

When the Alcohol Industry Rides Mexico's World Cup Wave, Youth, Women and Public Health Lose



Why It Matters Now

As Mexico hosts the FIFA World Cup for a third time, alcohol brands are making sure they're part of every big moment. Mexico's beer industry is forecasting a consumption increase of up to 20% during the tournament—and that surge is no accident.

The industry has embedded itself into Mexico's World Cup experience: through iconic players like beloved goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa, the football federation's official channels, activations in public spaces, content geared toward Gen Z, a beer-branded Player of the Match trophy and contributions to the government's World Cup social impact program.

This carries serious public health consequences. Young people are a large World Cup audience, and research consistently links exposure to sports-related alcohol marketing with increased youth consumption. Alcohol use is also strongly linked to violence, especially at home, where women and children are most at risk.

Mexican advocates pushing for policies that reduce alcohol harms must contend with the political and cultural force of pervasive industry marketing that normalizes consumption, fuses brands with national pride and embeds companies in government social programs.

The social media examples here illustrate how this strategy is playing out.



Source: [@michelobultramx](#) + [@yosoy8a](#) Instagram

What the Data Say

- **6 billion:** the number of people projected to be reached by media during the 2026 World Cup—the largest global reach in the tournament's history ([FIFA](#))
- **75% of Mexican football fans** say football plays a significant role in their daily lives; 91% plan to watch the tournament at home ([FIFA/Nielsen](#))
- **Up to 30% rise in intimate-partner** violence reports during football matches in Latin America ([BID](#))
- **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](#))
- **1 in 5 Mexican adolescents** (10–19) consumed alcohol in the previous year ([ENSANUT 2023](#))
- **The link between marketing and drinking 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 consumption and heavy consumption ([JSAD](#))
- **112 deaths every day in Mexico**, or 41,000 a year, are associated with alcohol use, which is linked to six of the country's 10 leading causes of death ([El Poder Del Consumidor/INEGI](#))

Findings

Mexico's World Cup Social Impact Program: A Missed Public Health Opportunity



Source: [@GrupoModelo_MX](#) on X

Mundial Social México 2026 is the Mexican government's social impact program for the World Cup, built around sport and community health, including 1,480+ activities under its "Live healthy, play happy" initiative. At an April press conference, President Sheinbaum confirmed a partnership with AB InBev's Grupo Modelo. The company announced: 500 World Cup tickets for winners of community "mundialitos," mobile-screen caravans ("Caravanas Corona") in all 32 states, transmission licenses, refrigerators and equipment for 35,000 restaurants and small businesses, and "responsible-serving" trainings. The partnership gives Mexico's dominant beer company prominent placement across a major government platform that promotes sport, health and community at a moment when Mexico is debating how to address alcohol harm. These debates include cancer and health warnings on alcohol labels, as well as civil societies' push for advertising restrictions and higher alcohol taxes, measures WHO identifies as effective "best buys."



Source: [@corona_mx](#) Instagram

Targeting youth



Source: [@corona_mx](#) + [@miseleccionmx](#) Instagram

- Corona renders national team players as collectible sticker-album cards ("estampitas"), fusing the World Cup ritual of Mexican childhood with an alcohol brand. The post was collaboratively shared to the national team's account of 7.6 million followers and received 201,000+ likes.
- Beloved goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa appears alongside Lionel Messi and other football stars in "The Superior Match" campaign for Michelob Ultra, the official beer sponsor of the tournament. The campaign was shared to Ochoa's Instagram where he has 3+ million fans of all ages. Source: [@yosoy8a](#)
- Grupo Modelo promotes its light beer to young people, with "team millennial" told it celebrates an active lifestyle and "team Gen Z" told it's "very cool" for an afternoon of football, using emojis.



Source: [@grupomodelomx](#) Instagram

Hiding behind "social responsibility"



Source: [@grupomodelomx](#) Instagram

- Grupo Modelo localizes "Cheers to Bars" AB InBev's global World Cup platform, framed as a campaign to help bars socially and economically since they are "the heartbeat of every neighborhood."
- As part of the Mundial Social México program, Grupo Modelo promotes its efforts to train "Modelo Guardians" to serve alcohol "responsibly" at restaurants, bars and other points of sale inside and outside of stadiums.

Grupo Modelo 10 June at 23:15 · 🌐

Previo a la [#CopaMundialFIFA](#) capacitamos a los Guardianes Modelo de la venta responsable. 🍻🇲🇪

Los estadios de Ciudad de México, Guadalajara y Monterrey, fueron las sedes mundialistas donde llevamos nuestro taller que brinda herramientas a tenderos, restauranteros y vendedores para tomar decisiones conscientes y mejorar el servicio a cliente a través de la prohibición de venta de alcohol a menores.

Juntos contribuimos a que los fans del fútbol disfruten un Mundial con más momentos positivos. [#SomosModelo](#) [See less](#)

See translation



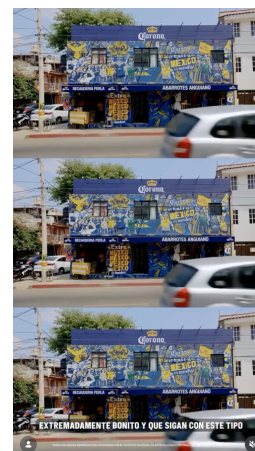
Source: [Grupo Modelo](#) Facebook

Using public spaces to promote alcohol



Source: [@michelobultramx](#) + [@campomarte26](#) Instagram

- For the entirety of the tournament Michelob Ultra holds branded physical territory in Mexico's host cities. It anchors a "Zona Michelob Ultra" inside Campo Marte 26 Santander, the ticketed fan festival in Mexico City's Campo Marte (June 11–July 19), despite [protests from local residents](#) citing the 2 a.m. closing time and use of military green space for sale of alcohol.
- [More than 500 people](#) gathered in Jardín Juárez in central Mexico City for Don Julio's World Cup activation to try to break open a giant ice football, representing the brand's signature 70 over ice, to reach World Cup tickets sealed within. Narration was provided by campaign frontman [Christian Martinoli](#), TV Azteca's lead commentator and the voice behind the most famous "gol" call.
- Corona's multi-platform "[El Extra de México es Mundial](#)" campaign fuses the brand with Mexican national identity and the country's pride as the only three-time World Cup host. It includes a promotion letting fans win match tickets by scanning bottle caps, driving purchasing directly tied to the tournament, and 50+ branded murals painted near stadiums.



Source: [@corona_mx](#) and [@grupomodelomx](#) Instagram

Placed to be Replayed: How Alcohol Branding Follows Young Fans From Stadium to Digital Screen

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 placement in the 2026 World Cup is designed similarly: AB InBev's Michelob Ultra holds the official beer sponsorship, and its branded "Superior Player of the Match" trophy is presented after every one of the tournament's 100+ matches, putting a beer logo inside the broadcast of football's most replayed moments. In Mexico, the [tournament's biggest moments](#)—every national team match and the final—air on free, open television, where children make up [14% of the audience](#). Those same moments are clipped and replayed across Instagram, as well as YouTube and TikTok (platforms FIFA has named [preferred partners](#) for the tournament), where Mexican adolescents already [spend hours every day](#). A beer-branded trophy shown once on television becomes dozens of highlights in a teenager's social media feed.



Source: [@michelobultramx](#) Instagram

Key Takeaways

Alcohol brands aren't just sponsoring Mexico's World Cup: They are fusing themselves with national identity, taking over the streets of host cities and operating from within the World Cup social impact program. This is not a game.

For parents:

When kids tune in to the World Cup, they will see a beer logo on the trophy after every match and on pitch-side boards in the stadium, on their favorite goalkeeper's Instagram and in the highlights flooding their feeds. Yet, the science is clear: This exposure to advertisement makes them more likely to consume alcohol.

For communities:

When match-day alcohol consumption surges and the industry counts its sales, it increases the risk of violence and disorder in the streets, while at home, where millions tune in to games, the harm falls disproportionately on women and children.

For decision-makers:

Every time alcohol executives are invited into government forums, WHO's proven policies to reduce alcohol harm—higher taxes, marketing restrictions, reduced availability—are less likely to be adopted. Mexico can host a World Cup for a historic third time without handing the tournament's biggest victory to the alcohol industry.

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 11) 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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