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ARCH 41 NURSERY ROAD SW9 8BP LONDON

# LONDON Beer Brixton 6ms LAB

**RAISING THE BAR!  
FOR LONDON BEER LAB!**

INDUSTRY SECTOR:

Beverages

CLIENT COMPANY:

London  
Beer Lab

DESIGN CONSULTANCY:

Elmwood

SUBMISSION DATE:

*June 2017*



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The popularity of craft beer continues to rise. It's leading the way in sought-after artisan products and its growth shows little sign of slowing.

London Beer Lab, a small Brixton-based brewery, came to us with a big ambition – to achieve real cut through in this hugely competitive boutique market. It was doing well but had bigger things in mind. And, in order to achieve them, it needed a standout identity and a knockout concept that hipsters and high-income home brewers couldn't ignore.

So that's what we gave them. We raised the bar for London Beer Lab. We took its relatively beige identity and gave it serious character. We celebrated the joy of experimentation and put quality front and centre. We took the brand from average to outstanding – which has helped drive distribution and listings, and convert leads into sales. As a result of our strategic design, London Beer Lab has grown its customer base to the point where the brewery has now reached its capacity and is looking to expand.

**Word count: 170**

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## INCREASE IN WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

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133%

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## INCREASE IN MONTHLY SALES

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900%

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## INCREASE IN AVERAGE INCOME FROM WORKSHOPS

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169%

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## INCREASE IN ACCOUNTS SINCE LAUNCH

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13x

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# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## OUTLINE OF BRIEF:

Karl and Bruno, two friends who share a passion for beer, set up London Beer Lab in 2013. Originally a nano-brewery, the pair focused on running brewing workshops – an idea that stemmed from their proud positioning as an accessible and ‘open source’ brewery. In real terms, that meant they would welcome consumers into their workshops, invite them to brew their own beer, and then take home their creations.

While they were doing well running workshops and selling their beer locally, they knew they were capable of more. They saw an opportunity to not only grow their business, but also create a home-brewing community in London. They had visions of a ‘home brew club’ that would facilitate knowledge sharing and “harness the increased passion of workshopppers... so they could be part of something bigger.”

So they came to us in need of a bold new identity. They knew their label was small and basic. It lacked standout and didn’t communicate the brand’s golden point of difference – that the recipes were available to punters to try out at home... inviting discussion, as well as enjoyment. In order to compete with the big boys, they needed a serious makeover supported by a thorough business plan.

To create a more credible brand, they needed to tie the multiple facets of their business together. Only then would it become truly successful in a fiercely competitive market. The new identity needed to do two key things: help the pair reach their community home-brewing goals, and infiltrate local craft beer shops and pubs. Added to this, the label design needed to stay true to the brand’s inclusive history and be adaptable – offering flex to accommodate multiple new recipes and small batch brews.



# KEY OBJECTIVES

1. Create a credible brand to compete against a wealth of local and national competitors
2. Drive distribution and listings
3. Convert these new listings to sales
4. Create a home-brewing community

## DESCRIPTION

London Beer Lab was set up with the goal of teaching Londoners how to make beer. The brewery’s target audience was, and remains, the local boutique beer market – including hipsters and home brewers with high disposable incomes.



## OVERVIEW OF THE MARKET

The Guardian reported an 8% increase in the number of craft breweries between 2015 and 2016, taking the total approximate number up to 1,700 at the end of 2016. And according to Craft Beer World, in 2015 craft beer accounted for 2.5% of the overall beer market.

Competition is primarily locally-based, and for London Beer Lab, that meant Brixton Beer, Pressure Drop and Ubrew. Competition at a national level though is tough and shows little sign of weakening. In order to considerably grow its market share, any brand in this category needs to grab (and hold) the attention of big retailers and pub chains. Much like Scottish craft brewer BrewDog.

## PROJECT LAUNCH DATES:

*July / August*  
**2015**

## SIZE OF DESIGN BUDGET AND PRODUCTION COSTS:

Pro bono work.  
Elmwood invested  
£13.8k in studio time.







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## OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

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To really get under the skin of London Beer Lab, we naturally immersed ourselves in their world which of course meant participating in one of their workshops. We could see that sharing stories and experiences was integral to the business' success.

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## CRAFT AND CURIOSITY

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We knew our clients were concerned that 'home brewing' and 'experimental beer' could have potentially amateur connotations. So we needed to celebrate that these two were established experts who had been perfecting their craft since their teenage years.

We settled on a distinct new attitude for London Beer Lab – 'Craft and Curiosity'. It championed the expertise and imagination of the brewing process, as well as the joy of experimentation. It had a sense of fun and discovery wedded to it, and a natural essence of storytelling. After all, sharing stories, swapping recipes, playing with different malts to create new and exciting flavours – these are the things that really matter and the things underpinning the brand.

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## A DISTINCTIVE IDENTITY

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It was really important that we stayed true to the brand's history, so we took the conical flask from their original identity to signify the experimental part of their brewing. Because it needed to reflect the craft part of the brand it was only right that we worked with a top typographer to craft the word mark and create something truly unique.

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## BRINGING THE IDEA TO LIFE ON PACK

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We created a highly adaptable bottle label that was split into two halves, divided by a beautifully simple elastic band.

The top half was dedicated to ‘craft’ – a place where the brand identity could consistently live, regardless of the brew. It acted as a mark of quality and a consistent brand endorsement.

The bottom half then acted as the curiosity canvas. It contained all the nutritional information about the beer, and was removable to allow recipe enthusiasts to jot down their ideas and leave their feedback.

This simple and interactive mechanic meant people could effortlessly engage with the brand, staying true to its ‘open source’ positioning and community-centric goals. It became a true platform for versatility – celebrating the limitless joy of experimentation.

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## COST EFFICIENT

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The necessity to keep costs down was also strong – one, because of the fact that this was still a relatively young business and two, because small batch brewing and experimentation formed a big part of how the brand work.

Using cutting edge digital printing, we were able to create one die cut and print multiple variants on one sheet. This efficient method meant our clients could achieve vibrantly coloured labels at a low cost – accommodating their need to print multiple new recipes in modest batches, and meeting their budget requirements.

**Word count: 445**

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## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

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In an increasingly competitive and crowded marketplace, London Beer Lab's brews were regularly dismissed by venues before even being sampled, based solely on their branding.

Since their rebrand, London Beer Lab has been able to secure new listings, had to expand its premises to meet demand, and scale up production from an obscure nano-brewery level to that of a steadily growing microbrewery.

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### 1. CREATE A CREDIBLE BRAND TO COMPETE AGAINST A WEALTH OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL COMPETITORS

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Our rebrand has effectively raised London Beer Lab's profile. London bars such as Bossman Wines, that had previously dismissed the brand because they felt it looked 'amateur' changed their minds and started stocking it, excited by the punchy new identity.

The new look and feel also created a buzz in the local community, and word of mouth has contributed to a growth in the number of workshop attendees. The number of attendees has grown from circa 75 per month to between 150-200 per month as of February 2017. That's more than doubled the number of people who are actively engaging with the brand every month.

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#### INCREASE IN WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

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133%

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#### INCREASE IN AVERAGE INCOME FROM WORKSHOPS

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169%

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## 2. DRIVE DISTRIBUTION AND LISTINGS

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Wholesale customers have been far more positive about the beer and it is much quicker to sell as a result of shelf presence.

Since the launch of their new brand identity, London Beer Lab has gone from three repeat accounts to over 40.

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## 3. CONVERT LISTINGS TO SALES

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In terms of actual wholesale beer sales, London Beer Lab has gone from an average of £500 per month pre-relaunch to £5k per month post-launch. This means that it's achieved £30k in the six months post redesign, which would have taken them five years to achieve pre re-brand.

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## 4. CREATE A HOME-BREWING COMMUNITY AND EXPAND THE BUSINESS

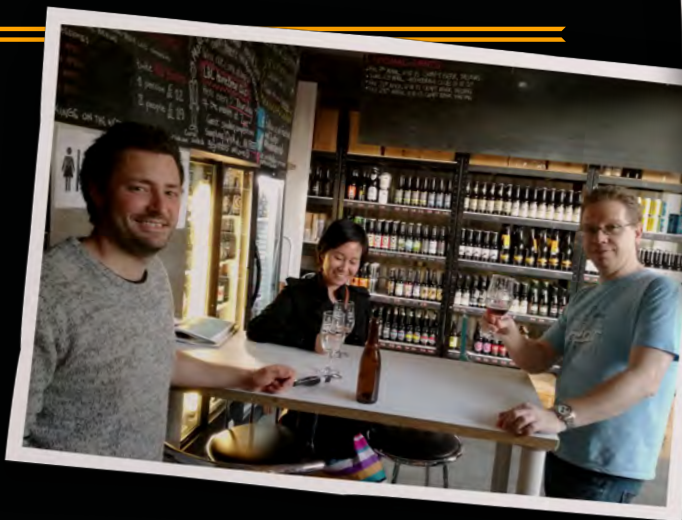
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Since launching the new brand identity, London Beer Lab has been able to scale up its production to go from a relatively unheard of nano-brewery to a steadily growing micro-brewery.

To meet growing demand, the business has increased its capacity by a third and recruited four extra members of staff. They've also just finished a major upgrade of the shop and brewing space to accommodate significantly increased production levels in the next 12 months.

In terms of creating a community, once a month London Beer Lab holds a session for home brewers to share ideas and celebrate their love of beer. In most cases, there's a guest speaker and a chance for Q&As, plus some tasting (of course). They've also started running competitions for brewers of all levels to engage with their fellow beer lovers and learn new and exciting recipes and techniques.

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## INCREASE IN ACCOUNTS SINCE LAUNCH

# 13<sup>x</sup>

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## INCREASE IN MONTHLY SALES

# 900%

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## CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

*“We knew our branding was not fit for purpose when it came to launching beers commercially. It was preventing us from getting our beers out to a wider audience for fear of embarrassment.*

*Elmwood took us under their wing and walked us through their entire process, taking our feelings and ambitions for the brand onboard, and giving us a concept that encapsulates so much of what was discussed in our very first meeting.*

*The execution has been flawless and we have been incredibly fortunate to be able to work with such a group of talented individuals.”*

**Karl O'Connor**  
Co-Founder, London Beer Lab

## AWARD WINS:

Graphis:

*Merit*

New York Festivals:

*Finalist*

Mobius:

*Certificate*



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## OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

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### HOW MUCH WAS THE SUCCESS DOWN TO DIVERSIFYING AND OFFERING OTHER BEERS TO CUSTOMERS?

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It's true that the brewery is selling other beers (not brewed by London Beer Lab) since relaunch, but the results reflect sales from their own brews.

The plan was always to create a home-brewing community with London Beer Lab at the centre, and the fact they're expanding the brewing space to meet demands and accommodate a growing appetite for workshops is proof of the brand's success.

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## IS IT DOWN TO ADVERTISING?

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The only other marketing activity undertaken by London Beer Lab has been social media-based to raise awareness and drive attendance of workshops. They've also upped their visibility at beer festivals to support this.

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### IS THEIR SUCCESS DUE TO THE GENERAL BOOM IN HOME-BREWING AND CRAFT BEER?

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The home-brewing industry has certainly experienced a boom in recent years and, as part of this trend, the craft beer market continues to grow. However, with more and more craft beer brands popping up, the pressure to stand out in the crowd is even stronger. We gave London Beer Lab a unique and engaging identity that expresses the premium quality of its products and showcases its creative personality. In doing so, we helped London Beer Lab raise its game in the fiercely competitive brewing industry.

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# RESEARCH RESOURCES

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## THE GUARDIAN, 3 OCT 2016

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**Number of UK breweries rises as craft beer shows no signs of going flat**

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/oct/03/uk-breweries-on-rise-craft-beer-sales-surge>

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## THE GUARDIAN, 15 APR 2017

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**How the beery vision of brewing a small fortune can fall flat**

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/apr/15/how-the-beery-vision-of-brewing-a-small-fortune-can-fall-flat>

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## THE TELEGRAPH, 20 AUG 2015

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**How Britain became hooked on homebrew by Jonathan Wells**

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/the-filter/11803139/How-Britain-became-hooked-on-homebrew.html>

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## CRAFT BEER WORLD, 13 JAN 2016

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**Craft beer market overview for 2015**

<http://www.craftbeerworld.co.uk/craft-beer-market-overview-for-2015-2015/>

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