



# Irish whiskey bucking the trend

The luck of the Irish has held true for Irish whiskey as it has bucked the trend in the whiskey market to emerge from the recession relatively unscathed finds Datamonitor.

Research\* from the independent business analyst has found that one of the reasons Irish whiskey remains strong within the spirits market is its popularity in the US and its ability to break through the age barrier and appeal to a younger audience, unlike the whiskey market as a whole.

As a result Irish whiskey is predicted to grow at a rate of 9.4% year on year over five years to 2014 in the US compared to just 2% for the overall whisky market and 0.2% for Scotch whisky.

Vicky McCrorie, analyst at Datamonitor said: "Irish whiskey has successfully set itself apart from the general market which has traditionally been dominated by older drinkers. In fact our research has revealed that in the US within the spirits market as a whole 41% of whiskey drinkers are over 55 compared to only 4% who are the youngest age category."

## Breaking the mould

Irish whiskey has broken the mould by appealing to younger drinkers with its smooth taste and image as a prestigious and affordable European drink. While Scotch shares the same European heritage, it has appeared to fail to break through to the younger demographic in the US in part due to cost, resulting in a weaker predicted growth than its Irish counterpart. Irish whiskey has successfully appealed to "pre-committal" young men who Datamonitor has revealed as both continuing to spend throughout the recession and being more adventurous in trying new brands.

As a result of the popularity of the drink, Datamonitor has recorded the launch of five new products in the first four months of 2010, despite the recession.

## Recession-proof

One brand taking advantage of the popularity of the Irish tippie in the US is Jameson which is currently the best selling Irish whiskey in the world, and like the Irish whiskey market as a whole, has been largely unaffected by the recession.

The brand has led a strong marketing and advertising campaign to ensure they appeal to a young audience. This has involved an annual comedy tour, dynamic media projections that create a buzz as well as an epic TV advert shown on stations popular with young men.

McCrorie added: "Irish whiskey is an example of a European brand trading on the fact that it's different to what is already on offer in an established market like the US. It has therefore become recession proof. Jameson has succeeded by identifying a market and spotting a demographic where there is potential for growth. As a result their sales have weathered the financial storm and will continue to grow as the global economy recovers."

*\*Case Study: Jameson Case Study Targeting the "recession resistant" consumer*

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