

Memo

To: Professor Foster
From: [REDACTED]
Date: February 11, 2019
Re: Find the PR

In January, the e-cigarette company, Juul, released a series of advertisements targeted at adults currently addicted to traditional, combustible cigarettes. A January 8, 2019 article on TechCrunch entitled "Juul Launches 'Make the Switch' TV Campaign Aimed at Adult Smokers," addresses the company's plan to market to adult tobacco smokers. Juul, a company launched in 2015, owns 68% of the vaping market.¹ However, its success has been tempered by criticism from the Food and Drug Administration after a 77% surge in the use of e-cigarettes by high school students from 2017 to 2018.² The FDA attributes this increase to Juul's use of flavors like mango, crème brûlée, and fruit that appeal to teens. The FDA ordered Juul, and other e-cigarette manufacturers, to devise a plan to combat underage use of their products, and this article concerns the company's effort to spread the word about its new initiative to advertise only to its target market--tobacco smokers looking to quit.³

A key message of the article is that Juul does not want teens using its product. According to Juul's spokesperson and co-founder James Monsees, underage use is a problem the company wants to resolve: "It doesn't do us any favors. Any underage consumers using this product are absolutely a negative for our business. We don't want them. We will never market to them. We never have." The article notes that Juul spent the last year combating underage use by changing its social media channels to feature only adult smokers and then deleted all marketing through Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. It also removed all non-cigarette flavored pods from all sellers except its own website, which requires age verification.

The other key message is that Juul's target market is adults trying to quit smoking. Juul's new ads now feature older adults who are looking to quit tobacco smoking by using Juul. These ads will only be featured on cable after 10 p.m. Monsees indicated that teen Juul users are actually a distraction for the company and end up "stealing life years from adult cigarette consumers at this moment, and that's a shame." The article not only provides samples of these new ads but reviews them positively: "These ads seem to be a step in the right direction for the company. Studies have shown that Juul is effective in helping adult smokers switch from combustible cigarettes." The article provides a link to a study on Juul's website conducted by Juul's Lab which found that 40% of the participants had completely switched from combustible cigarettes in 30 days.

Juul benefits from this article's focus on its new advertising campaign. The article lists all the measures taken by Juul to avoid targeting teens (such as eliminating ads on social media and removing flavored pods from its sales channels) and stresses its focus on the older, cigarette smoking market. The article also cites a study stating that Juul is effective in helping tobacco cigarette smokers switch (without explaining that the study was commissioned by Juul Labs). These points are consistent with the core message on Juul's website, which states in several places that its mission is "to improve the lives of the world's one billion adult smokers by eliminating cigarettes." In its marketing and social media code on its website, Juul also stresses that their product "is not appropriate or intended for youth." This article supports Juul's new marketing campaign by reiterating their renewed focus on cigarette smokers rather than teens.

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1. LaVito, A. "Popular e-Cigarette Juul's Sales Have Surged Almost 800 Percent over the Last Year." *CNBC*. July 2018.
 2. LaVito, A. "Juul e-Cigarettes Get a Bad Rap for Surge in Teen Use. But Some Adults Vape to Help Quit Smoking." *CNBC*. Nov. 2018.
 3. Kaplan, S and Hoffman, J. "FDA Seeks Restrictions on Teens' Access to Flavored E-Cigarettes and a Ban on Menthol Cigarettes." *The New York Times*. Nov. 2018.

Article:

<https://techcrunch.com/2019/01/08/juul-launches-make-the-switch-tv-campaign-aimed-at-adult-smokers/>