

Suggested Topics for the 2022 Craft Brewers Conference

The suggestions below have been outlined by the Seminar Subcommittee for the 2022 Craft Brewers Conference. The topics suggested are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather a guide to potential speakers to some of the top priority topics that the subcommittee would like to see presented on at this year's event. Hopeful speakers are welcome to submit proposals beyond the scope of these suggestions but are encouraged to keep them in mind when planning their proposal content.

Brewing Operations & Beer Styles

Every distinct beer style has a unique history and characteristics, and is brewed using specific techniques. Similarly, every brewery—from the smallest local brewpub to the largest regional or national packaging brand—has its own set of brewing processes and engineering challenges. Brewing experts in this track will highlight current beer styles and the techniques used to brew them, as well as ways to maximize quality and efficiency in your brewery operations, no matter the size.

Suggested topics for this track:

- Understanding haze stability; causes of instability and processes for ensuring stable haze
- Historical beer styles, including history and trends, recipes, and ingredients
- Blending beer and high gravity brewing
- Brewing with smoke and smoked malts
- Beer foam, including creation, retention, standards and measurement, and consumer perception
- Techniques for brewing low calorie, no alcohol, and low alcohol beers
- Best practices for managing multiple yeast strains
- Recipe development and effective scaling techniques; could include available software/tools and implications for contract brewing
- Pump sizing and selection for various applications, including care and maintenance
- Small-scale flash pasteurization
- Practical and low-cost tips for propagating yeast in a small brewery
- Carbon filtration best practices in seltzer production
- Beer styles reliant on water chemistry
- Beer maturation techniques, including benefits and equipment considerations
- Understanding and properly managing wastewater in your brewery
- Hop-related processes and techniques
- Carbonation, including challenges with force carbonating
- Best practices and unique considerations in lager brewing
- Cleaning under pressure
- Alternatives to CO₂ for purging tanks and limiting CO₂ usage in general
- Equipment procurement, including assessing and addressing used equipment

Business & Leadership

Running a brewery is about more than just making good beer. Things like finance and accounting, hiring and staff motivation, and change management are all just as important to keep your business healthy. This track is intended for owners, managers, and leaders in the craft brewing industry. Join these sessions to open your mind, be inspired, and learn to be a more effective leader.

Suggested topics for this track:

- Our responsibility as an industry and as individual businesses to be a voice for good, including ways and reasons to contribute to specific causes and social movements
- Building successful non-profit partnerships that create financial win-wins
- Alternative options for company structures (ESOPs, B-Corps, etc.) and how to effectively transition your business
- Leadership development and resources for small businesses
- Learning to delegate and trust your employees; understanding the difference between "leading" and "managing"
- Maintaining your company culture and motivating staff, especially during a crisis
- Promotions and how to manage going from co-worker to supervisor/boss; managing personal vs. business relationships
- Human resources (HR) for breweries without an HR department, including options for outsourcing
- Developing and evolving your employee benefits program in a changing industry
- Strategies for staff retention, including establishing policies that encourage employee health and work-life balance
- Practical options for providing brewery employee insurance; how to start an insurance pool with your guild/city/region
- Staff training and on-boarding new employees
- Brewery finance workshop/crash course; understanding profits and costs
- Maintaining healthy boundaries, work-life balance, and the importance of taking time off
- Resources for the brewery industry on mental health, anxiety, and depression
- Tipping and service models; success stories from changing your tipping policy
- Setting goals for your business and establishing metrics to drive behavior to meet them
- Workplace harassment prevention and training – next steps for the craft beer industry
- Contract brewing and alternating proprietorships, including setting up for success, negotiating mutually beneficial agreements, TTB compliance, and more
- Launching an internship program and other ways to encourage new, diverse participation in our industry
- The importance of being politically active; how to get involved in government affairs – local, state, and federal

Craft Beer Culture

All of us in the craft beer industry recognize how unique and collaborative our community is. This seminar track celebrates the history of craft beer and the ways it has changed the landscape of the overall food and beverage industry in America and around the world. Seminars will dive into important conversations about how we can challenge ourselves to foster a more inclusive and diverse craft brewing community for both brewers and beer lovers alike.

Suggested topics for this track:

- Update on industry-wide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts, including specific stories from breweries who have made positive changes
- Benchmarking your DEI efforts; how to measure success
- Diversifying your taproom and creating a welcoming space for all

- Re-envisioning the culture of the craft beer industry; where are we now and where do we want to go?
- Accountability and action; accepting responsibility and responding to a crisis
- Recognizing and addressing mental and physical health/well-being in the craft beer industry
- Creating safe and responsible beer festival and event environments
- Parenting and creating space for parents in the craft beer industry
- Effective communication and project management tools for brewery employees, including potential labor/overtime considerations
- Removing barriers and fostering inclusion in your hiring and recruiting practices
- De-escalation techniques and dealing with problem customers
- Responsible beer naming and avoiding cultural appropriation
- Approachability in your beer descriptions and terminology
- Promoting awareness and addressing implicit bias in your business decisions, communication, and employee interactions
- Decision making and charitable giving; being intentional with the causes, philanthropies, and community groups you support

Government Affairs, Legal & Export Development

It's essential for every small business to stay up to date on the rules and regulations affecting their operations. Attend the seminars in this track to make sure you're aware of the risks and opportunities in today's national and global environment. Topics will cover everything from taxes and tariffs, to changes in state and federal laws, to the things you need to know to export your beer abroad.

Suggested Export Development topics:

- Developing a plan to market and sell your beer abroad
- Evaluating potential import partners
- Importer/distributor relationships and expectations when exporting
- Navigating export compliance and regulations
- Evaluating ROI of overseas marketing opportunities like festivals, trade shows, and competitions
- Understanding the logistics of exporting beer

Suggested Government Affairs & Legal topics:

- Government affairs update for craft brewers
- Cybersecurity and privacy law for small companies
- The importance of being politically active; how to get involved in government affairs – local, state, and federal
- FDA compliance and legal considerations for product formulation
- What does cannabis legalization mean for brewers?
- Trademark bootcamp for brewers
- Direct-to-consumer
- Understanding the legal implications of producing across beverage alcohol categories
- Understanding the Biden Administration Executive Order on competition and its impact on your brewery

Quality & Ingredients

Quality management is critical for continued success in the brewing industry. Seminars in this track will help you build your own sensory and quality programs, as well as source, analyze, and properly use the highest quality ingredients to brew the best beer possible.

Suggested topics for this track:

- Best practices for brewing with experimental yeasts
- Mash quality considerations, including ingredients and milling quality controls; optimizing your mash recipe for unique beer styles
- Maintaining yeast health and fermentation efficiency in inhospitable environments
- Fruited and spiced beers – how to obtain and maintain a consistent product
- New techniques and best practices for souring, esp. for very small breweries, including food safety implications
- The importance of traceability and strategies for implementation at any size brewery
- Integrating quality control measures into the product development process
- Understanding, measuring, and managing hop bitterness from wort to beer
- Running sensory panels of all sizes and understanding the value to your brewery
- Barley varieties and impacts on beer flavor
- Water: supply, mash, sparge, de-aerated, reverse osmosis
- Beer shelf life and stability, including both sensory and microbiological considerations
- Raw material sensory analysis, quality assessment, and its effect on decision making
- Hop selection – how to do it at breweries of various sizes
- Climate change implications and potential effects on beer ingredient quality
- Aluminum cans, can liners, and general packaging tech innovations
- Brewing with cereal adjuncts, with a focus on using adjuncts for flavor, extract, and haze
- Consumer sentiment towards bioengineered foods, beverages, and esp. craft beer

Safety & Sustainability

In order to ensure the long-term success of the craft beer industry, it is vital that every brewery is committed to safety and sustainability. Nothing is more important than maintaining a safe and healthy environment for your employees and customers. This track is all about providing you with the resources you need to build a culture in your brewery that fosters environmental stewardship and protects your staff and equipment from harm.

Suggested topics for this track:

- Safety implications related to mental and emotional well-being, including workplace stressors, mental health, and substance abuse disorders
- Emergency action planning, OSHA requirements and beyond
- Preventing heat disorders, heat exhaustion and stroke
- Writing PPE policies for your specific brewery, from hazard assessment to training employees on proper use, care and fit
- Respiratory and hearing protection in breweries
- Boil over protection and burn prevention
- Building an inclusive safety culture that promotes personal responsibility and peer accountability
- Effective metrics/indicators for promoting safe behavior in your brewery

- Root cause analysis and implementing effective corrective actions
- Recycling co-ops and other creative solutions for reducing brewery waste
- Accurately sourcing recyclable materials and communicating recyclability to consumers
- Understanding your legal and ethical responsibilities for brewery sustainability
- Sustainability challenges in the beer supply chain and what they mean for the craft beer industry
- Brewery building/design considerations and planning for a changing climate
- Challenges and solutions for brewery water reduction and water recycling
- Climate impacts and policy trends; key climate, energy, and water legislation
- Establishing a successful sustainability culture in your brewery
- Evaluating used equipment and how to know when equipment is at the end of its life
- How to get free support (from your utility/insurance provider and/or OSHA consultation) for safety and sustainability projects

Sales, Distribution & Marketing

It doesn't matter how good your beer is if no one is buying it. The seminars in the Sales, Distribution & Marketing track will provide breweries with best practices for selling beer on- and off-premise, working with retailers and distributors, and designing successful marketing strategies to grow your brand.

Suggested topics for this track:

- Ins and outs of freight and fleet management
- Negotiating mutually beneficial distribution agreements
- Effective cooperation between the production and marketing departments
- Establishing, maintaining, and growing relationships with both chain and independent retail partners
- Understanding emerging beverage category trends; how and when/if to incorporate new trends into your business
- Strategically leveraging beer collaborations to grow your brand
- What makes a successful ride-along; best ways to support to your distribution and retail partners in selling your beer
- Social media strategy and metrics for small companies without a marketing budget
- Website 101: essential elements, design, and user experience
- Utilizing events and festivals to market your brand, including best practices for running your own event and participating in others
- Designing a profitable merchandise program that is integrated into your overall marketing
- Pros and cons of self-distribution vs. working with a distributor
- Understanding and utilizing sales data and analytics available to your brewery
- Using ambassadors to promote your brand in your own taproom and elsewhere
- Marketing and sales strategies for beer to-go, both from your brewery and in the on-premise market
- Establishing your e-commerce strategy: when and how many resources to allocate
- Using donations and philanthropy to increase sales and connect with your community
- Important sales and marketing tools that can help you sell more beer on- and off-premise

Taprooms & Brewpubs

Some of the most important issues for on-premise breweries are simply about hospitality – how can you continue to make meaningful connections with your visitors to keep them coming back for more? This

track will include seminars on enhancing your customer experience, training taproom staff, building programs for successful events and entertainment, and maintaining customer engagement during good times and bad.

Suggested topics for this track:

- Working with outside vendors (food trucks, yoga, live music, comedy, etc.) to attract new customers
- Strategies for mug/bottle clubs, loyalty programs, and memberships, including ways to create and reward “superfans,” and balancing different tiers or types of memberships
- Bottle shares in the taproom, including legal considerations and opportunities for partnering with homebrewers and other breweries
- Front-of-house hiring, compensation (including benefits and tipping), and on-boarding strategies
- Managing staff roles and investing in employees as a very small business owner wearing many hats
- New and changing service models (in-app ordering, bar service only, self-pour models, etc.) and the benefits and pitfalls of each
- Hiring and training a diverse workforce for a changing customer landscape
- Using point of sale data and other metrics to design, analyze, and evolve your taproom offerings (flagship vs. rotating beers, guest taps, non-beer options)
- Best practices for coordinating private events and space buy-outs for various sizes of facilities
- Taproom design and its effect on the perception and enjoyment of your product
- Strategies for community engagement through your taproom or brewpub; becoming a community leader
- Successful charity fundraising and philanthropy partnerships to bring in new customers to your taproom or brewpub
- Establishing the role of your tasting room in your overall business and how to define success
- Navigating new business models and platforms for delivery and to-go beer and food
- Ghost kitchens – what are they and how/when to use them