



Bud Light Sales Crash Worsens in Latest Week Since Dylan Mulvaney Fiasco

Description

The latest industry figures show that Bud Light's sales slump deepened into May as the fallout from the brand's engagement with transgender influencer Dylan Mulvaney continues to hammer Bud Light's bottom line.

Sales volumes of Bud Light fell by 23.6 percent in the week ended on May 6, according to retail scanner numbers cited by Beer Business Daily that are based on Nielsen IQ data.

That's a drop from the 23.3 percent slide Bud Light suffered in the final week of April.

"Trends aren't getting much worse, but certainly not getting any better either," Beer Business Daily said in a commentary on the data, which represented a further decline from the 23.3 percent sales drop Bud Light suffered in the last week of April.

Meanwhile, sales volumes for Anheuser-Busch, the company that makes Bud Light, fell 9.7 percent in the first week of May, a slight improvement over the 11.4 percent drop the week prior, the industry data showed.

Anheuser-Busch did not immediately return a request for comment.

Mulvaney Controversy

The controversy that has hit Bud Light's bottom line was sparked by the promotion of the brand by Mulvaney, a male who identifies as a woman.

A number of prominent conservative figures have called for a boycott over Mulvaney's marketing engagement with Bud Light, which involved a custom-made beer can featuring Mulvaney's face emblazoned on it.

Mulvaney, who has over 10 million followers on TikTok, posted a series of videos advertising Bud Light and showing off the personalized can.

The social media influencer rose to fame for chronicling a transition he dubbed “365 Days of Girlhood.”

“This month I celebrated my day 365 of womanhood and Bud Light sent me possibly the best gift ever—a can with my face on it,” Mulvaney said on April Fool’s Day.

Mulvaney’s engagement with Bud Light sparked outrage among many conservatives, some of whom accused the brand of promoting a transgender agenda and called for a boycott.

Singer Kid Rock used Bud Light cans as target practice to express his anger at the promotional campaign, while Florida governor Ron DeSantis [said he](#) would be boycotting Bud Light.

Former President Donald Trump also weighed in on the controversy, suggesting boycotts can be an effective way to send a message to brands whose critics say are pushing a leftist agenda.

“It’s time to beat the Radical Left at their own game,” Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social earlier in May. “Money does talk—Anheuser-Busch now understands that.”

‘Bud Light Crisis’

Anheuser-Busch CEO Michel Doukeris told the Financial Times in a recent interview that the boycott was driven by “misinformation and confusion” circulating on social media.

Doukeris insisted that Mulvaney’s involvement wasn’t part of an official Bud Light marketing campaign.

“It was one post. It was not an advertisement,” Doukeris told the outlet.

The Anheuser-Busch chief said that viral videos of billboards with images of the Bud Light can with Mulvaney’s face on it inserted “electronically” had been circulated on social media and viewed by millions of people.

“It was just like pure social media creation,” Doukeris said, insisting that it “had nothing to do with Bud Light.”

Doukeris said it was never Bud Light’s intention to mass-produce cans with Mulvaney’s likeness on them for sale to the broader public.

Amid the backlash, two Bud Light executives—Alissa Heinerscheid and Daniel Blake—took leaves of absence, though the company did not say whether the departures were connected with the Mulvaney disaster.

Anheuser-Busch InBev had its stock downgraded recently by an HSBC analyst who said the firm is in the midst of a “Bud Light crisis.”

HSBC analyst Carlos Laboy downgraded the company’s stock to “hold,” saying there are “deeper problems” than Anheuser-Busch admits after its marketing engagement with the transgender influencer

became a hot topic.

As the fallout from the Mulvaney partnership gathered steam, Brendan Whitworth, the chief executive of Anheuser-Busch's U.S. operations, issued a statement in mid-April saying that the company "never intended to be part of a discussion that divides people." He stopped short of explicitly mentioning Mulvaney or the campaign, however.

While President Joe Biden has not addressed the controversy, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre alleged that calls for the Bud Light boycott had led to bomb threats and that it "has to stop."

"We should be able to speak out, and others should be able to speak out, against hate and discrimination," the press secretary told reporters at a briefing last month.

In an apparent bid to take some sting out of the controversy, Anheuser-Busch released a patriotic ad on social media that featured American flags and iconic landmarks.

The ad was met with a mixed response, however, with some online users denouncing it as a hypocritical attempt to win back conservatives outraged by the Mulvaney partnership.

by Tom Ozimek

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