



## Market

With an annual turnover of almost one billion euros (Source: MEMRB Retail Audit), the beer market is the most competitive in Romania. Seen as a real battleground, the competition involves some of the biggest international breweries and tough local competitors. For three years in a row, beer has been the market sector making the highest investments in media and advertising (Source: Alfa Cont Rate Card Analysis). Market data shows that the Romanian beer market amounts to 15.3 million hectolitres, with 4 to 6% growth anticipated during the coming years. In terms of overall output, Interbrew produces some 2.6 million hectolitres, with Bergenbier representing almost half of this figure. Stella Artois, Beck's, Lowenbrau and Noroc, along with two imported Belgian specialties, Leffe and Hoegaarden, make up the rest of Interbrew's production.

As a well-known market player, Bergenbier acts in the mainstream segment, which holds accounts for 40% of the total beer market. This is the segment most disputed by the breweries, due to the fact that it offers an optimum balance between volume and profitability. Despite the dynamics of the overall market, market share growth is slow and demands a serious struggle. To improve its position on this market, every beer producer depends upon a deep understanding of the sector; perceptive insights into consumers' needs, their behaviour and preferences. And Bergenbier makes no exception. Bergenbier is one of the most well-loved beer brands in Romania. It has a well-developed brand equity, captured in an extremely powerful slogan: "Friends know why". Since 1998, Bergenbier has been the official sponsor of the Romanian national football team.

## Achievements

Bergenbier has been awarded prizes in some of the most important competitions in the communication

industry. Out of the awards won over the years, it's worth mentioning the ones awarded in advertising competitions.

In March 2006, Bergenbier achieved a record number of awarded campaigns in the EFFIE Awards festival. The EFFIE Award is one of the most significant international awards, dedicated to efficiency in advertising. Together with the Leo Burnett advertising agency, Bergenbier was awarded the Grand EFFIE for the most efficient campaign, entitled "Friends Know Why".

Besides the Grand EFFIE, two more Golden EFFIE awards, one in the alcoholic beverages category and the other in the FMCG category, were granted to Bergenbier, as an expression of its success on the market. And, to complete the picture of the brand's accomplishments, Bergenbier took home a Silver EFFIE in the alcoholic beverages category, with the campaign "Now or never", developed together with the McCann Erickson advertising agency. The innovative advertising campaign was perfectly adapted to the brand strategy, succeeding in re-orienting consumers towards the brand, in a way that has led to long term sales. The advertising

campaign was built upon the fact that Bergenbier needed to express more than friendship, and especially needed to communicate the brand attributes that created a brand world in consumers' minds. Bergenbier is mainly associated with the world of men and speaks about masculinity and male complicity.

These successes in the EFFIE awards not only indicated sales growths, but also a substantial development of the brand's attributes.

After the EFFIE event, there came the Ad'Or Festival. Bergenbier again walked away with an award, receiving the prize for Best TV Commercial in the alcoholic beverages category. The Bergenbier communication platform was always focused



around two main pillars. The first is friendship, expressed through the slogan "Friends know why", the best-known slogan in the beer category. The second is football, as Bergenbier is the main sponsor of the Romanian National Football Team. Both directions of communicating the brand identity were awarded at the EFFIE Festival. After the campaign "Friends know why", Bergenbier again became the best-selling beer in Romania and ranked first in beer awareness. It should be noted that, besides the advertising campaigns, the success of the "Friends know why" campaign was achieved thanks to excellence in execution, the efforts of the marketing and sales teams, as well as the entire organisation, which facilitated the successful implementation of all phases of the project.

Bergenbier's next daring goal is to become the incontestable leader of the Romanian beer market. Bergenbier's advantages in pursuing this goal are charisma and consistency in communication, excellence at the point of sale and its continual focus on the consumer. However, the most important award for the brand is, in short, the consumer's positive attitude and continuously increasing consumption of its branded products.

## History

The first batch of Bergenbier was brewed in May 1995, at Blaj, in the heart of the Transylvania region. Today, the Blaj factory continues to produce Bergenbier, using the best natural ingredients and spring water captured from Petrești source, situated in the Sebeș Mountains. It was the first beer brand produced by Interbrew on the Romanian market. The quality of the beer and the attributes of the Bergenbier brand won its awareness very quickly. Today, Bergenbier is the number one beer in Romania both in terms of sales and awareness

(Source: MEMRB & Synovate). Interbrew continues to be the best selling brand in the country, being considered the growth driver of the company on the local market.

Throughout its eleven-year existence, Bergenbier has continually maintained its quality standards and simultaneously became part of consumers' lives; it has been alongside friends in their important moments and never far from supporters when cheering on the Romanian national football team. Since 1998, Bergenbier has been more than an ordinary sponsor for the Romanian national squad: it has been a trustworthy and a reliable partner; consequently becoming "the beer of Romanian football".

In 2002, Bergenbier initiated the campaign "Support the Romanian Football Team. Wear Yellow!" Hundreds of football supporters enthusiastically answered Bergenbier's call to encourage their national squad. Yellow has, ever since, been the supporters' way of saying that Bergenbier represents the national team, as well as Romanian football. Regardless of how the national side fared, Bergenbier was always there alongside, loyal and constantly full of enthusiasm. Although Bergenbier does not have a long history on the Romanian market, it is a brand that is highly respected by local people for its strong belief in the future of Romanian football, and its dedication as the most loyal supporter of the national team.

## Product

Bergenbier has proved its extraordinary potential to carry the attributes that are associated with the world of men: friendship and football. From the first brewed bottle produced in 1995, Bergenbier succeeded to distinguish itself from other products by its unique taste and permanently changing bottle packaging. Almost every year, Bergenbier has offered its consumers new options: the Bergenbier Blonde 0.5L bottle (May 1995), the Bergenbier Brune 0.5L bottle (December 1995), the Bergenbier 50L keg (June 1996), the Bergenbier 0.5L can (April 1998), the Bergenbier alcohol free 0.5L bottle (November 2001), the Bergenbier alcohol free 0.5L can (March 2002), the Bergenbier 1L Q-Pack (June 2003), the Bergenbier 1.5L Q-Pack (March 2004), the Bergenbier Next Generation Q-Pack (April 2006).

In June 2004, Interbrew Romania revolutionised the PET segment by launching Bergenbier Q-Pack. The Q-Pack technology has been attested by the Fraunhofer Institute, a well known German organisation for innovation. The PET market has grown very quickly in recent years, now making up 37% of the total market (Source: MEMRB Romania). Bergenbier's success with the Q-Pack can be clearly seen today, as more than 40% of Bergenbier sales are represented by this type of packaging. PET packaging is also used for other brands under the Interbrew umbrella, such as Noroc and Lowenbrau.

Having enjoyed huge success with Q-Pack, the brand's revolutionary PET packaging, in 2006, Bergenbier launched the 'Next Generation' Q-Pack. This maintains the advantages of the old Q-Pack but introduces new design elements, making for a more elegant and practical bottle. The packaging includes a "grip" zone, allowing the bottle to be held with just one hand.

## Recent Developments

Since 2005, Bergenbier has had a new shape: a customised bottle. Moreover, Bergenbier passed through a process of image redevelopment, involving the refining of its logo and its label. Its new look, incorporating the plated label and the golden neck label, is meant to emphasize the masculine profile of the brand, with the new label being shield-shaped. At the beginning of 2006, Bergenbier also issued a special limited edition can with photographic detail, dedicated to the start of the Euro 2008 qualifications.

## Promotion

After losing leadership of the segment and the market in November 2003, Bergenbier saw its market share slowly but continuously eroded. The consumer preference level decreased and the brand lost ground, especially among its young target group. At the beginning of 2005, Bergenbier was under serious pressure; on the other hand, new players were challenging the market with very aggressive commercial programs. Moreover, the usual "male friendship" communication device used by Bergenbier was, by 2004, common to all beer brands. In 2004, many rival brands were all on the same territory, using friendship and beer as social signifiers.

In 2005, Bergenbier re-invented itself launching a new campaign "Friends know why", aiming to re-gain market leadership and explicitly attack the masculine territory. The objective was not only to stay visible but also to stimulate discussion. Bergenbier needed to find a way to become part of the daily life of its target. TV had the biggest weight for building national reach.



Radio was used tactically for improving the frequency of the message. Additional support was delivered through media relations. The same charisma and intelligent humour was used in other unconventional media channels. Thus, internet campaigns, toilet media and stickers in the men's toilets in student campuses were used to bring the brand closer to its consumers and to target younger sub-segments of its audience in a very focused manner.

Ownership of the world of football, a key part of the male domain, has been constantly defended and strengthened. Bergenbier, the main sponsor of the national football team, became the voice of the supporters. Bergenbier football campaigns succeeded in bringing the brand closer to the fans, identifying with the supporters, and becoming their spokesperson. It made Bergenbier the strongest Romanian brand to be closely associated with football (Source: Synovate Brand Tracking, 2005).

As part of the Interbrew Corporate Social Responsibility program, Bergenbier, in partnership with the City Hall of Blaj and Weber Transport Company, initiated the educational campaign "Protect the environment of Blaj! Join the recycling!", through which citizens were encouraged to collect and recycle paper, glass and plastic waste in order to preserve the natural environment. Blaj was chosen for its historic importance for Romania, being also the city where the Bergenbier brand was born.

## Brand Values

The brand values are based on a long term connection between football and the masculine domain. Given the masculine image of the brand, market research indicates that men define themselves through what they drink, their humour and their interaction with others.

After the change in marketing communication in 2005, the connection between the brand and the target group has been strengthened.

[www.bergenbier.ro](http://www.bergenbier.ro)

THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT

## Bergenbier

- › Since 1998, Bergenbier has been the official sponsor of the Romanian national football team
- › Bergenbier was awarded the Grand EFFIE for the most efficient campaign, entitled "Friends Know Why"
- › Bergenbier accounts for almost half of Interbrew's production on the Romanian market
- › Bergenbier initiated a corporate responsibility program in Blaj, the birthplace of the brand
- › The Romanian beer market is estimated at 15.3 million hectolitres, with Interbrew accounting for 2.6 million hectolitres of this figure

