

The Industry, Marketing and Advertising

Vaping



The Marketing and Promotion of Vapes

There are concerns about the marketing and promotion of vaping devices and how these may appeal to children and young people.

Vapes come in many different flavours and colours, with packaging and designs that can be very attractive to young people, like cartoon characters on the packaging and devices designed to look like everyday items such as highlighter pens.

Disposable (single-use) vapes were previously cheap, accessible, and popular among young people, leading to a sharp rise in youth vaping. Because of their affordability, appeal, and environmental harm, the sale and supply of disposable vapes is now banned in Wales (since June 2025) under new environmental regulations.

This can be confusing as it can look like vapes are suitable for children and young people. However, vapes should not be used by children and young people, and it is illegal to sell nicotine containing vapes to anyone under 18.



Industry Tactics

To help secure the tobacco industry's long-term future, transnational tobacco companies (TTCs) have invested in, developed and marketed various new nicotine and tobacco products including e-cigarettes/vapes.

Tobacco companies have referred to newer products such as vapes as 'next generation products'. The vapes market is rapidly evolving to create innovative and appealing products, such as vapes with Bluetooth capability and digital screens to customise settings, and vapes where the flavours can be adjusted.

Vape/e-cigarette advertising on television, radio, and in newspapers and magazines is restricted (see [22 Electronic cigarettes - ASA | CAP](#)). However these restrictions are not as extensive as those applied to tobacco products (see [Section 21 of the ASA code](#)).



Marketing Tactics

Industry marketing has frequently linked to latest trends and events, for example using 'victory' as a theme for cigarette adverts during World War I, and using 'torches for freedom' language to encourage women to smoke at the same time as women's efforts to secure equality with men and the vote in the 1920s.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, tobacco and vape companies donated medical equipment and PPE to hospitals in many countries of the world as part of corporate social responsibility efforts to build a positive public image.

Vape and tobacco companies use media influencers to advertise to younger users and non-smokers. You may have seen reels on social media sites such as TikTok and Instagram introducing new flavours and designs.

The vape industry also targets younger age groups by sponsoring events aimed at young people and giving out free samples, for example at music festivals.



What are the links between tobacco companies and vape companies?

As the harms of cigarettes have become better understood and laws and regulations have been tightened, tobacco company profits have started to shrink.

Tobacco companies began buying existing e-cigarette brands and developing their own e-cigarette products from 2012.

Tobacco companies are well placed to take advantage of the fast-growing vaping market. They have established distribution points and the money to resource and cover the costs of marketing.





GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales