

FOR PUBLICATION

INDUSTRY SECTOR:
Beverages

CLIENT:
Brew York Craft Brewery

DESIGN CONSULTANCY:
United by Design

SUBMISSION DATE:
30th June 2017

BREW  YORK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2015, the co-founders of Brew York knew what they were setting out to do; however the speed they have been able to achieve some of their goals has come as a shock even to them.

Branding has been at the core of their business plan since the beginning, and our challenge was to merge influences from a number of sources to create an impactful brand mark for Brew York which did not rely on category cues often seen in other beer brands, for example, the inclusion of the hop names within the labels or on bar collateral.

Having researched a lot of their aspirational brands in the craft beer market, we identified a clear benchmark for the Brew York brand recognising the need to be strong and dynamic in order to compete on bar and on shelf.

The collaboration between Brew York and United by Design has resulted in a successful year that has exceeded expectations and has smashed several 3 to 5 year targets for the brewery.

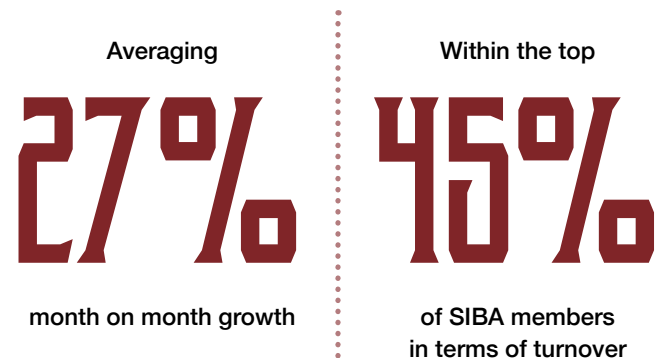
Word Count 289

“The strength of our branding, design and packaging has enabled us to exceed some significant commercial objectives of our 3-5 year business plan, within our first 9 months of brewing and trading.”

– Lee Grabham, Brew York
(Co-founder)

From launch of the brewery in March 2016 the brewery has achieved:

- Is within the top 45% of SIBA members in terms of turnover
- Confidently expanding the range beyond the norm
- Upped brewing capacity by 477%
- Tripled production
- #18 (of 204) on Trip Advisor's Things to Do in York



Stocked in two national chain supermarkets



PROJECT OVERVIEW



Outline of project brief

Key business objectives:

- Approach the market with an identity benchmarked alongside other strong brands in the industry
- Core products available in Cask, Keg and Can: Ensuring impact both on and off trade
- Selling 3 core beers, plus 6 seasonal releases: Develop a flexible brand ensuring a future-proof identity allowing for diversity
- Double the capacity and production of the brewery (5 year plan)
- Create confidence in a brand daring to be different
- Use York's provenance to attract consumers to a new brand

The brand needed to take on an already competitive arena, in terms of geography and product, and stand out in order to attract those already interested in craft beer, and those new to the market. The founders of the brewery had confidence in their product offer and wanted to make sure it caught people's attention.

An immediate challenge became apparent that 'fashionable' hops available for small scale brewing, those popular on bar, were harder to source. Therefore the brewery could not rely on name-dropping 'in vogue' hops to sell their beers; they needed a design solution that would capture attention and encourage consumers to try something new.

“To be the best brewery in York, offering fresh, innovative, top quality beers every time you try one. Beer isn't just about drinking it is about enjoying the experience, like sitting in the brewery where the beer is made and enjoying it at its freshest, or sitting by the river and sampling our latest creation.”

– Brew York

Lee and Wayne engaged United by Design while still in planning stage, ensuring a fully collaborative approach to the branding, personality, identity rollout and tone of voice for the brand. Having looked at the craft brewing industry in terms of design, they had a clear idea of their main competition. The brand needed the strength and flexibility to grow with the brewery and its outputs, be they cask, keg, bottle, can or extended merchandise. This helped to develop a strong, focussed brief and an even stronger result.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Description

Brew York was born when Wayne Smith and Lee Grabham had the opportunity to take voluntary redundancy within a few months of each other. The pair had already been successfully home brewing.

The brewery and taproom launched in April 2016 with cask, keg and bottled beer available. When the opportunity arose, the bottle range was dropped and immediately replaced with cans, as was the intention from the start.

Both Lee and Wayne believe cans offer a number of advantages including allowing more real estate for branding (although cans are overall smaller than bottles), keeping the product fresher and less likely to spoil. They also recognised the environmental advantages due the fact canning takes place in the brewery, resulting in a lower carbon footprint as well as more control over the production process, and the ease of transport and recycling.

Another key consideration when developing the brewery was the conscious decision to take an ethical approach in terms of using natural salts and creating vegetarian, and where possible vegan and gluten free beers, so as to be accessible to audiences who may have struggled finding suitable products in the market before.

Overview of market

Growth and differentiation:

- According to UHY, 520 craft breweries opened in the UK in 2016, a 55% increase from the 336 that opened in 2015.
- The average SIBA member carries 4-6 regular beers and 1-6 seasonal beers.
- SIBA members place branding, marketing, and design as third in their priorities for investing duty relief savings.
- The independent canned beer market has grown from 4 brands in 2014 to over 100 in 2016 and is increasing. (SIBA)
- SIBA has estimated in 2017, its members will only produce 1.4% of their beers for canning.
- On average, Level 1 SIBA members (up to 999HL) dedicate only 0.4% of their production to canning (2016)

Rise off trade:

- Asda aim to be a 'real destination for craft beer drinkers'. The Drinks Business predicts supermarkets stocking wider ranges of craft beer will develop an 'entry level' craft tier, overall benefitting the market by offering a new channel to attract consumers.
- Martin Constable (the Can Makers) suggested improved accessibility to canned craft beer is attracting a wider audience, specifically females, to what is considered a male product.
- Tesco have reallocated 350% of shelf space in the beer aisles to craft beer.

Consumer attitudes and spending patterns:

- The Grocer states although 41% of Brits are curbing their drinking, they are not spending less. The majority of 25-34 year olds are willing to pay more for better quality drinks.
- The Can Makers report notes that retail sales of craft beer have doubled in the last two years.
- 64% of packs in the take-home beer and cider market are cans, the largest growth being in 330ml units.
- In 2016 retail sales of single cans increased by 20%; the preferred unit for craft beers.

Launch date: April 2016

Initial investment: £4000

Word Count 842



OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

What we had to work with

The passion, dedication and ambition of Brew York's founder's, was compelling and endearing from the start.

Situated in a reclaimed warehouse, the brewery's industrial heritage resonates from within every exposed brick and pipe, creating a utilitarian yet charismatic interior.

What they wanted

Brew York wanted a dynamic, engaging brand that would 'hold its own' in a highly competitive sector. As a fresh-faced start up business, building recognition and instilling brand loyalty was key.

As avid home brewers with an interest in celebrating and experimenting with 'less fashionable' hops and styles the owners wanted to create further intrigue and interest based on instinctive reactions to the visual look of the product. Consumer confidence in the brand's reputation would be crucial to sales moving forward when competing with established brewers and the 'crowd favourite' hop varieties.



Brand mark

Centred on celebrating and amplifying the owners' ideas we took inspiration from the mythical figures featured in tribal narratives from around the world.

Brew York's identity is constructed from multiple illustrative elements that together encompass the 'spirit' of the brand.

Subtle layers of concealed detail create a playful intriguing brand mark. Do you see a silhouette of Abraham Lincoln's hat, or a partnership between the American and British emblems? Look closer to reveal the heart of its founders; or even a skull, as a nod to York's and New York's Gothic architecture. The incorporation of a distressed, organic texture reflects on both the brewery's unrefined style and traditional storytelling.

A strategic decision to focus on a vector-based illustration maximised efficiency at a time where we knew, as a start-up, the business would be changing and growing at speed (needing lots of work in a short space of time); also considering the limited budget a start-up business has.

The use of a textured layer as opposed to using special stocks or printing techniques keeps costs low whilst getting a happy medium of practicality and a hand crafted feel.

OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION (CONT)

Core packaging

Each product is brought to life in the form of its own unique guardian character, pattern or symbolism.

Strong, vibrant colour palettes across brews maximises shelf-stand out and aids differentiation for consumers when making buying decisions. Distinctive patterns are used, influenced by a contemporary take on Scandinavian folk art.

A central holding shape maintains consistent central focus and hierarchy of information, increasing legibility against 'busy' backgrounds. The brand positioned consistently above creates clear impact and recognition

Passionate about the ethical and social implications of their produce, another angle to the business has been vegan and vegetarian suitability. To reflect this the brand tagline 'Brewing it Right' was conceived.

Ranges expansion

The character and storytelling approach has been evolved for sub ranges (Seasonal, Collab, Beta, Modern). All individual and unique yet still express the brewery's approach.

The business is evolving rapidly with a brand that has 'the legs to keep up with the pace' due to it's adaptability and creativity.

Word Count 490



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

“When we sat down and wrote the business plan for Brew York, it focused on three things: great beer, great location and great branding.

We felt we had beer people would want to buy, but unless the beer stands out on a shelf or on a crowded bar then it wouldn't matter, as they would never taste it.

From the outset, we knew working with United by Design was the right choice. The Brew York logo alone stood out and made people ask questions.

The individual beer brands then took it to the next level. We think you can spot our beers on a crowded shelf and more than that; they make people want to buy them! So much so, we don't think we would have made it into supermarkets in our first year without such strong branding!

It's great when customers compliment us on our beers, but it's also great that we get lots of people complimenting us on our branding too!”

**– Wayne Smith, Brew York
(Co-founder)**

Financial success

- Average **27% month on month growth.**
- In the first year of trading, in the top **45% of SIBA members in terms of turnover.**

Situated in a reclaimed warehouse, the brewery's industrial heritage resonates from within every exposed brick and pipe, creating a utilitarian yet charismatic interior.

Differentiation of revenue streams

Core products available in Cask, Keg and Can:
Ensure the brand had impact both on and off trade

“Gone are the days of prejudice against a cheap tinnie as more and more well respected breweries are deciding to can and doing it well.”

– Ben Black (Beer 52)

Bottle:

- Apr '16 – Jan '17 bottling averaging **7% of monthly sales**
- Jan '17 Last month of bottling **7.56% of total monthly sales**

Can:

- Feb '17 First month of canning **51.11% of total monthly sales**
- Feb '17 – Apr '17 canning averaging **45% of monthly sales**

The significant increase in off-trade revenue also brings the advantage that the brand is almost doubling its reach.

E.g. a pub buys 1 cask (72 pints), which reaches 40-50 customers. The same volume produces 120 cans, thus is likely to reach over 100 customers.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS (CONT)

Extensive product range

Selling 3 core beers, plus 6 seasonal releases:
Develop a flexible brand ensuring a future-proof identity allowing for diversity

Create confidence in a brand daring to be different in several ways, including experimental ranges, using less fashionable hops, and bringing a fresh approach with the inclusion of multicultural influences.

“Marketing and branding have become every bit as important to a small brewery as selecting the right hops and malts. It can mean the difference between being good and being great. Great branding provides consumers with a chance to feel connected to the brewery and for a strong relationship to be formed.”

– Russ Phillips (European Can Market Report 2015)

Brew York have followed the SIBA trend of 6 core beers but have joined only 14.5% members who produce over 16 seasonal beers with an impressive 20 in total.

The seasonals split across 4 ranges (seasonal, collaboration, beta and modern). Each has its own confident place within the Brew York brand hierarchy and offers something different to cater for a wide audience.

The majority of the can range is in the standard 330ml but Brew York have also released 440ml as a point of difference, this has been well received.

As is tradition with collaboration ranges, the host brewery leads on the design of the packaging, but in Brew York's case some have admired the branding and therefore are working within Brew York's styling.

Local and National success

Approach the market with an identity benchmarked alongside other strong brands in the industry

“Cans look cooler too. Unshackled from the confines of a modest bottle label, can designers have 360 degrees of creative space on which to showboat in style, seducing pub-goers that, while it may well pain purists, drink as much with their eyes as their mouths.”

– Pete Brown
(Crafted Handbook)



SUMMARY OF RESULTS (CONT)

Not only are Brew York seeing a great reception for their ranges within their taproom and in the York area, they are all also seeing success regionally and nationally.

Some of Brew York's core can range hit the shelves of Asda (nationwide) and Tesco (regional) in March and April, respectively, this year. This has of course had a significant impact on their off trade success.

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“You can’t miss the eye-catching Brew York cans and the designs are leading a new trend within the craft beer market.

The successful national listing of these beers in Asda from such a new brewery demonstrates the strength of the brand.

They have cleverly created a local brand with nationwide appeal.

As soon as we set eyes on the quirky cans and tasted the beer we knew we had discovered something special.”

– Becky Robertson (The Locally Sourced Food Company)

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The cans are now stocked alongside their competition, following the market price point.



<http://your.asda.com/news-and-blogs/brew-york-say-cheers-to-asda-after-agreeing-to-sell-local-craft-beer>

<https://www.tescopl.com/news/news-releases/2017/get-the-beers-in-with-tesco-s-largest-ever-craft-beer-range/>

PapaKata

Brew York's commitment to design for this specific project has made a significant return on investment. Based on sales projections from previous years they knew would need to sell an entire batch of beer just to recoup the branding costs.

Brew York struck a deal with PapaKata after 'rebranding' one of their core beers specifically for Thor's Tipi, a main attraction in York's City Centre in the winter months. The move to include the PapaKata branding within their core brand style paid off as their beer outsold the other two available by 2:1.

Brew York smashed the projections of PapaKata, resulting in ongoing discussions about the year ahead and rolling the beer out across a number of sites for winter '17.

Other stockists of note (on and off trade):

- House of Trembling Madness – UK's Best Independent Craft Retailer 2017
- eEBRIA
- Pivovar
- Alesela
- Alesruss
- Glassworks
- Beer Paradise
- Pig's Ears

The Brewery has also reached its 3-year goal, to be always available in 5 venues within York's City walls, within the first year of opening.



SUMMARY OF RESULTS (CONT)

Brewery/Brand Recognition

The Brew York branding has been praised within the craft brewing industry, packaging industry and by those interacting with the brewery and beers:

York Beer and Cider Festival – Beer Festival Beer of the Year 2016 (out of over 500 beers)

Shortlisted SIBA awards 2017

Best Concept design (Brew York Brand)
Best Individual Design (Tonkoko)

<http://www.siba.co.uk/2017/03/07/uk-brewings-best-shortlisted-in-siba-business-awards-2017/>

<http://www.lovelylab.co.uk/blog/brew-york-york>

<http://plusonemagazine.blogspot.co.uk/2016/10/york-breweries-to-visit.html>

<https://theglasspassport.com/trades/trade-2-brew-york>



Smashed 5 year production growth plan within 16 months

Double the capacity and production of the brewery (5 year plan)

The speed of on and off trade sales have resulted in Brew York exceeding their business plan over 3 years early

- Upped capacity by 477% (65HL – 310HL)
- Tripled in production from 30 BBL a week, soon to be 90 BBL on receipt of new equipment.

Footfall

Use York's provenance to attract consumers to a new brand

Only 8% of SIBA members run a taproom, shop and visitors centre from their premises. The strength of the Brew York identity running across the venue, merchandise and of course the products themselves has aided Brew York in appearing at #18 (of 204) on Trip Advisor's Things to Do in York with 94% excellent reviews.

The reputation of the brewery is prolific enough that they are now looking to extend opening hours and their bi-monthly events regularly sell out. Ensure the brand had impact both on and off trade

Other influencing factors

It could be argued that the continued growth and expansion of the craft beer market has caused the launch of Brew York to be a success.

However, the craft beer market is highly competitive, and carving out a reputation as a brewery offering something new to the market can be difficult – let alone being accepted into two national supermarkets. Creating an identity that lends itself to the supermarket 'beauty parade' is imperative to success at this level.

Apart from investment in some tourist bodies, all of Brew York's marketing and promotion spend has been with United by Design.

They also have a thriving social media community with over 10k check-ins on UnTapd, as well a growing following on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. However, the level of followers at present is not likely to have made significant impact on the success of the brand.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS (CONT)

Research resources

SIBA annual report 2017

Marston's Premium Bottle report 2016

The Can Makers UK Market Report 2016

Hall & Woodhouse Premium Ale Insight Report 2016

<http://www.uhy-uk.com/news-events/news/record-high-for-new-craft-breweries-as-over-500-open-in-a-year/>

<https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2017/05/are-craft-brewers-selling-out-the-indies-in-supermarket-move/>

<https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/reports/digital-features/alcoholic-drinks-report-2017/boozy-britain-why-are-sales-up-as-more-try-to-drink-less/553852.article>

http://drinksretailingnews.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/16595/Asda_on_a_mission_to_become_UK_s_leading_craft_beer_retailer.html

<http://blog.beer52.com/?p=2857>

<http://www.siba.co.uk/2016/05/13/indie-beer-can-festival-celebrates-the-fastest-growing-trend-in-craft-beer/>

