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## IN BRAZIL, BEER COOLER BLOCKS SMARTPHONE SIGNALS TO BOOST FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION



WORK & LIFESTYLE

**Lager brand Polar has developed a beer cooler that blocks cell and mobile internet signals in an attempt to stop customers checking the devices when they're with friends.**

The backlash against the overuse of cell phones – especially smart ones – in bars and restaurants has led to a few interesting ideas to get customers talking to each other again. Singapore's [Social Rehab](#) has already offered discounts to diners that leave their device at the door, and now Brazilian lager brand [Polar](#) has developed a beer cooler that actually blocks cell and mobile internet signals.

Created in collaboration with communications agency [Paim](#), the device uses technology similar to that found in prisons, where signals are blocked to stop inmates from communicating with the outside world. Working on a smaller scale, the beer cooler blocks signals for up to 1.5 meters only, and was handed to customers who ordered the Polar lager at select venues in São Paulo. When the bottle is kept in the cooler, the signal blocker is activated, disrupting both cell and 3G and 4G connections. The cooler also comes with a message that explained how the device worked, offering a talking point among friends to distract them from their phones. The video below explains the concept further:

Given the nature of consumers' always-on devices, the Polar campaign provides an engaging way to temporarily render them useless, enabling customers to enjoy social time with their friends in person. Considering that chatting could help venues benefit from a better atmosphere, could we begin to see restaurants and bars use similar technology to ensure an outright ban on phone use?

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