

Anchor Brands: The Chosen Beer

BY MICHAEL KUDERKA

As you look over your shelf space, and ponder where to place the next Shandy, Pizza Beer, or India Pale Saison, be sure to not squeeze out or limit the footprint of those “anchor brands” that have helped build your store’s craft beer following.

These national, regional and local brands/brewers carry a ton of selling power and shouldn’t be undervalued for their ability to keep customers coming back to your store. After spending years establishing their brands, perfecting their quality, and building a following, this is the type of brand equity every retailer needs to capitalize on with tastings and in store displays.

Shmaltz Brewing

A good example of a well differentiated “anchor brand” would be the beers produced by Shmaltz Brewing; established in 1996 by Jeremy Cowan, Shmaltz’s HE’ BREW - The Chosen Beer® line-up standouts for its branding and its craftsmanship.

“I think the value proposition the HE’ BREW beer offer retailers is our unique niche with the branding, imagery and content of our packaging. The flavorful recipes are always combined with unique stories and diverse influences,” Cowan explains. “Certainly during different holidays, and of course in the kosher section, the Chosen Beers are designed to stand tall and attract customer attention”.

In 2013 Shmaltz moved production into their own facility in Clifton Park, NY, about 10 minutes north of Albany, ending 17 years as a contract brewer. Shmaltz’s

new home boasts a 50-barrel brewhouse with 20,000 barrels of annual capacity, so the brewery can handle both the company’s production and contract brewing for others as well. Shmaltz’s has a 37-state distribution footprint.

Adding more weight to the anchor

In recognition of their one year anniversary in the Clifton Park brewery, Shmaltz. released Death of a Contract Brewer.

“Death of a Contract Brewer marks our transition from the first seventeen years in which I was extremely happy to let talented professionals handle all the He’brew production, to a new life in Upstate New York in our shiny new facility,” Cowan explained.

This black IPA has a 7% ABV and is made with seven varieties of malt and seven varieties of hops and has notes of coffee, dark chocolate and citrus. The beer is available in 22-ounce bottles and on limited draft in select bars, and is a strong addition to an already impressive line of brands.

Bottom-line

Although every retailer likes the quicker turns generated by the new,



novelty, or limited release products, many of your customers may not be that adventurous. So as you look to expand your craft beer selection, remember to start with “anchor brands” that are well recognized by your consumers as your craft beer foundation.

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 Beer Trends 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*.

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