

Consumers Choose Cans

Research shows consumers want a great tasting, easy drinking, environmentally friendly pack format

New research shows that the overall consumer perception of drinks cans have improved since 2007, with cans of soft drinks and beer seen as offering “good value for money” and “freshness”, as well as delivering a “recyclable pack” which is “easy to drink from”. According to the research conducted by GfK on behalf of the Can Makers, cans are also seen to contain the “right amount” of drink and to keep a drink “colder”.

72% of respondents think drinks taste “fresh” in cans, compared with 51% in 2007. 49% of respondents also think that cans are “good value” and 55% think cans contain the right amount of a beverage, compared with 42% in 2007. In the case of beer, Medium and Large cans are the most popular. For Carbonated Soft Drinks (CSDs), single serves in medium and large multipacks are the most popular. All age groups are drinking from cans more often, but particularly males and 14-17 year olds, where 75% are choosing cans compared with 62% in 2007. The results also show that more people than ever before are drinking from cans on the move. (Note: see PDF chart attached).

More people are also drinking CSDs, 77% in 2011 compared with 67% in 2007. CSDs are popular amongst consumers who are on the move and 60% of respondents drink one to two cans or more a week, up from 48% in 2007. When asked about what contributes to their purchasing decision, the research showed that younger people are very influenced by up-to-date styles. 27% of them think cans look “cool and trendy”, compared with 13% in 2007. Unsurprisingly, in this tough economic environment, respondents aged 35-54 are most price conscious, with 69% not wanting to pay a premium for their drink.

Recycling is growing in importance to consumers, with 53% of all respondents saying that environmental considerations are “very or quite important” when making a purchase of take home beer or CSDs. 63% of those surveyed in the UK think that beverage cans are “recyclable, 100% recyclable or reused”, compared with only 40% in Spain and 41% in France. The group most concerned with recycling was those aged 35-54, where 60% said they recycle all they can, compared with 35% of 14-17 year. Asked about how to encourage recycling, 81% of people said “more bins in public places” suggesting convenience is a key motivator.

Geoff Courtney, chairman of the Can Makers said: “It is encouraging to see that the positive marketing of drinks in cans has been recognised by consumers. In only four years since the last research was conducted, consumers



have recognised more and more that the can is an ideal pack to drink from, whether on the move or at home.

Seeing that consumers are increasingly recognising the importance of recycling, specifically the drinks can, is also a great achievement. However, with one in five finding it difficult to recycle, more needs to be done to ensure that drinks cans do not go to waste”.

The research is a follow up study to one conducted in 2007 into attitudes of consumers towards drinks packaging.

The sample was demographically representative of 14-54 year olds who drank carbonated soft drinks (CSDs), energy, sports drinks and beer (aged 18 and over).

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UK Can Makers

Members of The Can Makers work together specifically to promote the benefits of the drinks can and aid communications between the industry and its customers: the brewers and soft drinks manufacturers and the retailers, as well as the packaging industry, the media and consumers.

The Can Makers Information Service acts as the reference point for data and advice on the beverage can and the can manufacturing industry. Amongst its services is the issue of a regular newsletter and the publication of special reports on research activities. Consumer opinion and industry research forms an important part of the Can Makers programme.

The Can Makers was the first organisation in Europe formed to promote drinks cans. It is now part of a European network set up under the auspices of Beverage Can Makers Europe (BCME), which includes similar organisations in France, Germany and Spain.