

= Hensley & Co . =

Hensley & Co . , also known as Hensley Beverage Company , is an Anheuser @-@ Busch beer wholesaler and distributor headquartered in the West Phoenix area of Phoenix , Arizona . It markets to the Phoenix , Tempe , and Prescott Valley areas . It is the third @-@ largest Anheuser @-@ Busch distributor in the United States and one of the largest privately held companies in Arizona . It is arguably the best @-@ known beer distributorship in America .

The company was founded in 1955 by Arizona businessman Jim Hensley and steadily grew based upon population growth in the region and a close arrangement with Anheuser @-@ Busch . Following Hensley 's death in 2000 , his daughter Cindy Hensley McCain became the controlling owner . Hensley & Co. maintains an active presence in the Phoenix area in terms of sponsorships and charitable giving . Its representatives have held high positions in several city and state business groups and the company is active in political discussions that affect the industry .

= = Business history = =

The company was founded in January 1955 by Arizona businessman Jim Hensley on a \$ 10 @,@ 000 loan . It originally had 12 workers , sold 73 @,@ 000 cases of beer a year (a case typically being twenty @-@ four 12 @-@ oz. bottles or cans) , and had a 6 percent market share . While it initially handled many brands of beer , Hensley accepted an offer later in 1955 to become Anheuser @-@ Busch 's sole distributor for Maricopa County in return for selling only that brand . Under the names Hensley & Company Distributors and Hensley & Company Wholesale , the company saw decades of steady growth , aided by the Phoenix area becoming one of the fastest @-@ growing regions of the country while the company still maintained exclusivity with Anheuser @-@ Busch . Jim Hensley 's tireless sales efforts and the generous wages and benefits he gave employees were also key success factors . Regarding technology , Hensley & Co. were the first Anheuser @-@ Busch distributor to invest in refrigerated warehouses , which subsequently became standard in the industry . By 1970 , Hensley & Co. had a 20 percent market share ; by 1980 , that had grown to 50 percent , the business had become quite successful , and Jim Hensley was a multi @-@ millionaire .

In 1981 , Jim Hensley 's new son @-@ in @-@ law John McCain , recently married to daughter Cindy Hensley McCain and retired from the United States Navy , was hired as Vice President of Public Relations . McCain soon left to begin his Congressional career . In 1993 , the company consolidated operations under the name Hensley & Company .

Robert Delgado , who had been with the company since 1975 , was named president in 1994 ? assuming day @-@ to @-@ day control of the business ? and later was named CEO , while Jim Hensley remained chairman . The company also acquired real estate holdings throughout Arizona . John McCain 's son Andrew , from his first marriage , joined the firm around 1997 ; his MBA and banking experience would lead to his later becoming the company 's CFO and COO .

At the time of his death in 2000 , Jim Hensley held most of the controlling stock ; annual revenues were over \$ 220 million on 20 million cases of beer sold . Cindy Hensley McCain , who had been a vice president , became the controlling stockholder ? she , her children , and Andrew McCain together control 68 percent of the company ? and chair of the board . As chair , her role takes the form of remote consultations with Delgado on major initiatives such as new products , new plants , employee welfare , or charitable giving , rather than of an active physical presence . She is categorized by Anheuser @-@ Busch as an absentee owner , and Delgado is required to have complete control over business operations and investment decisions . Anheuser @-@ Busch inquired about buying the distributorship in the early 2000s , preferring not to have absentee owners , but she declined (all other beer distributorships in the U.S. are privately owned as well) .

By 2007 Hensley employed 650 people , sold about 23 million cases of beer a year to over 5 @,@ 000 retail accounts producing revenues of \$ 340 million , and a 60 percent or more market share in its target area . Beverage industry analysts estimated the company 's value in 2008 at more than \$ 250 million . Despite the late @-@ 2000s recession , which resulted in a rare decline in sales

volume for the company , revenues rose slightly to \$ 350 million by 2009 and employment was still 650 in 2010 . It subsequently rose to 800 by 2015 . The company said it had record revenues in 2014 but did not disclose the amount . The company 's workforce is dominated by men in their twenties . The company 's facilities include its own printing shop . It operates a fleet of some 750 trucks and other vehicles and conducts its own training program for commercial driver 's licenses .

The company 's Phoenix distribution plant occupies a number of acres and is marked by a giant Budweiser sign . In addition to beer , Hensley also distributes energy drinks , root beer , liquor , and wines , some of which are distributed from a warehouse in Tucson . The move into wines was accelerated by the acquisition of Phoenix @-@ based Quench Fine Wines Ltd. in 2010 . Via the holding company King Aviation , Hensley also owns and operates Cessna Citation Excel aircraft . Over half the beer sold in the Phoenix area is from Anheuser @-@ Busch , making it one of their better markets nationally . Both companies benefit when major sports events are held in the area , such as Super Bowl XLIX . The beer distribution business and the Phoenix market for it are very competitive ; some Anheuser @-@ Busch distributors eventually ended their exclusive arrangements with the beer maker , while for a while Hensley had no plans to do so . However in 2009 it did so , in part this being associated with Hensley 's move into selling craft beers , an emerging force in the market . In such regard Hensley worked with Four Peaks Brewery among others . By 2015 Hensley sold some 850 drinks and brands from around the world and had around 8 @,@ 000 retail customers in the Phoenix area .

= = Political activities = =

Between 1982 and 2000 , the company contributed \$ 80 @,@ 000 to John McCain 's political campaigns ; from 2001 to 2006 , the company and its employees would contribute an additional \$ 24 @,@ 000 . In Congress , McCain recused himself on legislation involving alcohol issues .

In the late 1980s , Jim Hensley was active in legislative battles against neo @-@ prohibitionist movements . In 1992 , a former Anheuser @-@ Busch lobbyist accused Hensley & Co. of illegal " bundling " of contributions to state legislators . Hensley denied the claim , which was later withdrawn by the lobbyist with no charges filed .

Hensley & Co. holds a seat on the board of the National Beer Wholesalers Association , and company spokesperson Douglas Yonko is the association 's Arizona director . Company executives have contributed heavily to the association 's funding . Hensley executives have been active in successfully convincing the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau to not require alcohol content displays for beer labels . In the early 2000s , Hensley sought unsuccessfully to keep liquor makers from entering the flavored malt beverage market , while it began distributing such beverages itself , including Anheuser @-@ Busch 's Tilt . During the 2010s , Hensley supported proposed state legislation that , within the rigid three @-@ tier framework of producers , distributors , and retailers , would relax production caps on craft breweries with respect to how much beer they can make and " self @-@ distribute " , in the belief that such relief would help such breweries grow bigger and eventually need Hensley 's distribution services .

Hensley & Co. has continued to be a strong presence in Arizona politics , opposing liquor tax increases in all circumstances , including those targeted for childhood education and children 's hospitals . Yonko has also been an officer of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce & Industry , which backed John McCain 's successful bid for re @-@ election in 2010 . In 2008 , Andrew McCain was chairman of the Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce , where he focused the group 's attention on the state 's budget deficit , possible transportation initiatives , and immigration reform .

Like many businesses in the state , Hensley got caught up in the controversy surrounding the Arizona SB 1070 anti @-@ illegal immigration law , with the group Somos America advocating a boycott of Hensley until the company denounced the law . The company called the action " an obvious cheap political stunt motivated solely by self promotion " and said that " Hensley Beverage Company / Budweiser will continue to embrace and encourage the wonderful diversity of our state " . The boycott gained little attention . Later that year , Hensley and Delgado joined the Partnership for a New American Economy , an effort started by Michael Bloomberg to push towards comprehensive

immigration reform , and in early 2011 Delgado signed a letter from a number of Arizona CEOs directed at Arizona State Senator Russell Pearce requesting that the legislature back off any more anti @-@ illegal immigration measures .

= = Community involvements = =

Hensley engages in various local sports sponsorships , including for Phoenix International Raceway . Andrew McCain has served on the board of directors of the Fiesta Bowl and for 2014 ? 15 was named chairman of the bowl .

Hensley is a major contributor to charity in the Phoenix metropolitan area , donating about \$ 1 million per year to various causes and starting the Hensley Employee Foundation in 2001 . In addition , the company has helped promote safe ride businesses in an effort to avoid drunk driving incidents . Another event is the Budweiser Shootout Golf Tournament , held in conjunction with the Arizona State University Hispanic Business Alumni since 1991 , which has raised over \$ 1 million for Latino student scholarships in the area . Hensley & Co. has also been a supporter of the Phoenix gay community , sponsoring events by the Phoenix Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee , and Cindy McCain and her daughter Meghan McCain were outspoken proponents of the NOH8 Campaign .