

Craft Beer Under Pressure

Strategic Marketing to Survive and Scale

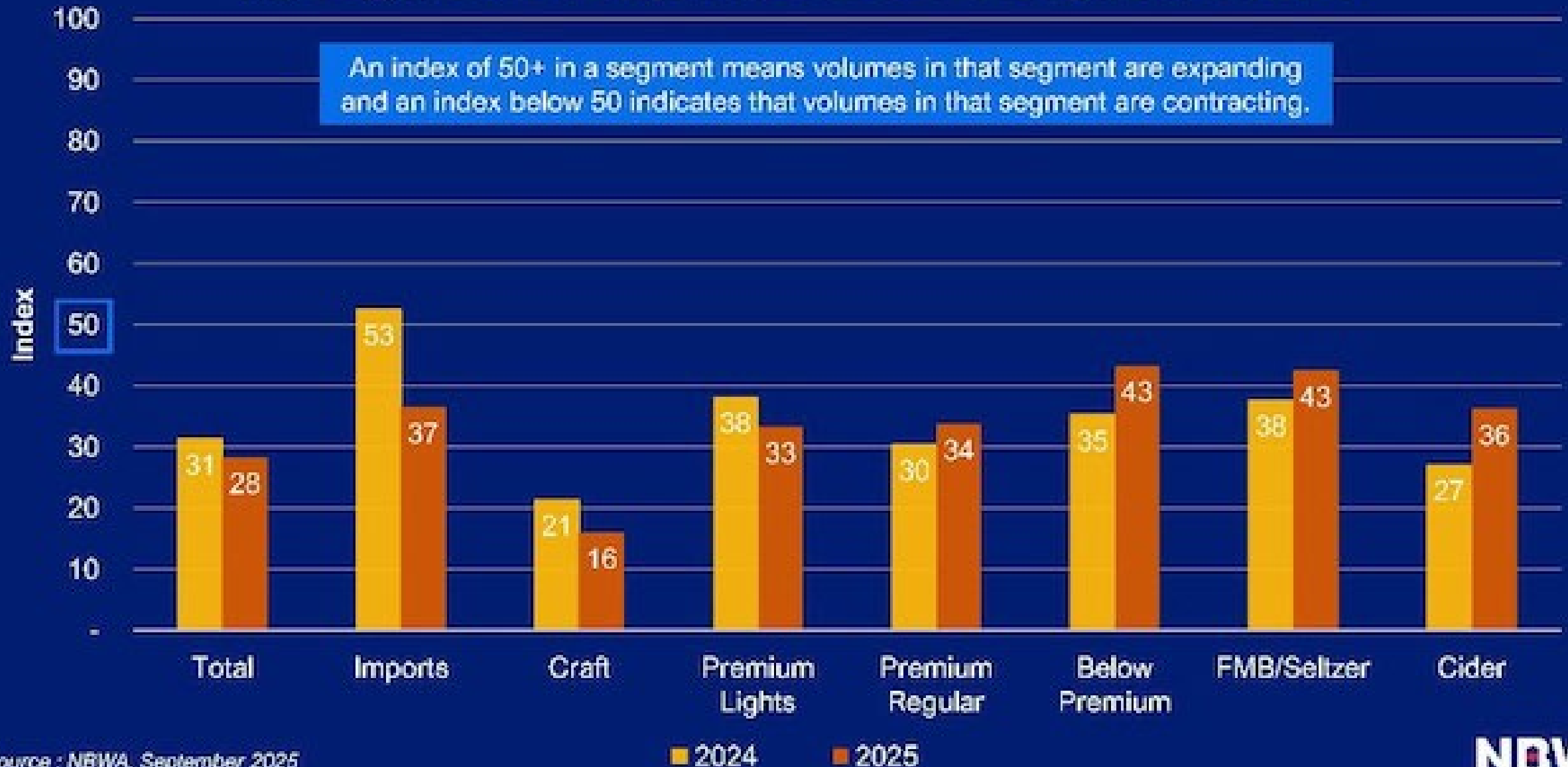
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NBWA Beer Purchasers' Index

All Segments for September 2024 vs September 2025

An index of 50+ in a segment means volumes in that segment are expanding and an index below 50 indicates that volumes in that segment are contracting.



Ways Breweries Are Responding

- Diversifying the portfolio of beverages.
- Co-packing to reduce operational cost.
- Shrinking distribution footprint.
- Closures and consolidations.
- Workforce reductions.

Ways Breweries Are Responding

Reducing or eliminating
marketing efforts.

Why Optimize Your Marketing Now

- Helps build brand awareness.
- Creates storytelling opportunities.
- Puts you on the front end of a rebound.
- Supports loyalists and local community.
- **Is the most effective survival tactic!**

What You Take Away

**Shortcuts to marketing
that actually works.**





About Market Your Craft

- Fractional marketing project management.
- Sweet spot: storytelling, planning, automation.
- 20+ years in beer, wine, spirits, and non-alcoholic.
- Assistant Brewer for BJ's Restaurants, homebrewer.
- Live in Denver, part-owner in an Iowa brewery.



About Market Your Craft

BEER



WINE



SPIRITS



About Merlot Marketing



- National marketing agency.
- Services include public relations, brand strategy, social media, advertising, and digital communications.
- **Consider:** if you want journalists and media talking about your brewery.
- Visit merlotmarketing.com for info.

One Simple Blueprint

- Drive organic search to your website.
- Grow taproom traffic with email.
- Sharpen your social media activity.
- Activate drinkers with a mobile app.
- Streamline operations with AI.



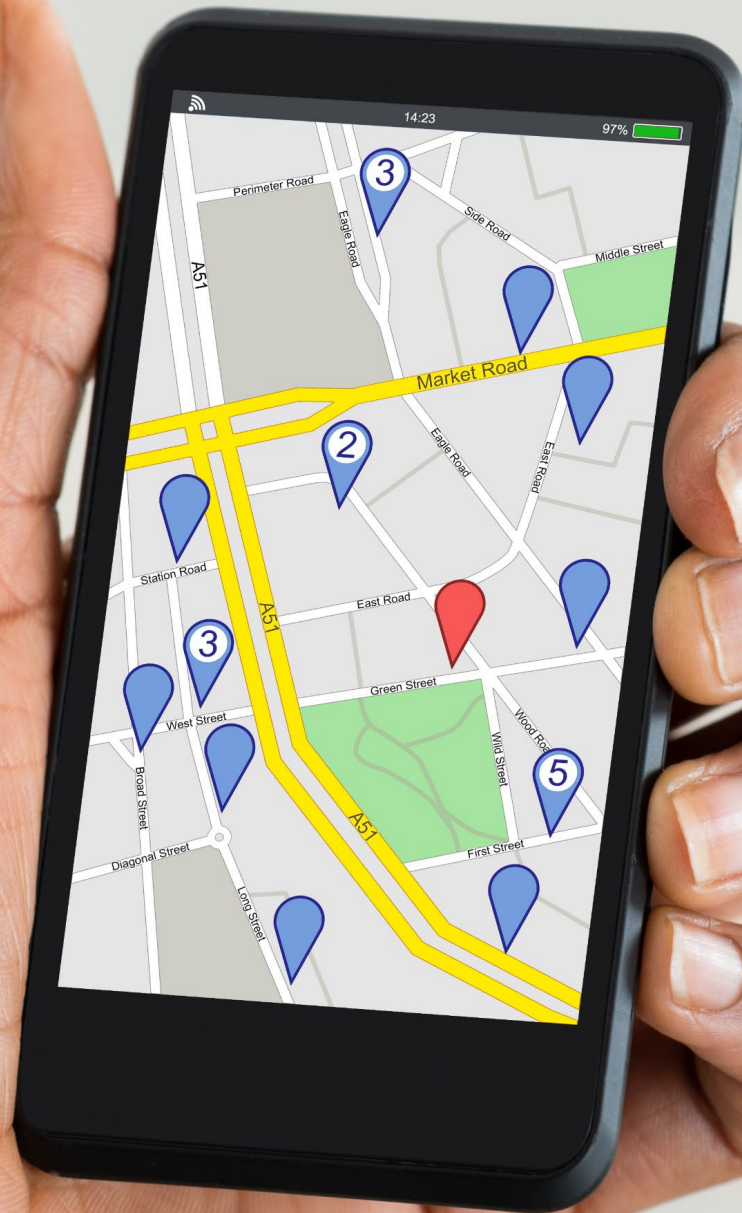
Guidance on Promotions



What we understand from the ABC:

- No discounting alcohol for a select group or timeframe.
- Drink specials must be offered to all customers.
- Cannot provide beer for free as part of a club.
- Can provide free merch, food, events, gift cards, mug.
- Can give away or discount alcohol for a private event.





1. Why Organic Search Matters

- Your brewery is one of many available to drinkers.
- You need a website and content designed for search.
- A “Brewery Near Me,” Google search should find you.
- Descriptors matter like family-friendly, food options, etc.
- It’s feeding Artificial Intelligence (AI) responses!





Find Our Beer ▾ Beer With Purpose ▾ Connect ▾ Food Calendar

Core Beer



Park Circle

Juicy Pale Ale, 5.5% ABV

This American Pale Ale is our year-round hop-forward pale offering. Expect strong tropical aromas, a soft body, with subtle juiciness and haze.



Red Fox

Irish Style Red Ale, 5% ABV

A classic Irish Red, the hallmark toasty cocoa first impression puts you squarely in one place—Ireland—sharing a pint elbow to elbow at the neighborhood pub. Layers of subtle fruit—apricot, plum, even tomato—underpin the classic malty tones.



Looking East

West Coast IPA, 6.2% ABV

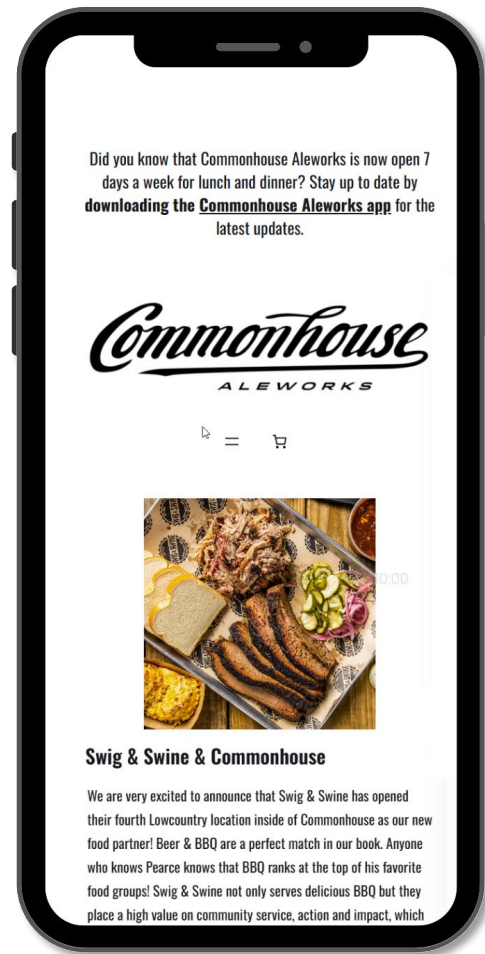
This hop-forward IPA is Commonhouse's West Coast IPA, bursting with citrusy and resinous flavors. Centennial, Chinook and Simcoe hops lend flavors that will remind you of citrus peel, piney mango, and grapefruit.



The Air is Salty

Gose Style Sour Ale, 5.2% ABV

The Air Is Salty is our interpretation of a traditional Gose-style beer. This zingy sour beer is accented with notes of coriander, as well as the addition of locally-sourced Bull's Bay Sea Salt. A refreshingly tart beer, great for the beach and boat.



commonhousealeworks.com commonhousealeworks.com

AScore: 25



Site Health	Visibility	Organic Traffic	Organic Keywords
92%	8.64%	1.4K	352
0%	0% 0 hours ago	+5.31%	+11.75%

Backlinks
2.3K
-0.64%

‘Google Zero’ Scenario



- Google user does a search.
- Served an AI-generated overview at the top of the results.
- They’re less likely to click the source links.
- Those sites see a decrease in traffic, regardless of ranking.
- Google effectively owns the experience!

Answer Engine Optimization (AEO)

Your brewery's next marketing challenge!

- Create high-quality, keyword-optimized content.
- Answer customer questions before they ask.
- Boost your digital footprint across quality sites.
- Optimize your website for users AND search.



Stay Focused

Your website should work hard to make you discoverable:

- Mobile-friendly sites rank higher.
- Where legal, online sales increases search visibility.
- Frontload 80% of your website 'value' on the homepage.
- Describe who you are, what's different, and what you offer.



Dial It Up! With Plugins

- WordPress with Neve Theme
- WooCommerce and Stripe
- The Events Calendar or Beatgig Calendar
- Google Site Kit
- Yoast SEO
- Age Gate
- Wordfence for security
- WP-Optimize or WP Rocket
- MyWorks for QuickBooks
- YITH WooCommerce Gift Cards
- LiveTapLists
- Stackable
- Smush



HOT: Multiple Pages Generator



If you use a Google Sheet to manage your tap list:

- Create SEO-optimized landing pages to attract drinkers.
- Update Google, website immediately updated.
- Improve your local SEO and ultimately AEO.
- Visit themeisle.com/plugins/multi-pages-generator for info.
- See it in practice at 6and40brewery.com.



One Critical Question

Every brewery has a website.
But does it answer the question:

Why should I care about your brewery?

Make it easy to say Yes! to visiting you.





2. Why Email Prompts Action

- Email is affordable, fast, personal, and action-oriented.
- Email has a high ROI.
- Drinkers are okay with receiving weekly emails.
- Half of emails are opened < 3 hours.
- Most consumers make a purchase after receiving an email.



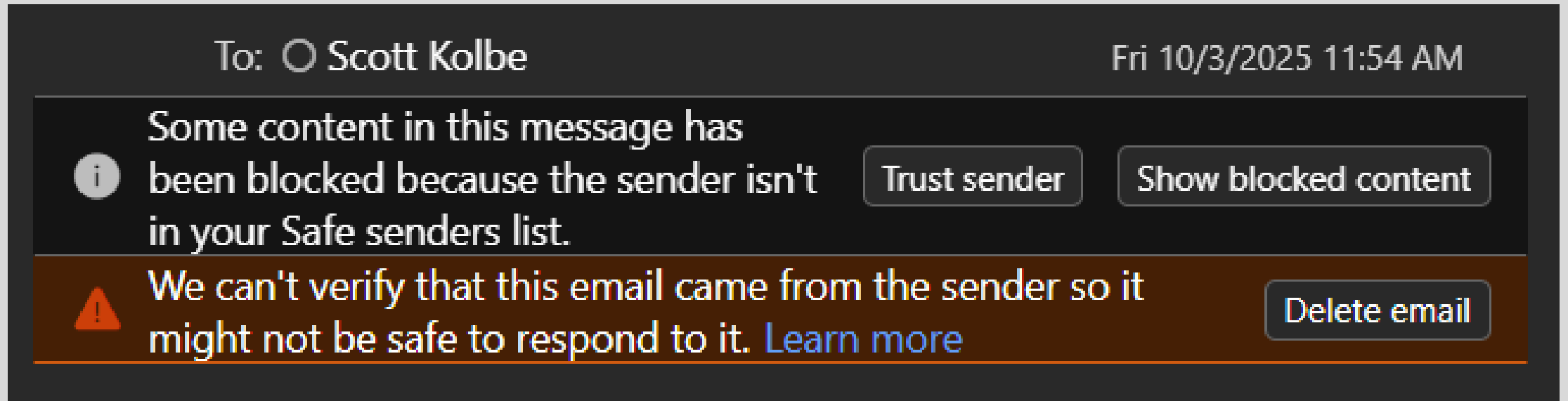
Stay Focused

Make sure your email is received and opened by your drinkers:

- Setup: use a proven template for consistency.
- Email Signup: allow visitors to opt-in at any touchpoint.
- Calls-to-Action: ensure each email has a clear ask and timeline.
- Mobile View: it's estimated 50-60% of emails are opened on mobile.
- DMARC, DKIM, SPF: ensure deliverability.



Oof. Not Good.



HOT: Mailchimp



- Drag-and-drop templates, email and SMS campaigns.
- Start with a free account then scale with a paid account.
- Easy to remain compliant with CAN-SPAM, GDPR.
- Mailchimp has a deliverability rate of over 99%.
- Visit mailchimp.com for info.

And Then There's Klaviyo...



- Highly-technical platform with better support.
- Seamless integration with Shopify sites.
- Offers more personalization and targeting options.
- Robust behavior reporting and member insights.
- Visit klaviyo.com for info.



Email Is Not Dead!

- Email is incredibly efficient at calls-to-action.
- Dedicate a separate email for marketing outreach.
- Scale communications with personalization and automation options.
- Welcome messages, event reminders, and release notifications save time while making emails feel more personal.
- Segmentation can boost click-through rates by 50%.





25



9



3



25



9

3. Social is Changing

- Breweries are no longer seeing the ROI on social media.
- Gone are the days when social was 100% of your marketing!
- Fact is, your posts are being served to 10-20% of followers.
- Unlike email and apps, there's no 1:1 deliverability guarantee.
- Algorithms favor paid advertisers!



Stay Focused

- You DON'T need to post multiple times a day!
- It's okay to be a little unpolished versus staged and perfect.
- Social can be effective if there's time, but less so if there's immediacy.
- Lifestyle photos and videos help drinkers see themselves enjoying a beer in your taproom. **Share with permission!**
- Formats/Guidelines change, so stay up-to-date.



HOT: Sprout Social



- Post to all platforms at once!
- Manage a monthly content calendar aligned with releases, events.
- Conduct a competitor audit to understand peers' post performance.
- Social listening to discover conversations that matter to your drinkers.
- Track and report engagement metrics for continuous improvement.
- Visit sproutsocial.com for info.





Today



September 2025



List

Week

Month



AI Assist



Share



Filters

Profiles

Viewing all

Post Types

Viewing all

Tags

Viewing all

[Clear All](#)

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

10:00 pm

...

10:00 pm

...

12:29 pm

... 0.7%

10:22 am

Us football season stock up...

... 2%

11:34 am

Love to see you

... 0.7%

9:59 am

... 0%

10:56 am

We're at

... 0%

1:06 pm

... 0.8%

10:23 am

... 0.6%

11:35 am

... 0.8%

10:15 am

Great time to stock up on...

... 0%

1:07 pm

... 0.8%

10:00 pm

...

1:25 pm

Football brews

... 4%

4:39 pm

Perfect water companion

... 1%

[View 1 more](#)

Which Platforms?



Focus your time and energy:

- 18-29 years – YouTube (93%), Instagram (76%), Facebook (68%), Snapchat (65%)
- 30-49 years – YouTube (94%), Facebook (78%), Instagram (66%), Pinterest (43%)
- 50-64 years – YouTube (86%), Facebook (70%), Instagram (36%), LinkedIn (30%)
- 65+ – YouTube (65%), Facebook (59%), Pinterest (22%), Instagram (19%)

It's estimated 69.2% of Millennials are using social media.

sproutsocial.com/insights/new-social-media-demographics



What About A Mash-Up?



- Lines are blurring between digital, email, and social.
- Pull your existing social feed into your website.
- Lifestyle content and the appearance of being up-to-date.
- Share links in bio to drive traffic to website landing pages.
- Visit [Smash Balloon](#) and [Linktree](#) for info.



Paid Influencers?

- Most breweries can't afford it. Or won't benefit from it.
- Influencers are paid whether or not their followers buy your beer.
- The more local your business, the less impact Influencers will make.
- Likes or comments are fine; were you successful at growing sales?
- Which platform do your drinkers use?





4. Activate Drinkers With An App

- Give drinkers a branded mobile app!
- Highly effective at reaching and engaging current customers.
- Direct messaging to their phone's home screen.
- Higher open rate than email; no per-SMS message charge.
- Drive repeat visits with loyalty features.



Stay Focused

A mobile app may be right for your brewery if you want:

- Better ROI: apps boast 97% reach, 25% engagement, and 10x return.
- Subscription programs make managing membership easy.
- Tighter Controls: rewards that work with any POS system
- Digitized Loyalty: no more paper cards!



HOT: TapWyse



- Move drinkers to act with your brewery's own branded mobile app!
- Push notifications, digital mug clubs, memberships.
- Loyalty, punch cards, rewards, custom content.
- Plays nicely with POS, website, and social media.
- Visit tapwyse.com for info.



A Way To Retain Customers

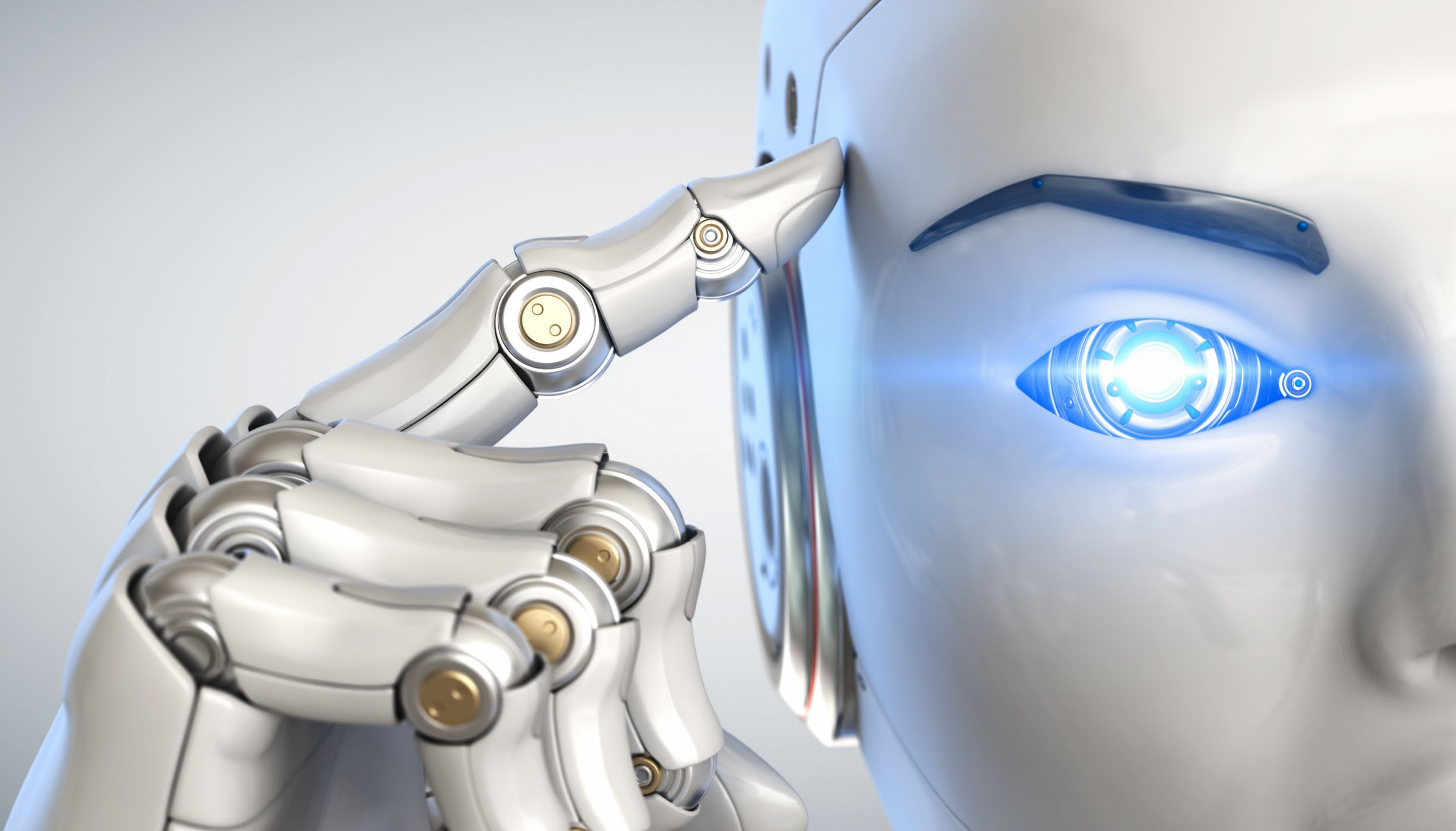
- Consider a program that costs the same as the liquid.
- Mug Club costs \$80: entitles you to 10 x \$8 regularly priced beers per month; and we add a free mug or any merch.
- Subscription costs \$140: entitles you to 20 x \$7 regularly priced beers per month; and we add exclusive event access or food discounts.



Concerns Debunked!

- It's less expensive than you think!
- You're in complete control – no coding necessary!
- The cost is predictable, and the return can be immediate.
- Drinkers of all ages will use this if you promote it.
- You have access to tons of analytics.



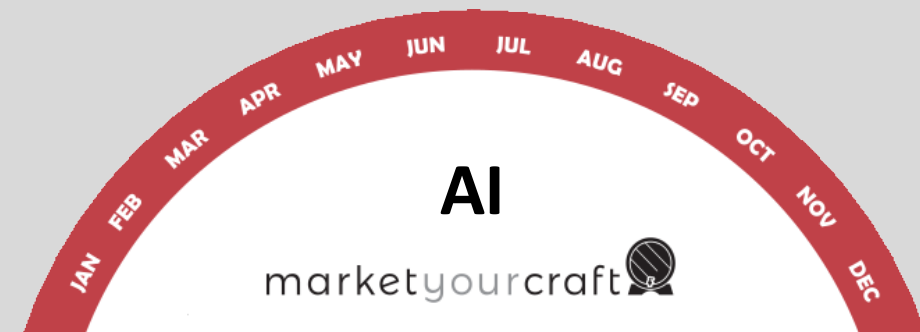


5. Leveraging AI With Caution

- **AI is a tool, not a strategy.**
- AI doesn't understand humor, culture, or local context.
- **AI can't replace your brand's human voice.**
- Accuracy isn't guaranteed; hallucinations are real.
- Data privacy and compliance matter.
- Energy usage and sustainability.

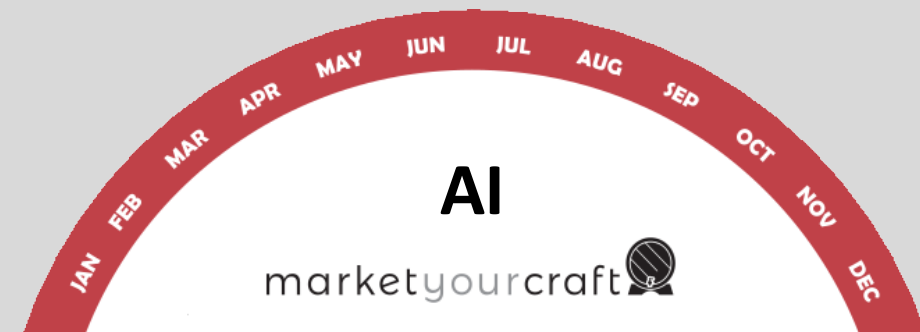
Stay Focused

- Content Creation: social posts, web events copy, email.
- Image cleanup versus creation; be careful with video.
- Prospecting: replace current customers with 3x new.
- Storytelling: AI can't create your story, but it can help tell it.
- Reporting: spotting trends/opportunities.



Services Worth Exploring

- Adobe Express, Canva, and Shutterstock: stock imagery, rapid content creation, A/B testing of messaging, social media posts.
- Windsor.ai: connectors for smart reporting.
- ChatGPT and Gemini: getting better, struggles with layered logic.
- SendBird.ai: leaning into 'Agentic' AI with a pricey chatbot.
- Storybrand.ai: Donald Miller's 'Building a Storybrand' via AI tools.
- Apollo.io: lead generation, CRM, data enrichment.



HOT: Chatbase



- 24x7 customer service and sales agent on your website.
- Train on your data, then configure actions/responses.
- Dialogues and responses improve over time.
- Complex issues are automatically routed to a human.
- Review analytics and insights.
- Free to start. Visit chatbase.com for info.

- ▶ Playground
- 🕒 Activity
- 📊 Analytics
- 📁 Sources
- ⚡ Actions
- 👤 Contacts
- 🚀 Deploy
- ⚙️ Settings

Playground

Agent status: • Trained

Save to agent

Configure & test agents 

Compare

Model

 GPT-4o Mini

Temperature

0



Reserved

Creative

AI Actions

No actions found

Instructions (System prompt)

Base Instructions

 Yeast Buddy



 Yeast Buddy

Hi, how can I assist you today?

VISIT **PROPAGATELAB.COM** TO
TRY CHATBASE AI OUT, OR TO
BUY YOUR FAVORITE YEAST ;-)

What services do you offer?

What Propagate yeast is closest to mine?

 Powered by Chatbase

Message...



Bonus: Essential Reporting

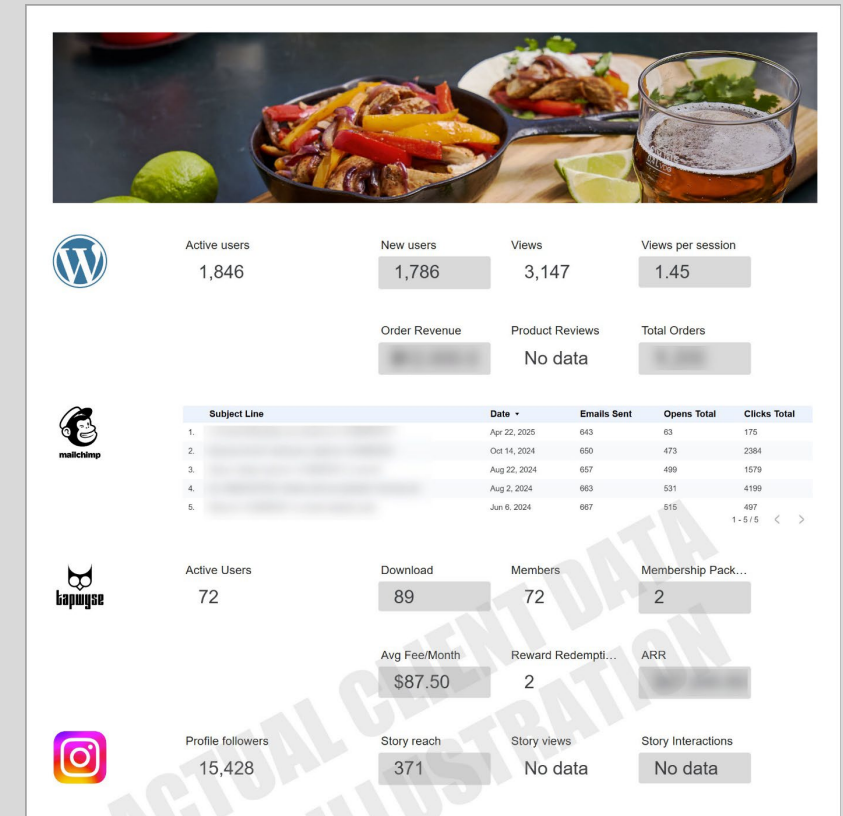
- Start with the end in mind.
- Track both financial and engagement metrics.
- Keep reporting simple and consistent.
- Assign ownership for data collection.
- Use data to drive storytelling and action.



HOT: Google Looker Studio

- Website: traffic, users, sales
- Email: opens, clicks, unsubscribes
- App: fees, rewards, annual revenue
- Social: reach, engagement
- POS: spend, categories, app users

Visit lookerstudio.google.com for info.



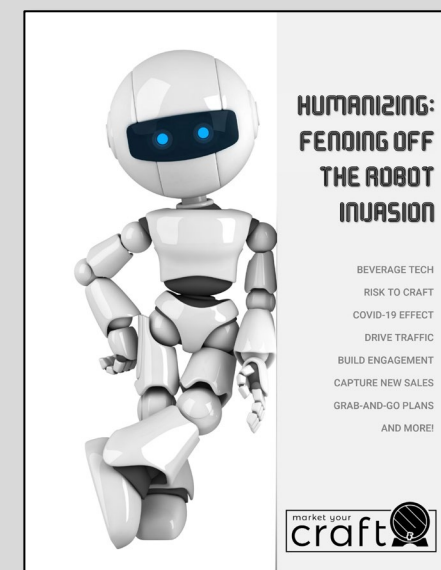
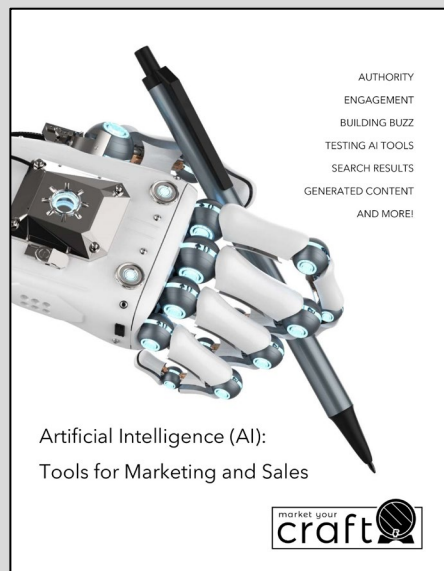
Important Caveats*

Successful marketing also relies on:

- Quality Product
- Events
- Public Relations
- Tasting Room Experience
- **Marketing as a budget line item!**







visit marketyourcraft.com/guides to
download any Guide for free today!

CODE: NCCBC2025



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