

Designed to meet your needs

The key to success in craft beverage packaging lies in a few areas. One of the most obvious is partnering with a strong and innovative player such as **Tonejet** with its Digital Printing Engine.

You've created an excellent craft beverage, but how do you take it to market and maintain healthy margins?

As a printer converter, I'm currently hindered by the economics of traditional can and bottling technologies – how do I serve the craft beverage growth market? As a contract brewer, how can I increase my brand awareness and drive sales?

Recognising the significant growth in the craft beverage market, as an investor, what are the opportunities available to me?

These are all the questions being asked by existing suppliers to the craft beverage market, or those looking to capitalise on its growth. And the answer to many of those questions lies in the brand new, cutting-edge technology that enables the canning of craft beverages at low cost and with no restriction on run lengths.

How is this the answer one may ask. Well, new digital can-printing technology is unchaining the traditional craft beverage industry, and removing one of the most expensive and restrictive part of its production – traditional bottling and labelling.

Craft beverage producers

Digital can-printing will enable craft beverage producers to print and can their product, exactly as they want it, and in exactly the quantity they need it. It provides this at low cost, ensuring that craft beverage producers can maintain healthy profit margins.

In addition, it now enables them to capitalise on short runs or special brews, specifically for seasonal campaigns or events, where they need to cost-effectively can products in small batches. What's more, by supplying produce in digitally printed cans, craft beverage producers are able to use the 360° area of the can, with much more surface area than bottles, to brand their products and better tell their unique story.

Printer converters

Due to the traditional analogue printing process used for can decoration or labelling, and the economic crossover point with these technologies, minimum order quantities of around 150,000 and lead times of several months have been a huge barrier for the craft beverage market. But for printer converters looking to capitalise on this burgeoning market, an in-house, custom digital can-printing operation such as the Tonejet Digital Printing Engine provides the flexibility for smaller-batch can production (5,000–150,000) and a route to profitable new business opportunities.

Contract brewers

By their very nature, contract brewers choose a contract-based business model to enable them to focus their capital, time and energy on building brand awareness and developing sales – and not on brewing, packaging and production logistics. This has been a popular 'start-up' model for many businesses for some years.

But with a growing focus on branding and consumer communication, contract brewers have increasingly looked to



Digital printing is allowing the craft beverage market to flourish.

cans. Cans enable 360° on-pack communication, and with the use of digital can-printing using technology like Tonejet, there is also the opportunity for valuable personalisation.

Cans are also more light-resistant, lighter and more reliable than glass so, mixed with digital printing for special event branding, they are ideal to serve the outdoor event market. With the availability of new digital can printing technology, the shift to cans is not only predicted to increase but to rise dramatically once digital can-printing services become more widespread.

Potential craft beverage investors

The craft beer market, specifically, has been widely reported on in the past two years. Today, in the US alone, according to the Brewers Association, there are over 4,200 individual craft breweries producing in excess of 24 million barrels every year.

In 2015, the US craft beer market grew by 12.8%, representing 12.2% of the country's overall beer market. Compare this with the overall US beer decline of 0.2% and the evidence is clear. The craft beer market is in great health, with good and continued predicted growth representing a compelling investment opportunity for many. Additionally, exports of US craft beer have increased by 16.3% to 446,000 barrels a year.

In realising this potential, digital print technology for metal can decoration, whether that be in craft beer, or non-alcoholic craft beverages, wines or spirits, is expected to deliver the variety, flexibility and choice that producers need to succeed.

While digital can-printing is extremely popular among craft producers who have access to it, there is still a lack of availability to these services in most countries through the world. As such, printers from manufacturers like Tonejet and its partners, are seen as the key to unlocking significant investment opportunities, for a variety of craft beverage packaging business models – be that simply as a financial investor or in setting up individual custom digital can-printing operations. ■

Further information

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