays are not coincidences; they are strategically placed in football's greatest moments to be amplified across digital platforms, reaching millions beyond the stadium. Alcohol brand placement in the 2026 World Cup will be no different, since AB InBev holds the official beer sponsorship across broadcasts, including the new [digital-only broadcaster in Brazil](#).

Amid FIFA's push to engage the next generation, it's partnering with digital-only broadcasters. In Brazil, [CazéTV](#), led by influencer [Casimiro Miguel](#), is streaming all 104 games—more than double the number of matches broadcast by Globo, Brazil's traditional home of football broadcasting—via YouTube (34 million+ subscribers), Amazon Prime, Disney+ and more, with content creators and comedy in place of traditional sports reporting. [CazéTV](#) nearly ties Globo for watching preference among 16–24-year-olds (29% vs. 34%)—but draws just 1% of viewers 60+ (vs. Globo's 39%), showing its reach is concentrated among younger people. FIFA has made the goal clear: new audiences and demographics, providing its sponsors—including alcohol brands—with access.



Source: [cazeTV](#) Instagram

Key Takeaways

Alcohol brands are clearly looking to use the World Cup to reach the next generation, relying more on digital channels, deploying idols young people worship and associating products with young Brazilian identity and culture. This is not a game.

For parents: When kids tune in to the World Cup—on Globo or on CazéTV, the youth-oriented channel streaming every match—they will likely see beer logos pitch-side and across the broadcast and on their digital feeds, as well as their idols promoting beer alongside football. The science is clear: Exposure to alcohol marketing makes young people more likely to consume it.

For policymakers: The World Cup push exposes the alcohol industry's strategy to reach young people. WHO's proven tools—higher taxes, marketing restrictions, reduced availability—are designed to reduce consumption and limit youth uptake. An alcohol industry win is not required for Brazil to chase glory at the world's biggest football tournament.



Read our full report on alcohol advertising beyond the World Cup



About Canary!

Canary is a real-time media monitoring and reporting service that harnesses AI and expert analysis to identify emerging threats in digital environments. For more information on our methodology, visit our [website](#). Note: this brief uses a manual search of Canary-monitored and adjacent accounts for 2026 (through June 10) and is not exhaustive.

About Vital Strategies

Canary is a project of [Vital Strategies](#), a public health organization that partners with governments and local organizations to tackle the growing burden of noncommunicable diseases and injuries, using data and evidence to assess health and environmental threats and to move policy, practices and people. Our team of 400+ includes epidemiologists, policy experts, communicators, data analysts and others who work in 80+ countries around the world.

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