

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

TO

BREWERY MARKETING

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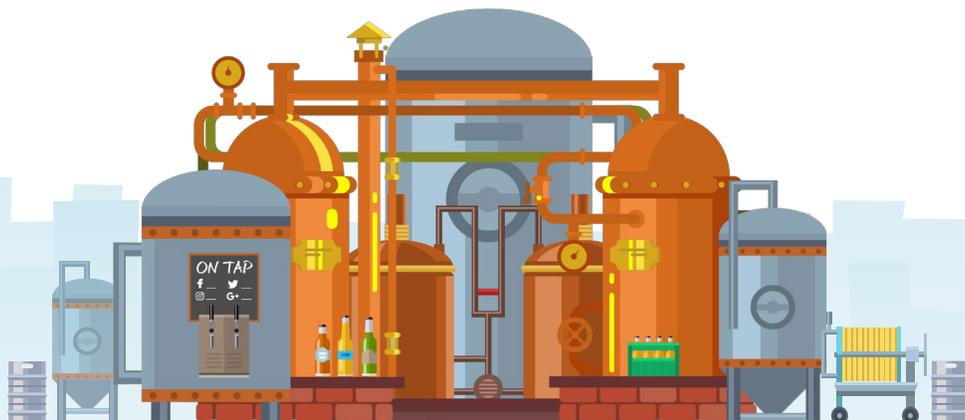


ON TAP



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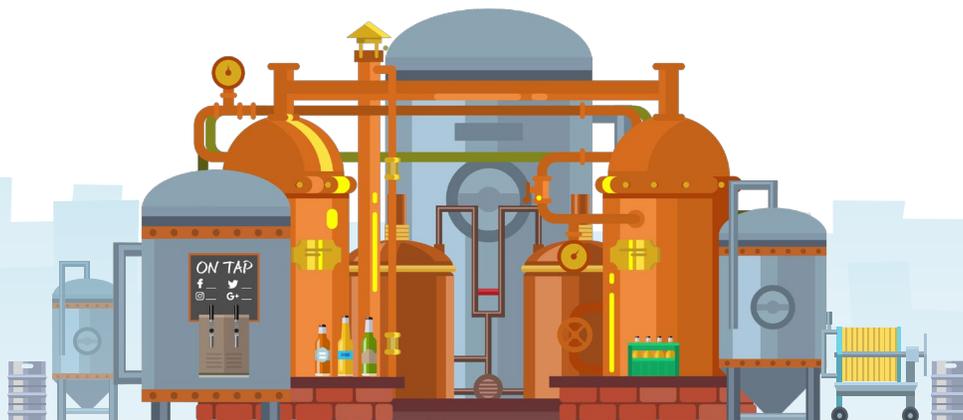


INTRODUCTION

Maybe you suddenly quit your corporate job to chase your dream of creating delicious beer, or perhaps it was a voice that was loud and clear throughout your life guiding you to open a brewery. Whatever it was, you did what you needed to do to brew.

Now you have great beer, a production line that keeps rolling, a slow rise in customer engagement, but something is lacking. You need a creative boost to get people everywhere to fall in love with your brand. It's time to call in the Brewmaster of Marketing.

This guide will go through the five taps of marketing for breweries so, just like your beer, so you can stay fresh in the minds of customers and make your mark on the craft beer industry.



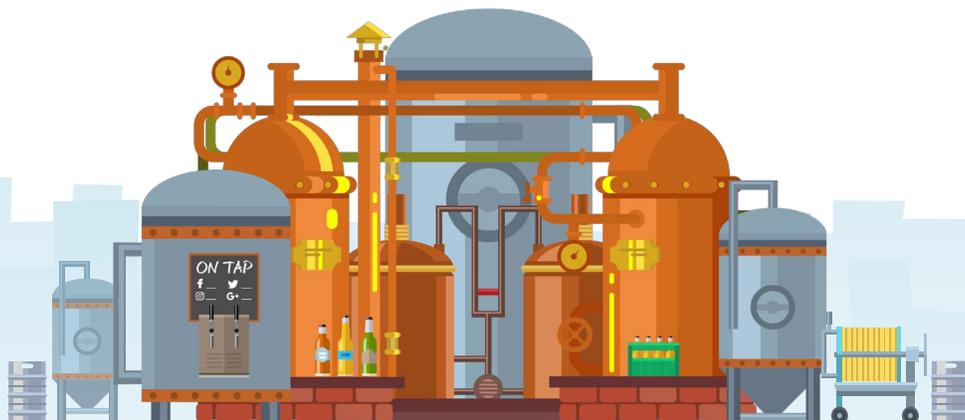
BRANDING

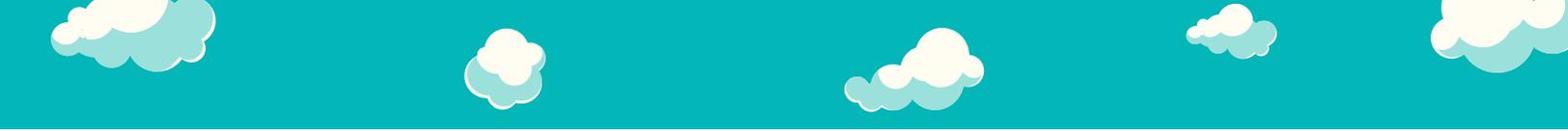
Let's begin with one question: Who are you?

It might seem simple, but before you start marketing your brewery, you need to know your brand inside and out – as if it were a person.

Start by asking and answering these questions:

- **What are your core values?** Are you homegrown, hoppy, and bright? Or rich, dark, and deep?
- **What do you want to be known for?** Is there one brew in your line that you want to be known for above all others, or are you all about fun and want to be known for your original flavors?
- **Who are you up against?** Know thy competition to know thyself!
- And most importantly, **who would enjoy your company?** Identify your ideal customer.





Everything from your name to your logo to the design of your bottles or cans should revolve around this archetype and appeal to your prospective patrons.

Critical to defining yourself is knowing who your ideal customer is and exactly what they want. For example, are you hoping to reach Millennials that care deeply about locally produced products and love new beer trends? Information like this is key to determining what your brand should emphasize.

Once you've determined who you are, here are three essential components to creating your brewery brand:

- 1. Think About Your Name:** What's in a name? The answer: everything. In a few short words, your brewery's name is tasked with conveying the type of beer you brew, the clientele you attract, and your place in the craft brew scene. For example, Left Field Brewing vs. Old Klaverack Brewery. The former denotes a sporty, casual brand, while the latter sounds like a place with a rich history and a commitment to the local community.
- 2. Develop Your Personality:** Does your logo match your bottles, event space, website, and all of your social media? The look and feel of your key marketing materials, like your signage and packaging, should match your décor and all your digital efforts. To determine the look, feel, and voice of your brewery, go back to the archetype you created at the beginning. If there's too much branding inconsistency, prospective customers might become confused, and this reduces any brand affection or loyalty to your business.
- 3. Embrace Your Differentiator:** Find out what makes you different and make it a cornerstone of your brand. There might be a slew of craft breweries in town, but if you're the only one with a nitro-stout, make it known. One study showed that [75% of your brand's uniqueness](#) will be attributed to the experience – so reflecting that experience within your branding upfront gets prospective customers excited and anticipating your unique offering.

DIGITAL MARKETING

You may have heard the phrase, “Pics or it didn’t happen”. It’s a common Millennial mantra, meaning that if a photo of an activity wasn’t uploaded to social media, then it’s as if it never happened. While this mentality is great for your social media efforts because it guarantees some Millennials will engage, the same mentality can be applied to digital marketing as a whole:

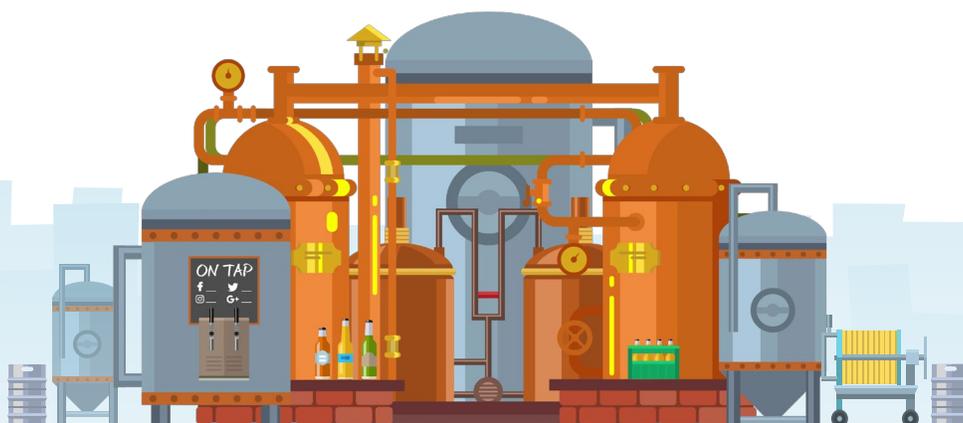
- If you don’t have a website, you don’t exist.
- If you don’t have a social media presence, you don’t exist.
- If your patrons aren’t interacting with you, you don’t exist.

But you do exist! You just need to sharpen these strategies to make your digital presence more effective. Digitally lead people to your brand and brewery with the following two ways:

AN UPDATED WEBSITE

Your brewery is constantly changing – you’re constantly creating new brews and seasonal offerings – and these days, having a website that is easy to update is easier than ever. If you choose the right provider, websites are really easy to manage and cost-effective too.

Wordpress and Squarespace are two great options. Both offer templated websites and the flexibility within those templates to customize and highlight your brand. Check out [The Ultimate Guide to Creating a Restaurant Website](#) to learn how to create your own website.

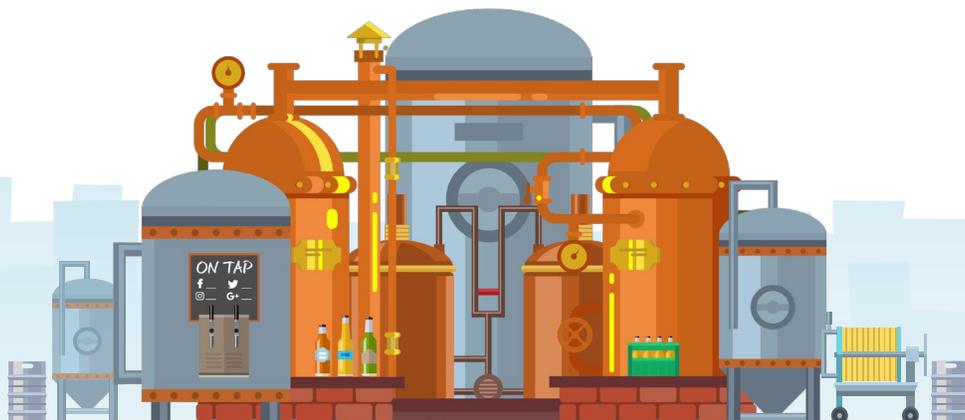


SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

SEO is the process of driving organic search engine traffic to your website. The goal of SEO is to appear as one of the top search results in Google. While it may sound like an engineer's task, it's a lot easier than you think.

To "SEO" your website means to include keywords in the text that someone might put into a search engine. To determine where to direct searchers, Google sends bots to web pages. These bots scan websites looking for keywords so that they send searchers to the right place. This way, when someone searches for "Craft beer in Montana", they don't get a big brewery in Texas in their top results. Google's algorithms also take into consideration the amount of views your website gets and the amount of time people spend on your website.

But here's the thing: there's no exact science to mastering SEO or getting on the first page of Google. The algorithms that rank websites are under lock, key, and likely armed guards, somewhere deep within the fortified walls of the Google headquarters. That said, there are various, proven strategies you can use that will improve your SEO and help customers make their way to you.



HOT TIPS FOR RAISING YOUR WEBSITE'S SEO

Title Tags: Displayed on top of each website page, and as the title when you Google your brewery, these tags should be between 20 and 60 characters and straight to the point.

Example: Your home page would be called “your brewery name” with your location. Other pages might be named, “Our Beers” or “About Us”.

Meta Descriptions: This is the brief description of text below the Title Tag. It should be unique to each page and shorter than 150 characters.

Link Juice: Also known as link building, these are internal links within your website and external links from other websites. If you link to your homepage in a company blog post or an external beer blogger links back to your website, this bodes well for your SEO. When Google sees that others are talking about your site, it increases your relevancy.

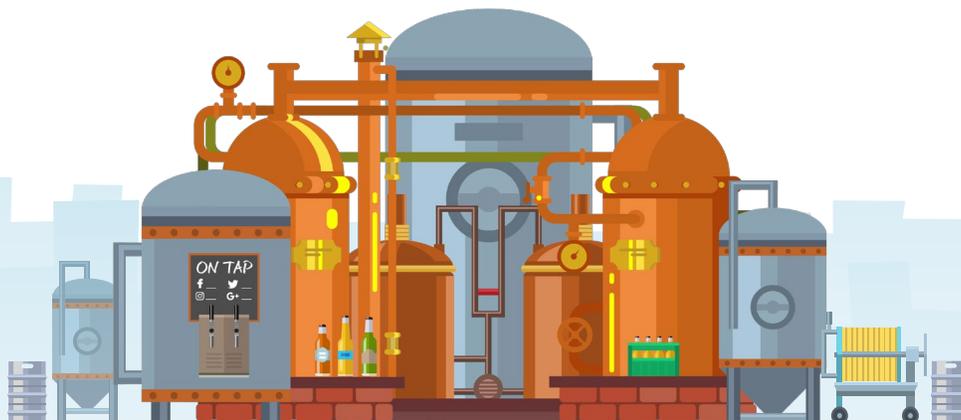
The image shows a Google search interface for "nighthawk brewery". The search bar contains the text "nighthawk brewery" and a search button. Below the search bar are navigation tabs for "All", "Maps", "Images", "News", "Shopping", "More", and "Search tools". The search results are displayed below, with annotations in red circles and arrows pointing to specific elements:

- Title Tag:** A red circle around the text "Nighthawk Brewery" in the first search result, with an arrow pointing to the word "Title Tag".
- Meta Description:** A red circle around the text "Nighthawk Brewery hosts a GWD every Thursday night 7-11 pm. We have great beer on tap and killer eats! We are in Broomfield, Co right off Highway 36." in the second search result, with an arrow pointing to the word "Meta Description".
- Link Juice:** A red circle around the text "Nighthawk Brewery - 47 Photos & 72 Reviews - Breweries - 2780 ..." in the third search result, with an arrow pointing to the word "Link Juice".

For more detailed information on SEO, check out this [great blog post](#).

Google My Business: [Google My Business](#) is the most important page next to your website because you can create and control your own profile and how you appear in Google Search and on Google Maps for free. It links to your website, reviews, hours, and other essential information for customers. Taking care of this page is important: it's the most searchable place beyond your website, people trust that it is accurate, and it is home to a star-rated review summary.

The image shows a Google search for "nighthawk brewery". The search results include a link to the brewery's website, "Meet Nighthawk", "Events", "Taproom", "Contact Us", "Currently On Tap", and "Kitchen Menu". A red circle highlights the "Google My Business description" section, which is a detailed profile for Nighthawk Brewery. This profile includes a map, photos, a 4.4-star rating from 76 Google reviews, the address (2780 Industrial Ln, Broomfield, CO 80020, USA), phone number (+1 720-262-3900), and hours (Open today - 11AM-11PM). It also shows reviews from Facebook (4.7/5) and Groupon (96%), and popular times for Thursday.



EMAIL MARKETING

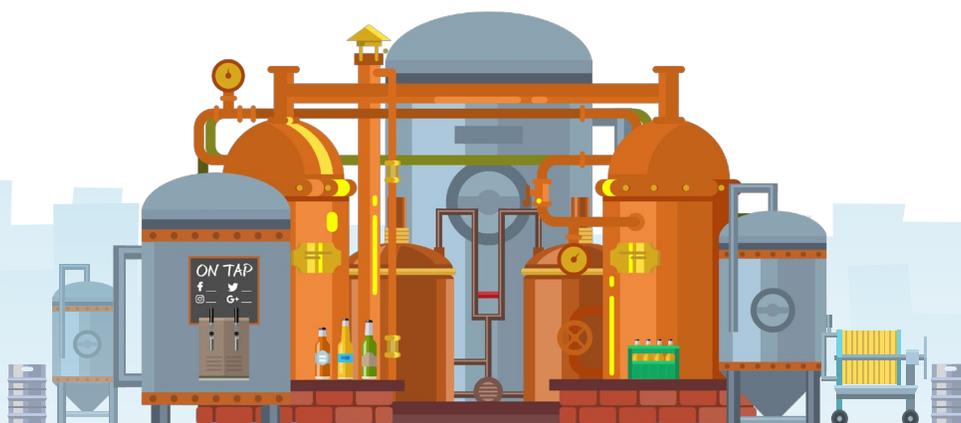
Email marketing begins with creating a list, offering customers the chance to opt-in, and is successful when it gives back to recipients and ends with an increase in sales. However, people are increasingly being bombarded with sales emails and newsletters asking for their attention. So how do you make your marketing emails stand out in your customer's inbox? By giving back to a very select, targeted audience that wants to hear from you. Just make sure that you have something valuable to offer your customer instead of simply asking them to buy from you.

HOT TIPS FOR EMAIL MARKETING

Building an email list: Getting customers to opt-in to email communication starts with your staff if customers are buying direct at your brewery. It can also be on your label, or on a postcard inside a case of beer. At this point, your customer has already developed a familiarity with your brand and is open to learning more. Another place ripe for list building is your website. Include a newsletter sign-up field in a highly visible place, like a side bar or a pop-up box.

When to send emails: You can choose to send pretty much any time you want, but consistency can be good, especially if you have regular offerings, so customers know when to expect to hear from you. You can send the following types of emails:

- **Monthly newsletter:** A short email that lists special events, featured beers, or promotions happening in the next month. You can also include any recent news.
- **Ad-hoc emails:** One-off emails that can contain coupons, contests, and other creative ways to engage your database.

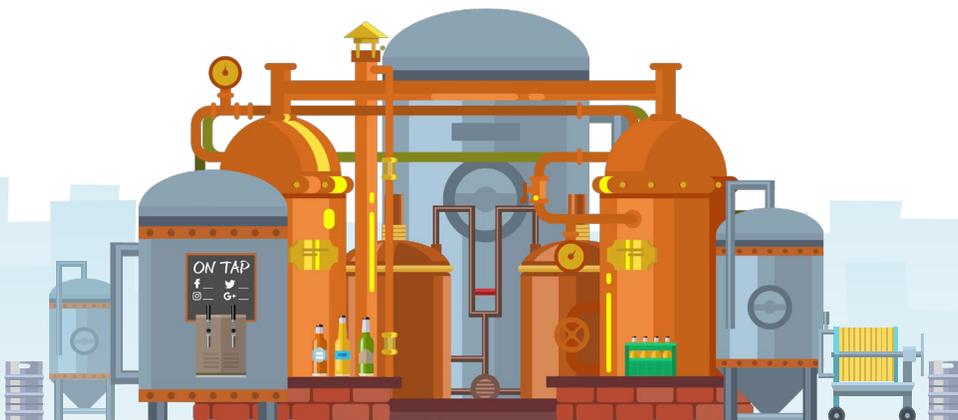


Email marketing providers:



Follow the Rules: Always give customers the option to unsubscribe. Depending on your region and your database, some email marketing regulations stipulate that recipients must be able to unsubscribe in a single click and you must have records of their explicit opt-in.

For more information, see American regulations [here](#) and Canadian email regulations [here](#).



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Word of Mouth: Word of mouth used to sound something like this: “I tried this new beer, it was amazing! You have to try it!”

But today, word of mouth is something more like an Instagram selfie with the caption “Lunchtime @randombeerhouse was so good! Tried my new favourite beer by @nighthawkbeer - you have to try the Lamp Post Milk Stout. #craftbeer #microbrew #ontap #milkstout #nitrobeer”.

Whether it’s on a wall, a homepage, in a comment, or on a review site, the reach of a single social media post is far, and can be either a public endorsement or a public shaming. Word of mouth isn’t simply just words anymore. A photo of your beer, a geo-tag at your brewery, or a mention in a tweet is just as valuable as an outright endorsement.

So how can you create engaging social content, and which platform is worth your precious time?

Social Media Accounts: Pick and choose which platforms suit your business’s personality and where your audience is actively engaged.

Facebook



Instagram



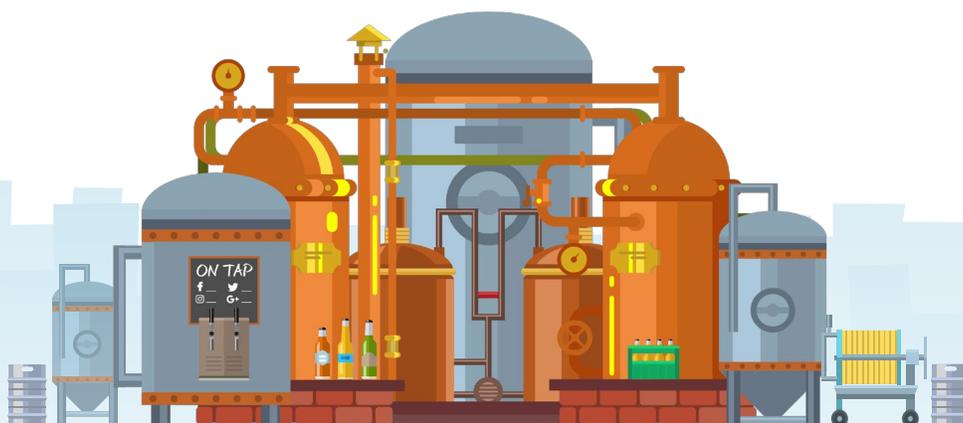
Twitter



Snapchat



YouTube

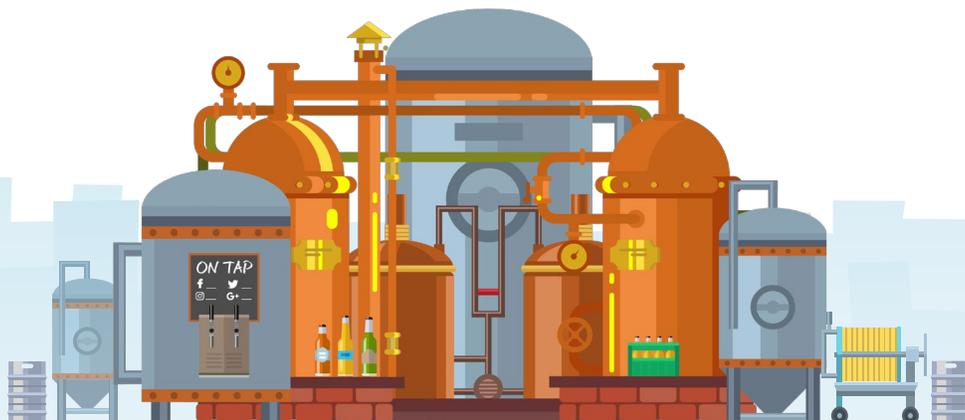


HOT TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Content that makes you thirsty: Photos are the new open-ended question. While guides of social media past might have stipulated that asking questions was the way to stimulate engagement, photos are the best way to get the attention of the masses. A crisp cold brew with a hint of condensation with light hitting the amber gold liquid just right, has power. As well, photos of your customers enjoying your offerings can be extremely persuasive. A mix of product, brand, and customer is ideal.

Geo-tagging and Check-ins: Checking-in on Facebook appears on home feeds and it's essentially free advertising. Similarly, geo-tagging (adding a location to posts) on Instagram compiles all posts under one map point, so followers can check out other people's posts of your beer and brewery from the location.

Social Ads: Facebook for Business allows you to advertise promotional content in two ways. The first is that you can market to “friends of friends”, or connections of people who like your page. The second is by marketing to those who fit a predefined set of demographics or interests that you set. You can also promote your posts on Instagram as long as you have Instagram Business Insights set up and connected to your Facebook Business page.



Hashtag (But do so effectively!): Hashtags keep track of conversations. When someone says, “create a hashtag”, there’s no special tool you use or process to follow. Type in # and the word you wish to track. #Simple. Make sure to check out our [Quick Tips for Using Hashtags for Restaurants](#) for quick and easy tips to maximize your posts.

There are two types of hashtags you should use on your social media pages: unique and niche.

- **Unique hashtags** are those that you create. For example, the name of your brewery or the name of a contest or promotion you’re running.
- **Niche hashtags** are those that already exist. They might be geographical, industry related, or event-driven. Avoid excessive hashtagging or hashtagging frivolously. Your prospective customers won’t be looking for #bottle #tap or #thirsty, but they might be looking for #craftbeerdenver, #localbeerchicago, and #microbrew.

Niche & Unique Hashtags Example: Collective Arts Brewing (@collectivebrew) used the niche hashtag #craftbeerlover so that their photo will show up when beer lovers look at #craftbeerlover. And they also used their unique hashtag #collectiveartsbrewing so that all photos tagged by them or others will show up in that stream.



469 likes 15w

collectivebrew Did you hear? Our NEW Collective Project, Sour Pumpkin Saison is launching tomorrow! The first keg will be tapped at 5PM in the shop. Be the first to taste the beer PLUS we've got live music. Art by: Blair Kelly #artplusbrewing

Unique

Niche

#collectiveartsbrewing #collectivearts #craftbeerlover #bottleshop #keg #newbeer #beerlaunch #craftbeer #beer #pumpkinspice #pumpkinbeer

view all 48 comments

sammrxo_ WHERE DO WE GET THIS @ryan_bertoia

natetorresan @amydanielss hmmmmmm...

kyra711 @ryan_bertoia all pumpkin everything 🍂

josieabate @m.arcese not another sour beer!!!!

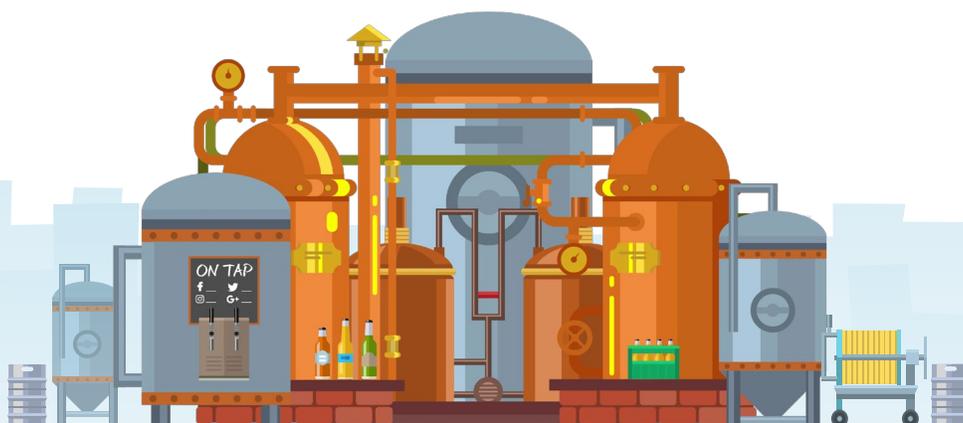
SOCIAL CONTESTS

Contests open up a dialogue, give customers and prospective customers a chance to engage, and can increase the reach and awareness of your brewery. You can run contests on your own, or partner with a blogger or influencer to help spread the word and manage submissions. The number one thing to remember to run a successful contest? Make the payoff well worth the effort. If you're asking for 500 social shares in exchange for a single pint, the deck is stacked in your favor, and likely won't be worth it for most potential entrants. But a free keg? You'll have a much better chance at engagement.

Try these three contests to drive interest and traffic to your brand and brewery:

- 1. Recipe or Flavor Contest:** Ask customers to come up with inventive new flavor profiles, or their ideal ingredient combination. For example, if they could create the most refreshing Summer wheat beer, what would it taste like? The winner gets to meet the brewmaster and watch their beer be made.
- 2. Social Shares Contest:** Create your own hashtag, for example #kettlepintcontest, and encourage your customers to use it when they purchase a pint at your brewery. Every share gets an entry. After a limited time, like a week or two, a winner is picked randomly.
- 3. Forever Free Fan Contest:** This is a fun contest that can drive a lot of engagement because the payoff is so great. Customers use an Instagram image to enter to get free tastings for life (limit one per week or month). You choose a round of finalists and then put it to a vote via social media. Entrants can use their social accounts to generate votes, and the pic with the most votes wins!

For a deep dive into all things social media, including how to run contests, how to engage on the best platforms, and how to use your social media pages to extend your customer service, see our [Ultimate Guide to Social Media Marketing](#).



MOBILE APPS

[Ninety percent of Millennials and sixty percent of baby boomers](#) own smart phones so naturally, they're using this technology to make their decision processes easier.

Getting on board with the latest in mobile app technology keeps your brewery in your customers' back pocket. If you're not searchable on a commonly used app, then you've lost prospective business. While every app follows the beat of their own drum, mobile apps bring the most highly-qualified prospects to you: the thirsty and the close-by.

HOT APPS FOR BREWERIES



Untappd: This app markets itself as a “social discovery and check-in network” for beer lovers. It allows users to find craft beers and bars based on proximity, see beer trends, and what their friends are indulging in. So sign up and make sure your beer is on there.



Elixir: Elixir allows beer drinkers to rate their favorite beer. Users check into the beer when they're enjoying it.



Beer Buddy: A cell phone camera is used to scan barcodes from bottles, cans, and cases. The full rundown of the beer's history, alcohol content, taste profile and drinker reviews is available. Over 300,000 beers are catalogued and if one isn't, when it's scanned it gets uploaded into the database, so be sure the first thing you do is to upload your brews!



Brewery Passport: A beer tour guide, Brewery Passport allows people to search for nearby breweries, collect “stamps” for breweries they've visited, and see beer related events in their area. Make sure your brewery is involved.



Next Glass: Users rate beers and get suggestions for their next pint based on their preferences and their taste profile. A good way to see what people are enjoying and see how your brew stacks up against the competition.

EVENT LISTINGS

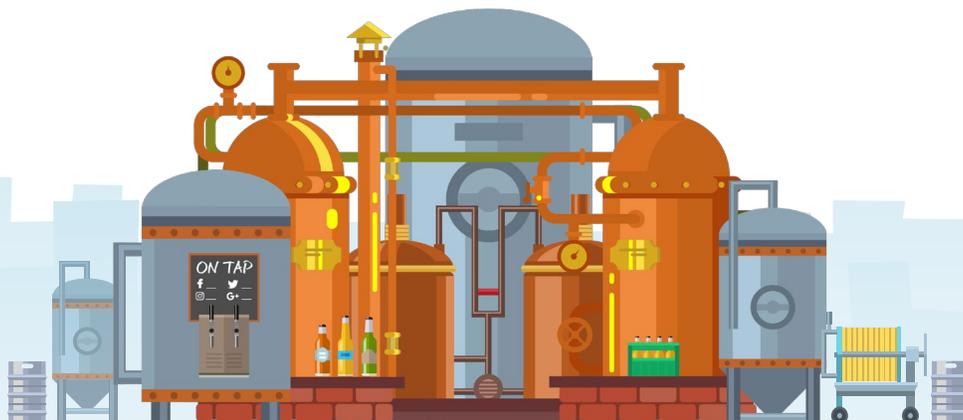
As a brewery, it's likely that you have a large event space that you're eager to rent out and make available for parties, weddings, and corporate events. So make sure that you're listed in all your local event listings as well as online to gain maximum exposure to people who wouldn't otherwise find out about you.

LOCAL LISTINGS

Local blogs and websites: Citywide blogs, tourism sites, wedding bloggers, they all should know about your venue and what you offer so that they can promote you. There might be a listing charge, an advertising fee, or an unspoken trade of free beer, so don't expect it to be free. Nevertheless, make sure that you build and maintain these relationships - they can be invaluable for driving local referrals.

Chamber of Commerce: Your BIA possibly has an online listing of local businesses and what they offer, so make sure you take the opportunity to become a member of your local business initiative and get involved in your community.

Event Planners: Event planners in your city and community are a great resource. They are up close and personal with clients, often showing them venues they've handpicked. Getting on these lists may come with a commission or fee, but it's well worth reaching out and getting close to these potential on-the-ground allies.



ONLINE LISTINGS

Event Up: Is a venue listing site that lets people browse venues in over 300 US cities, then filter their search to find just what they are looking for. A great place to list your brewery and amenities for potential weddings, corporate events, and private parties.

Gig Masters: Across the US and Canada, people can search for talent and a venue to host it in a few simple clicks. While there are currently more listings for bands and musicians than venues, being the only venue listed in your area could be a huge win.

Unique Venues: Featuring dozens of listings for most major areas, Unique Venues, “brings together one-of-a-kind venues with planners who are ready for something new”, across North America.



TRADITIONAL MARKETING

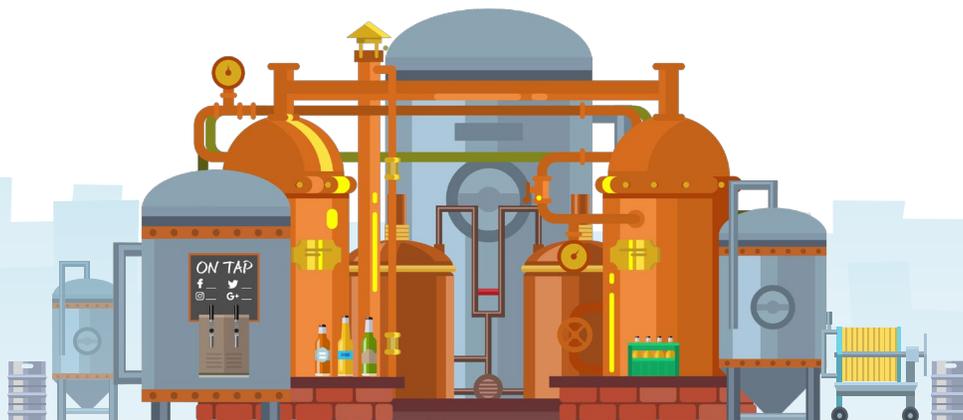
While digital is the way of the future, there is something refreshing about good old-fashioned boots-on-the-ground marketing. Traditional marketing has gone from being the only way to market your brewery, to something that resembles chivalry. For prospective customers, old school marketing often feels above and beyond.

Here are a few traditional marketing tactics to keep up:

Daily Deal: Day of the week specials, BOGOs, and free gift with purchase - everyone is looking for an excuse to have a treat on the cheap. When mixed with your differentiator, daily deals are still incredibly effective, especially when buffered through your other marketing channels, like email and social media.

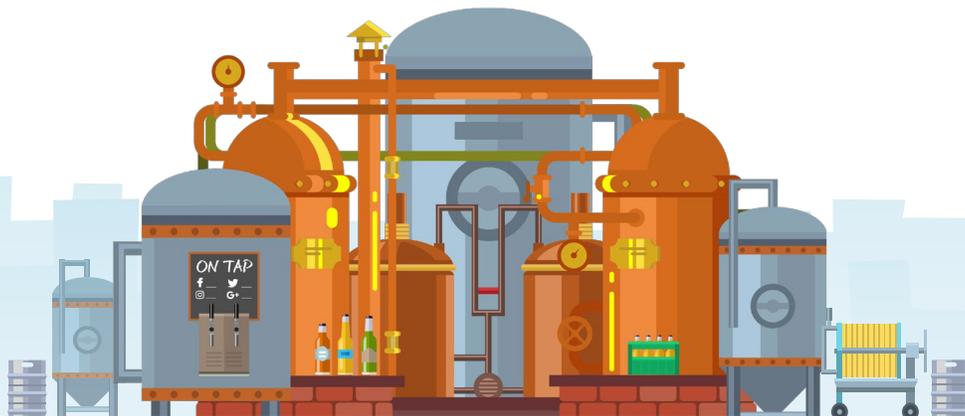
Sponsorships: A little goodwill goes a long way. Sponsoring a local sports team, event or charity gets your logo out there and creates positive brand association and goodwill. This might also lead to more opportunities for you to get your product into the mouths of like-minded supporters.

Generate Buzz: Beer bloggers, local media, and industry publications, whether online or in print, the more trusted media you can introduce your beer to, the more prospects will be likely to try you on for size. When you get a write up or an endorsement, the credibility of that individual rubs off on you.



CONCLUSION

While the consumer has always faced the dilemma of choice, there has simply never been so many ways to discover new craft beer or breweries. The task of the modern day brewer is not just to provide a unique offering, but to communicate that offering in a way that both engages consumers in the moment and keeps them top of mind in the future. It's only then that your bottles will be flying off the shelves. Managing a strong digital presence and honing in on the forums that dominate the way consumers make choices isn't optional - it's a necessity.



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