

Breweries to Watch

BY MICHAEL KUDERKA

As we have shared in previous columns, nothing has grown faster than the sales of craft beer. Even in the midst of this recession, consumers are seeking out the value, the creativity, and the quality of craft beer brands.

To prove this point, take a look at the sales data from Information Resources Inc (IRI) below. IRI derives their numbers from their data set that includes 15,000+ grocery retailers from around the US.

Notice that in this snap shot of craft beer supermarket sales for March–April 2010 every region is showing impressive increases in sales. Considering that late March-early April are not the strongest months for alcohol sales, these numbers speak to an even more positive trend for craft brands.

California

<i>Information Resources Inc (IRI)</i>	\$ Sales	% Chg
SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO CRAFT	\$2,045,756	- 0.2
BOSTON BEER CO CRAFT	\$1,729,360	19.5
*CRAFT BRANDS ALLIANCE CRAFT	\$1,397,778	8.0
NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$950,351	0.9
*INDEPENDENT BREWERS UNITED CRAFT	\$647,606	- 10.8
STONE BREWING CO. CRAFT	\$406,855	23.7
GORDON BIERSCHE BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$381,139	42.3
THE LAGUNITAS BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$320,108	0.9
LOST COAST BREWERY CRAFT	\$313,268	28.1
FIRESTONE WALKER BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$291,656	21.2

Great Lakes

<i>Information Resources Inc (IRI)</i>	\$ Sales	% Chg
BOSTON BEER CO CRAFT	\$1,742,134	27.9
BELLS BREWERY INC CRAFT	\$816,319	32.4
CRAFT BRANDS ALLIANCE CRAFT	\$666,444	25.3
THE GREAT LAKES BREWING CO. CRAFT	\$572,010	14.4
SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO CRAFT	\$486,401	24.5
NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$400,950	115.1
NEW GLARUS BREWING CO. CRAFT	\$342,285	- 0.4
*NORTH AMERICAN BREWERIES CRAFT	\$207,996	3.4
*INDEPENDENT BREWERS UNITED CRAFT	\$155,053	17.1
*GAMBRINUS COMPANY CRAFT	\$121,854	20.9

Mid-South

<i>Information Resources Inc (IRI)</i>	\$ Sales	% Chg
BOSTON BEER CO CRAFT	\$1,770,929	22.4
SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO CRAFT	\$871,320	22.4
NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$555,446	55.4
*CRAFT BRANDS ALLIANCE CRAFT	\$436,634	2.6
*INDEPENDENT BREWERS UNITED CRAFT	\$373,615	- 6.2
*GAMBRINUS COMPANY CRAFT	\$192,979	2.7
ANHEUSER-BUSCH INBEV CRAFT	\$150,366	5.5

HIGHLAND BREWING COMPANY INC. CRAFT	\$135,644	24.7
FLYING DOG BREWERY CRAFT	\$134,605	16.0
SWEETWATER BREWING COMPANY LLC CRAFT	\$127,471	63.0

Northeast

<i>Information Resources Inc (IRI)</i>	\$ Sales	% Chg
BOSTON BEER CO CRAFT	\$2,383,451	21.4
MATT BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$432,038	13.7
*INDEPENDENT BREWERS UNITED CRAFT	\$373,489	4.8
SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO CRAFT	\$360,643	26.3
HARPOON BREWERY CRAFT	\$328,582	- 1.0
LONG TRAIL BREWING CO. CRAFT	\$312,114	9.1
SHIPYARD BREWING CO. CRAFT	\$207,722	49.0
*CRAFT BRANDS ALLIANCE CRAFT	\$174,488	35.4
BROOKLYN BREWERY CRAFT	\$155,679	23.8
*NORTH AMERICAN BREWERIES CRAFT	\$146,735	12.5

Plains

<i>Information Resources Inc (IRI)</i>	\$ Sales	% Chg
BOULEVARD BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$535,832	22.1
BOSTON BEER CO CRAFT	\$458,668	23.5
NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$351,946	39.0
THE SAINT LOUIS BREWERY CRAFT	\$237,933	25.5
*CRAFT BRANDS ALLIANCE CRAFT	\$127,472	- 11.0
SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO CRAFT	\$88,032	21.3
*GAMBRINUS COMPANY CRAFT	\$65,291	3.0
BIG SKY BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$48,186	79.1
SUMMIT BREWING CO CRAFT	\$36,426	16.7
O'FALLON BREWERY CRAFT	\$32,556	49.4

South Central

<i>Information Resources Inc (IRI)</i>	\$ Sales	% Chg
*GAMBRINUS COMPANY CRAFT	\$2,120,117	9.1
BOSTON BEER CO CRAFT	\$609,198	37.4
ABITA BREWING CO INC CRAFT	\$564,048	10.0
NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$351,240	22.1
SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO CRAFT	\$293,391	51.0
REAL ALE BREWERY CRAFT	\$192,786	54.6
SAINT ARNOLD BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$144,659	4.1
*CRAFT BRANDS ALLIANCE CRAFT	\$97,571	- 16.7
STONE BREWING CO. CRAFT	\$58,158	34.9
*INDEPENDENT BREWERS UNITED CRAFT	\$50,303	74.3

Southeast

<i>Information Resources Inc (IRI)</i>	\$ Sales	% Chg
BOSTON BEER CO CRAFT	\$1,789,706	12.2
SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO CRAFT	\$587,058	24.9
NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$374,502	
SWEETWATER BREWING COMPANY LLC CRAFT	\$358,179	22.7
*CRAFT BRANDS ALLIANCE CRAFT	\$241,152	- 1.5
ABITA BREWING CO INC CRAFT	\$165,152	- 1.8
*INDEPENDENT BREWERS UNITED CRAFT	\$156,472	135.8

DOG FISH HEAD CRAFT BREWERY CRAFT	\$139,250	88.3
*GAMBRINUS COMPANY CRAFT	\$102,285	4.6
*NORTH AMERICAN BREWERIES CRAFT	\$90,283	14.7

West

Information Resources Inc (IRI)	\$ Sales	% Chg
*CRAFT BRANDS ALLIANCE CRAFT	\$2,565,995	1.3
DESCHUTES BREWERY CRAFT	\$2,109,906	32.6
NEW BELGIUM BREWING COMPANY CRAFT	\$1,300,193	4.2
BOSTON BEER CO CRAFT	\$980,725	19.1
*INDEPENDENT BREWERS UNITED CRAFT	\$955,725	3.2
SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO CRAFT	\$874,435	5.6
FULL SAIL BREWING CRAFT	\$703,257	- 13.5
*GAMBRINUS COMPANY CRAFT	\$568,032	- 7.9
ALASKAN BREWING CO CRAFT	\$550,250	- 5.3
STONE BREWING CO. CRAFT	\$220,097	4.8

*Craft Brands Alliance – Redhook & Widmer Bros, *Independent Brewer United Craft – Magic Hat & Pyramid, * Gambrinus Company Craft – Shiner, Pete’s Wicked, Bridgeport, *North American Breweries Craft – Genesee Brewing, Dundee Ales & Lagers

The take home message from these numbers remains the same. Use your lagers and light lagers as the high volume base for your business, and look to grow and expand your sales by increasing your investment in selling craft beer.

What’s selling? Where’s the buzz coming from?

The good news is that with the continued growth of this product category, established breweries are expanding capacity, product lines, and distribution. So, breweries like Kansas City’s Boulevard (*once a well kept mid-west secret*) have brands available in many states including Washington, Texas, and New York, according to their web site. And with Boulevard’s growth and expansion, founder **John McDonald** has now been able to bring to market (*in addition to Boulevard’s traditional brands*) his dream line-up of big beers with the brewery’s very successful “Smokestack Series”.

Similarly, another brewery to keep your eye on is Boston’s Harpoon Brewery. Now available in 26 states, brands like Harpoon IPA, UFO, and the brewery’s “100 Barrel Series” of wonderfully creative small batch brews, makes Harpoon brands something any store should consider keeping in stock.

So from the list above you can see what is currently selling and which craft breweries you should pay attention to if expansion brings their brands to your area, but which newer brewers and brands are consumers talking about? We recently conducted a survey with beer enthusiast, and these are the “newer” breweries and brands people are talking about.

Brewery	Location	Brands
Terrapin	GA	Hopsecutioner IPA
Sweetwater	GA	420 Extra Pale Ale

River Horse	NJ	Hop-A-Lot-Amus
Tall Grass	KS	Oasis
New Holland	MI	Dragon’s Milk
Cigar City	FL	Jai Alai India Pale Ale
Pisgah	NC	Solstice
Duck-Rabbit	NC	Milk Stout
Big Boss	NC	Wooden Monkey
Lone Rider	NC	Deadeye Jack
Mother Earth	NC	Sisters of the Moon, Tripel Over Head
Half Acre Beer	IL	Daisy Cutter Pale Ale
The Bruery	CA	2 Turtle Doves
Surely	MN	Bender
Mayflower	MA	IPA
Evolution	DE	Exile ESB
Odontata	CA	
Pretty Things	MA	Jack D’Or
Sun King	IL	Sunlight Cream Ale
Yazoo	TN	Sly Rye Porter
Mikkeller	Denmark	Beer Geek Breakfast
St. Somewhere	FL	Saison Athene
Upright Brewing	OR	SIX
Old Schoolhouse	WA	Epiphany Pale
Dark Horse Brew.	MI	Double Crooked Tree I.P.A.
Blue Mountail	VA	Evil 8° Belgian-Style Dubbel Ale
Williamsburg AleWerks	VA	Wheat Ale
Short’s	MI	Huma-Lupa-Licious IPA
Odonata	CA	Saison Ale
Maine Beer	ME	Spring Peeper Ale
Real Ale	TX	Full Moon Pale Rye Ale
Rahr and Sons	TX	Ugly Pug
Coast	SC	Red Legs Scotch Ale
Ale Asylum	WI	Hopalicious

Are You Thinking Out-of-the-Box?

How innovative is your store at selling beer? We would like to know. If you have promotions that go beyond refilling the cold box, we would like to hear from you and share your “out-of-the-box” thinking with our fellow **Beverage Media** readers.

E-mail me at mkuderka@mcbasset.com with your successful ideas for selling beer, along with your contact information. If we write about your program in our column we will send you a free copy of The 3rd Edition of *The Essential Reference of Domestic Brewers and Their Bottled Brands*.