



Better Beer Society Offers Beer Education, Draft Maintenance Programs for Restaurants and Bars

By Robin Shellman, Founder/Certified Cicerone, Better Beer Society

Monroe Moxness Berg client Better Beer Society is an organization dedicated to the growth of the craft beer industry and expertise through education. It helps restaurants and bars achieve best practices in beer sales and service through their professional certification, training course and range of expert services. Its instructors (all Certified Cicerones) offer a major on-site training program for front-of-house staff.

Craft beer is one of the fastest growing segments in the entire adult beverage industry, and while it's still in its infancy (in comparison with wine), it demands a much higher level of respect than it's currently getting. This is the only segment in the entire food and beverage industry where it is somehow considered acceptable for bartenders and serving staff to have less knowledge than their guests about the beer they serve. But this current standard is becoming less acceptable to patrons and it should be less acceptable to you as an owner. A similar need for higher standards has arisen in the area of sanitation, or the way bars and restaurants clean and maintain their draft systems to ensure consistent beer quality. The programs offered by Better Beer Society address both these issues.

Beer Education

Investing in beer education for your staff will dramatically increase your beer sales and offer an entirely new experience for your current guests while attracting new business. Upon completion of training, your staff will have a great overall knowledge of beer styles so that they're able to explain both the subtle and the vast differences in beer flavor and aroma. Your staff will be able to detect any off-flavors that may (or may not) be in the beer before your guest does, eliminating waste.

Drinking great beer is one thing; finding the perfect pairing with your food menu is something entirely different and a completely eye-opening for your guests. Understand such pairing principles will help your staff enrich your guests experience, thus increasing both food and beer sales. These are just a few examples of the benefits that we bring with our program.

Beer enthusiasts want that connection with your staff, and they are choosing to support establishments that truly care and share the same passion and respect for beer as they do. Once again, this leads to more sales, higher tips and staff and customer retention.

Draft Maintenance Program

Sanitation is one of the most important factors in brewing, and breweries go to great lengths to ensure that the beer is properly handled, packaged, and delivered as fresh as possible by the time it hits the retail level.

The concern for sanitation shouldn't end with the brewery, but unfortunately we are seeing a large number of establishments that aren't maintaining their draft systems properly, in part due to a lack of knowledge on the national industry standard of cleaning every two weeks, but also because of negligence or improper cleaning methods. As of now, line cleaning is not being regulated in Minnesota, and so we have elected to do something about it.

We have developed the "Brewer Approved" Draft Maintenance Program, which strictly adheres to the Brewers Association guidelines and offers establishments a higher level of protection on their draft equipment investment as well as the beer that runs through them. Our goal is to improve upon the current standards for how line cleaning is handled in Minnesota, and, we hope, develop a sense of uniformity in the marketplace.

We are offering restaurants and bars the opportunity to improve upon their quality standards and to feel confident about protecting their investments and setting themselves apart. Our Certification Program won't be the right fit for every establishment; the amount of knowledge we provide won't be necessary for everyone. However, line cleaning and maintaining a proper draft system is absolutely necessary, which is why we have created these two separate programs so that we are able to meet specific needs of any bar or restaurant in the Twin Cities.

Find out more about Better Beer Society by visiting betterbeersociety.com, or contact Rob directly (rob@betterbeersociety.com).