Generation Game: Are Younger LDA Consumers Becoming More Selective in Their Drinking Habits?

by The IWSR Drinks Market Analysis, www.theiwsr.com

IWSR consumer research shows a nuanced global picture with participation rates stable and some signs of diminishing abstinence, but also a narrowing of repertoires among the crucial Gen Z and Millennial age cohorts.

While younger consumers are now actively engaging with beverage alcohol around the world, there are signs that they are becoming more selective in their purchase choices, but trends are highly diverse, with notable variations by market and age group.

According to IWSR Bevtrac consumer research conducted across 15 (T15) markets in September 2025, the trend towards drinking across multiple categories on the same occasion has reversed, with younger cohorts — who typically have the broadest repertoires — showing less propensity to mix than in September 2024. This trend is particularly notable among Gen Z consumers in Brazil, India, Mexico and Spain; and among Millennials in Canada, China, Germany, Italy, Taiwan and the U.S.

"Category participation remains stable year-on-year and higher than in September 2023 among Gen Z, narrowing the gap with all adults," said IWSR's Marten Lodewijks. "Even so, Gen Z is becoming more selective, with the average number of categories consumed per occasion dropping from 2.8 to 1.8 in the past two years."

Gen Z: engaged but selective

According to Bevtrac's September 2025 research, 74% of Gen Z consumers across the T15 markets now participate in beverage alcohol, up from 72% in September 2023. The strongest participation gains have come in Taiwan, the U.K., India, Brazil and France.

However, the trend has plateaued or even reversed in other markets, including the U.S., South Africa and Canada.

At the same time, the beverage alcohol participation gap for Gen Z versus all adults has narrowed from nine percentage points (9pp) to 3pp since spring 2023, although it has now stabilized. In Taiwan and China, Gen Z participation rates are now higher than those recorded for all LDA+ consumers; elsewhere, the smallest participation gaps occur in the U.S. (1pp) and India (2pp), and the largest in Japan (18pp) and France (12pp).

On-premise consumption remains a key dynamic for Gen Z: according to Bevtrac research, 39% of all drinkers visited the on-premise on their last consumption occasion, compared to 46% for Gen Z. "Despite the general decline in on-premise participation, Gen Z drinkers remain more likely to consume in the on-premise across Europe, North America, Australia, South Africa and Japan, although the opposite is true in China," said Lodewijks.

Mindful Millennials' diverse dynamics

Millennials remain a crucial age cohort for beverage alcohol brand owners, but Bevtrac research shows a highly fragmented picture, with trends varying from market to market.

continued on page 2

NABCA Explores AI & Supply Chain in Beverage Alcohol

by NABCA

Supply Chain and IT Experts from Heaven Hill Brands & Info-Tech Research Group share insights.

The delicate balance of AI in supply chain and beverage alcohol have become more apparent to consumers since COVID. Its impact carries on with the economic conditions of today.

The National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA) continues its exploration of AI in beverage alcohol, this time focusing on supply chain and this now widely used technology. For this article, NABCA collaborated with IT and supply chain experts from Heaven Hill Brands and Info-Tech Research Group. The articles, The Intricate Interplay of Supply Chain and AI Dependency in Beverage Alcohol Parts I and II, look at adoption, integration and AI's ability to manage and predict risk, as well as its pitfalls, efficiency and ROI.

Interviewed were George Wilson, JD, MBA, End-to-End (E2E) Supply Chain Leader Specializing in Process Excellence and Digital Transformation, Heaven Hill Brands; and Shreyas Shukla, Principal Research Director, Manufacturing, Info-Tech Research Group.

The first written article of this AI series, AI in The Beverage Alcohol Marketplace – Simply the Basics set the tone and explored its nuance in beverage alcohol including its value, benefits, potential uses, areas of growth and challenges. It also outlined considerations when choosing AI tools, the people needed on the AI development team and general tips for embracing AI. So far, six AI and beverage alcohol articles have been published.

These are the links for information about NABCA, Heaven Hill Brands and Info-Tech Research Group.

NABCA January 2026 Control States Results

Control States began the year with January 9L volume declining -2.1% and $Vol decreasing -3.7%, resulting in a negative price mix of -1.6%. The volume decline was partially attributable to four fewer selling days in Michigan, the second-largest spirits control state. This was partially offset by three additional selling days in Utah, for a net loss of one selling day across the system. On a rolling 12-month basis, spirits finished down -1.6% in 9L volume and -3.1% in $Vol,

continued on page 2

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