



ABL: Speaking for retail

BY MICHAEL KUDERKA

As a beer retailer, you are a member of a very unique group that is an extremely important part of the U.S. economy. Establishments that sell alcohol in the U.S. employ as many as 1,449,850 people across the country with jobs averaging \$32,170/year in wages and benefits. In 2011 the beverage alcohol industry alone was responsible for as much as \$184.7 billion in total economic activity, paying over \$16 billion in federal taxes, and \$15 billion in state and local taxes.

Although the Brewers Association (BA) and the National Beer Wholesalers Association (NBWA) often dominate the headlines when it comes to the business of beer, as a beer retailer the American Beverage Licensees (ABL) is an important resource that should be utilized, and has been the preeminent national trade association for independent retail since 2002.

Who is the ABL and what do they do?

ABL's members, numbering nearly 20,000, are comprised of on-premise (bars, taverns, restaurants, casinos) and off-premise (package stores) retailers. The ABL works to promote beverage retailers, their businesses, and their role in the alcohol marketplace.

"Aside from being the national voice for the alcohol retailer, and promoting their important role in our economy, we work diligently (nationally and federally) on reforming the taxes and fees that impact our members," explained ABL Executive Director John D. Bodnovich.

"The majority of ABL members are family-owned, single unit stores or bars that support their local economies and communities. For these important small to mid-size businesses, the ABL is ideal for providing Legislative, Legal, Regulatory and Administrative, and Education and Public Opinion services," explained Bodnovich.

A track record for success

Beyond the annual national meeting, and the networking and exchange of ideas the organization offers, recent policy successes by the ABL include saving retailers \$250/year in taxes and negotiating reforms to reduce the cost of debit card swipes when doing business.

Concluded Bodnovich, "Our industry is changing on a monthly, if not a weekly basis. As we look harder at how alcohol is produced, distributed and sold, it is incumbent upon retailers to educate and explain the benefits of the three-tier system, the value of locally-owned small business, and the variety that independent beverage licensees – be they on- or off-premise – provide to their customers and communities."

Who are the ABL affiliates in your area?

- Alabama Beverage Licensees Association
- Alaska CHARR
- Anchorage CHARR
- Arkansas Beverage Retailers Association
- Colorado Licensed Beverage Association
- Connecticut Package Stores Association
- Retail Beverage Council of the Florida Retail Federation
- Georgia Alcohol Dealers Association
- Beverage Retailers Alliance of Illinois
- Illinois Licensed Beverage Association
- Indiana Association of Beverage Retailers
- Indiana Licensed Beverage Association
- Kansas Licensed Beverage Association
- Kentucky Association of Beverage Retailers
- Kentucky Licensed Beverage Association
- Maryland State Licensed Beverage Association
- Massachusetts Package Stores Association
- Tavern League of Minnesota
- Mississippi Hospitality Beverage Association
- Montana Tavern Association
- Nevada Tavern Owners Association
- New Jersey Liquor Stores Alliance
- Empire State Restaurant & Tavern Association
- Metropolitan Package Stores Association
- New York State Liquor Stores Association
- Ohio Licensed Beverage Association
- Retail Liquor Association of Oklahoma
- Rhode Island Liquor Stores Association
- ABC Stores of South Carolina

- Licensed Beverage Dealers of South Dakota
- Texas Package Stores Association
- Virginia Licensed Beverage Association
- Tavern League of Wisconsin
- Wyoming State Liquor Association
- Wine & Spirits Guild of America: Wine & Spirits Guild of America has members in California, Delaware, Hawaii, Louisiana, Missouri, North Dakota and Tennessee, in addition to those in states represented by other ABL affiliates.

To get involved or to find out more about the ABL, go to www.ablusa.org.

Are You Thinking Out-of-the-Box?

How innovative is your store at selling beer? If you have promotions that go beyond refilling the cold box, we would like to share your ideas with our fellow *Brewer Trends* readers. E-mail me at mkuderka@mcbasset.com and include your contact information. If we write about your program in our column we will send you a free copy of *The Essential Reference of Domestic Brewers and Their Bottled Brand* (3rd edition).

WHAT'S BREWING

Radeberger Gruppe's Schöfferhofer Grapefruit now available

The latest addition to Germany's Radeberger Gruppe U.S. portfolio is a tangy wheat beer called Schöfferhofer Grapefruit. It is made by blending 50% natural grapefruit flavors of lemonade with classic Schöfferhofer Hefeweizen. It has a slightly sweet floral aroma; cloves and a hint of spice last throughout, complemented by lemon zest, a slight hop of dryness, and the refreshing citrus notes of the sun-ripened grapefruit. Schöfferhofer Grapefruit is available at select retailers nationwide for \$8.99 - \$9.99.

Bud Light Lime introduces Straw-Ber-Rita

Last April, Bud Light Lime Lime-A-Rita hit shelves, and in less than eight months, became the leading flavored malt beverage brand on the market, selling more than 500,000 barrels. Now, Lime-a-Rita will launch Bud Light Lime Straw-Ber-Rita, an 8% alc/vol flavored malt beverage. It's a Bud Light Lime with the taste of an authentic strawberry margarita. Both Straw-Ber-Rita and Lime-A-Rita are best enjoyed over ice. The new brand will be available in three pack sizes: 12-pack, 8 oz. cans; four-pack 16 oz. cans; and 24 oz. cans.

North American Breweries' launches Cicerone Scholarship Program

The learning academy at North American Breweries, named NABrewniversity, has launched its exclusive Mission to

Become a Master Cicerone Scholarship Program. The Program is designed to prepare qualified candidates to take the Cicerone Certification Program's Master Cicerone exam. The Program provides real-world experience in beer and brewing from a process, ingredients, historical, and service point-of-view. The application process for the program begins in August. Applications will be available to download on <http://nabscholarship.com/>. Once participants are chosen, the Program begins in October. Scholarships are valued at more than \$50,000 each.

Newcastle Brown Ale's 2013 campaign

Newcastle Brown Ale's 'No Bollocks 2013,' a new integrated national marketing campaign is an extension of its original No Bollocks platform launched in 2012. The new work continues Newcastle's dedication to bollocks-free ads by celebrating honesty. The campaign includes a series of TV and radio spots, digital, out-of-home and in-bar signage, posters, coasters and QR code tap handles rolling out throughout the year. The new marketing campaign coincides with the recent launch of a new 14.9 oz. Newcastle can, now available nationwide in 10-packs.

Fanfare Mobile enhances its Craft Beer Alerts Service

Fanfare Mobile has announced a new addition to its Craft Beer Alerts service. Joining Tap Alerts, which lets craft beer

establishments notify customers when their favorites go on tap, In-Stock Alerts lets them notify customers when their favorite bottled beers arrive in store. These targeted alerts allow the craft beer fan to opt-in to their favorite styles, breweries or specific beers at their favorite business. When the beer they're interested in is received and in stock, they get a message on their mobile phone. Alerts can be scheduled or go out immediately, and the business can optionally decide to allow customers to reserve a quantity to have set aside by responding to the text alert. The service, based on SMS text messaging, is compatible with 99% of the phones on the market today.

Oskar Blues Brewery expands single serve can offerings

Oskar Blues Brewery continues to push the boundaries of craft beer in a can by releasing Mama's Little Yella Pils in the 19.2oz single serve royal pint can. The brand will be available throughout the brewery's 31-state distribution area. Mama's Little Yella Pils is Oskar Blues' second offering in the single-serve can following the unveiling of Dale's Pale Ale. The Royal Pint is approximately the height of a 24-oz. can and the diameter of a 16-oz. can. Oskar Blues remains the only brewer (craft or otherwise) in North America who uses the unique 19.2 ounce single-serve can.

