



facts about smoking and the import scene

Who cares about the import car scene?

- **Big Tobacco wants more customers - Import car culture has easy targets:** “Import car culture” is a massive demographic of young people who engage in car shows, racing, and auto body customizing. It is a scene with incredible consumer potential and rapid growth for corporations, including tobacco companies.
- **Perception that tobacco is intertwined with import car culture.** Furthermore, at every car show in the last 2 years where we asked about this association, over 50% believed that “most Asian import racers smoke cigarettes.” This suggests that the belief everyone is smoking is quite strong in this population and viewed as the norm.
- **“Camel Car Culture Event” targeting import car enthusiasts.** Camel representatives promote their deadly products and invite young import car tuners to their tobacco events. To collect young import tuner’s personal information and to lure new smokers, they gave out free dinners, movie tickets, cigarette coupons, and car show passes, to name a few. (RIDE research and interviews).
- **Import car culture is the next big marketing phenomenon:** this same underground cultural phenomenon has fueled the blockbuster films “Fast and The Furious,” its sequel “2 Fast 2 Furious”, FOX’s “FastLane,” and an MTV special featuring the lives of young car tuners and racers.



Tobacco Industry van handing free samples at car show

RIDE's Survey Shows...

among Asian and Pacific Islander respondents aged 18-24 yrs:

- two-thirds own an Asian import car — many more than in the general sample
- smoke significantly more than the overall sample, with 17.6% smoking every day compared to 12.3% overall
- are more interested in quitting (83.9%) or cutting down than those not in the target audience (71.9%)
- were more likely to agree that most Asian import racers smoke cigarettes than the sample as a whole
- are more likely to allow smoking in their cars than the general sample

A total of 2,084 questionnaires were collected from attendees at the Vietnamese Tet Festival in February 2002, the Hot Import Nights car show in April 2002, and Hot Import Nights one year later in April 2003. Analyses looked at both the overall sample as well as the 18-24 year old Asian/Pacific Islander target audience subgroup.

- According to the Specialty Equipment Market Association, young import tuners bought \$1.5 billion in parts in 2001, an increase of 25 percent from 2000. That figure is expected to increase by close to 60% and hit \$2.5 billion in 2002.¹
- At the heart of the import scene, and central to a major part of RIDE’s intervention, are “car shows” or “car expos,” enormous exhibitions of personalized cars and retailers. According to The New York Times (10/23/02) car shows attract up to 20,000 visitors at each location.
- In California alone, there are over 30 car shows per year. Extreme Imports AutoFest and Hot Import Nights (HIN) events attract a mostly API crowd in the thousands.² With its overwhelming participation by Asian Americans, especially males and youth, the import car scene is an ideal tobacco industry target.

¹ The New York Times, 10/23/02.
² Asian Week, 6/21/01.



facts about smoking and asian americans and young adults

Why Asian Americans and young adults?

- **Big Tobacco targets us:** Over 500,000 pages of tobacco industry documents reveal 15 years of targeted marketing to Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities. ³A Lorillard memo described API's as a "potential gold mine."⁴



Tobacco Industry targeting its products to Asian and Pacific Islanders.

- RJR internal documents state that 18-24 year olds are (1) "smokers of the future" and (2) "major factor in Philip Morris' continued growth."⁵ **After 1995, the 18 -24 age group showed the greatest increase in smoking prevalence, and is the only group with a trend that has continued to rise after 1998.**



- **Alarmingly high smoking rates.** The California Department of Health Services⁶ (TCS) Report of 18-24 year old smoking prevalence shows that in 2005 the smoking rate for men was 22%. The RIDE Participants were much higher at 34% for the same year.
- **More young Asians are smoking:** Asian Americans saw a seven-fold increase, the largest increase among any ethnic group in smoking rates from 7th to 12th grade (American Legacy Foundation, 2001).

- Smoking among Asians moves from the lowest in the 6th grade (3.8 %) to the second highest by the 12th grade (33.1%, highest is White), (1999 National Youth Tobacco Survey).

Why focus on smoking?

- **Smoking is the #1 cause of preventable death in America** and kills more people than cars, AIDS, homicides, and wars combined. Smoking has claimed an estimated 430,700 deaths each year.⁷ Smoking can cause lung cancer, heart disease, sexual dysfunction, birth defects, asthma, emphysema, and other diseases.
- Nicotine is as addictive as heroin and cocaine.
- Secondhand smoke is equally harmful. Over 38,000 people have died from secondhand smoke related lung cancer and heart disease.⁸ Non-smokers can be afflicted with lung cancer, increased asthma, heart disease and other respiratory illnesses from secondhand smoke.



A tobacco company promoting its products to Asians and Pacific Islanders through religion.

³ Pacific Business News, 9/3/02, <http://pacific.bizjournals.com/pacific/stories/2002/09/02/daily18.html>.

⁴ Rogers & Associates.

⁵ M Muggali, R Pollay, R Lew and Anne Joseph, Tobacco Control.

⁶ Asian American Targeted for Tobacco Promotion, 9/1/02, Inter Press Service.

⁷ California Department of Health Services—Tobacco Control Section. 18—24 year Old Smoking Prevalence (<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/tobacco>)

⁸ American Lung Association, www.lungusa.org, 2003.



facts about tobacco sponsorship and advertising

**Why take a stand against tobacco sponsorship & advertising?
Would you allow a gun company to sponsor your booth?**

- According to a Hot Import Nights (HIN) organizer on April 03, 2003 the Tobacco industry approached HIN regarding sponsoring their import car events. No tobacco sponsorship has been made yet.



- Sponsorship is a key Big Tobacco strategy to keep people from getting organized: Internal tobacco documents Asian directed marketing which emphasizes “Direct marketing of specific cigarette brand through community cultural events, youth oriented promotion”⁹ and “corporate sponsorship aimed at key organizations and community events.”¹⁰

- Replacement smokers. \$34.2 million Every DAY. Millions of Dollars. That’s how much Big Tobacco spends EVERY DAY on sponsorship and marketing to get new smokers to replace the ones that...die.



A car event sponsored by a tobacco company.

Big Tobacco uses sponsorship and ad dollars to:

- bring over large markets of new smokers by associating their brands with popular activities
- perpetuate a false impression that tobacco is intertwined with society,
- keep people and organizations out of anti-tobacco efforts for fear of losing tobacco dollars,



An import car contest organized by a tobacco company.

- The famous 1971-2003 NASCAR Winston Cup (newly renamed as the Nextel Cup) is an example of tobacco sponsorship. Tobacco has historically paid for placement in movies, sponsored sporting events such as the Salem Tennis Open, and sponsored arts and cultural events - all to promote a product that kills 430,700 Americans each year.

- Tobacco promotion is just plain WRONG -given how deadly smoking is for people and profitable it is for the tobacco industry. Some people are getting very rich by getting other folks very sick.