

# Gay-oriented magazines set for Southern Comfort ads

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Ads for Brown-Forman Corp.'s Southern Comfort liqueur will appear in gay-oriented magazines for the first time next month.

Jim Murphy, senior brand manager for Southern Comfort, said the ads in *Out* and *Genre* magazines fit Southern Comfort's marketing plan.

"Our marketing strategy for the brand is males, and we look at the gay community as a subset of that group," he said. "We also have feedback from our field salespeople that we already have a franchise within the gay community."

Southern Comfort joins several other well-known brands in courting gay consumers.

Absolut Vodka, Miller Lite, Hiram Walker and Evian already advertise in gay-oriented publications.

And *Out* magazine announced yesterday that its next issue will also include ads for Philips Consumer Electronics, Dewars scotch and Apple computers.

Marketing-research firms have estimated that the gay and lesbian market spends about \$500 billion a year.

It's also an affluent market. The average annual income of a gay household is more than \$51,000, among the highest of any market niche, according to *Overlooked Opinions*, a Chicago market-research firm.

Murphy of Southern Comfort said there was some concern among company executives about how the ads would be perceived by the general public.

"I think attitudes about the gay community are changing, but I'm not denying that some people might be appalled that we are supporting the gay community," he said.

Murphy said the two magazines meet the company's standards for editorial quality.

"There are some gay publications that we wouldn't go into because they are too raunchy," he said.

And Murphy said the ads make sense from a business standpoint.

"My job is to sell more whiskey," he said. "We're doing this primarily for business reasons, not to promote or validate the lifestyle. If you take the sexual side out of this, gays are a very strong market."

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