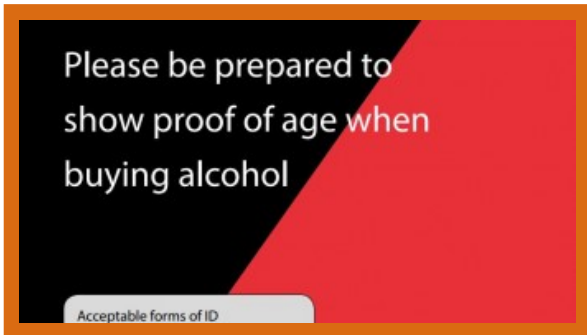




Challenge 25



Objective

To tackle the serious issue of underage sales and underage drinking.

Description

In 2005, retailers in the UK were challenged by the then Government to do more to tackle the serious issue of underage sales and underage drinking. The formation of the Retail of Alcohol Standards Group, and the development of the Challenge 21 (subsequently Challenge 25), was a direct result of that challenge. The challenge 25 scheme is now commonplace in supermarkets, independent retailers and in the on-trade throughout the UK.

Challenge 25 is a retailing strategy that encourages anyone who is over 18 but looks under 25 to carry acceptable ID when buying alcohol. Challenge 21 is mainly used by the on-trade while challenge 25 has been adopted by the off-trade. The increased age check requirement was developed as a way of giving staff a buffer zone should they not be able to accurately guess the age of a customer. This was on the basis that if you guess the wrong age at 25, you are less likely to make a mistake and serve someone underage than if you are guessing at 18.

Challenge 25 was an important cultural change for organisations. It is not simply an ID scheme; there are several additional components that go into making the scheme effective by looking to raising the overall standards of those that sell alcohol. These components include:

- Training - Retailers that adopt Challenge 25 ensure that the scheme is accompanied by a programme to regularly train staff in its application. This helps to ensure that staff are confident in making challenges and that the policy is consistently applied in store;
- Display - Posters are placed in prominent places in the store to advertise that Challenge 25 is operational. This helps not only to deter potential underage customers, but also acts as a

back up to staff members who make challenges;

- Staff support- Challenge 25 only works if staff have confidence that the decisions they make will not be undermined by management. Therefore in the operation of the scheme, decisions that are made by frontline staff are not challenged or overturned by management;
- Keeping records - The operation of Challenge 25 encourages the keeping of records of all the failed attempts to buy alcohol of those without ID who look under 25, this helps licencees with police or trading standards operations ;
- Clarity on acceptable ID - There are hundreds of forms of ID used in the UK and this can make it difficult for retailers to know what to accept. The standard Challenge 25 scheme suggests accepting Passports, Driver's Licences and PASS approved cards. While individual premises can accept any ID within the law, if they chose to accept the Challenge 25 standard this is clearly highlighted on all posters and ensures consistent application of the scheme.

Posters, shelf barkers and badges have been developed to reinforce the message throughout stores, that people who are attempting to buy alcohol and who look under 25, will be asked for ID. The signage, in red and black, adds a fresh and striking look and makes it clear that under 25s must now expect to be challenged to prove their age. It also spells out the heavy fines which could follow for those caught breaking the law.

Partners

A joint action by the Retail of Alcohol Standards Group:

Aldi UK & Ireland

Asda Stores

Association of Convenience Stores

The Co-operative

Home Bargains

Lidl UK

Marks and Spencer

Sainsbury's Supermarkets

Spar (UK)

Tesco Stores

Waitrose

Wine and Spirit Trade Association

WM Morrison Supermarkets

Results

Challenge 25 is operating in at least 12,500 supermarket stores in the UK.

An average of 68 full and part time workers are trained each year, in every store in the UK, meaning an estimated 850,000 people a year are trained to enforce challenge.

Around 11m people have been challenged through Challenge 25 and similar schemes.

While Challenge 25 has been championed by the supermarkets, its reach has grown further

and it is now increasingly prevalent in the independent retail sector.

The scheme is being promoted further through the work of organisations like the Association of Convenience Stores, who sit on the Retail of Alcohol Standards Group, that promote the scheme. Additionally, with local areas more likely to place Challenge 25 as a licensing condition on the application for an independent store, compared to a pub or bar, Challenge 25 is now seen as the standard for the off trade.

Measurement & evaluation

The evidence used to compile the June 2014 report (attached) includes a review of evidence on underage sales and drinking, including evidence from the Department of Health, Usdaw, European School Survey Project, Serve Legal and others; a survey of 4,000 people in the UK conducted by polling firm Yougov; a focus group of checkout operators and managers at a Retail of Alcohol Standards Group member supermarket; a survey of Retail of Alcohol Standards Group members as well as evidence from the day to day operation of RASG. Key findings:

- 67% of the public, including 86% of 18-24 year olds, are aware of Challenge 25;
- 79% either strongly support (51%) or tend to support (29%) retailers adopting Challenge 25;
- 65% of shop workers have been subjected to verbal abuse as a result of asking for ID;
- Two retailers reported that 25% of their licences contain a condition to run Challenge 25;
- Analysis shows off trade test purchasing pass rate was 79% compared to 69% for on trade;
- Only 4% of under-age consumers would attempt to obtain alcohol from a large supermarket main till compared to the 74% that would attempt to obtain alcohol from their parents;
- Young Adults drinking in the last week has fallen 8% since Challenge 25's introduction;

Since Challenge 21 was introduced consumption by 16-24 year olds has dropped by 24%.

Website

<http://rasg.org.uk/about/#top>

Downloads

Photo gallery



of age wh
cohol

Documents

Challenge 25 Report 2014 (pdf - 1.23 Mo)

Challenge 25 poster (pdf - 0.02 Mo)