Blog 5

CATEGORY ARCHIVES: MARKETING

The jobs involved in opening a brewery …

2 Replies

There are many things to do in starting a business, that much is for sure. But let me be the first to say that there are about twice as many jobs to get done as you first anticipate, when you are conjuring up your business plan months and years before actually taking that leap of faith. With the help of this post, you can plan ahead, learn some skills, mentor from someone who has experience, take a few classes, or just meet someone with a complimentary skill set to yours.

In no particular order, here are the things you need to be good at:

Salesperson: Maybe I put this first because I feel like there is so much of this process that you need to get buy-in on. Whether it be your spouse and why they should support you in opening a craft brewery, investors to see a bright future in your business, or even possible partners to believe in what you are doing, you are always pitching an idea to someone it seems. Not a lot of people have sales experience, so I would recommend Spin Selling by Neil Rackham

Janitor: Get really good at sweeping. This means finding a messy floor somewhere and getting a good broom and going to town. A couple techniques. There is the long stroke or the short stroke. I seem to prefer long strokes on smooth surfaces and short strokes on rough surfaces

Accounting: There is no way you want to get behind on this one. From the start, have a good idea of your plan for taking care of the books and reporting this information. We use an accountant and they have set us up on a system that works with their office. Essentially, we track everything in quickbooks, pay every bill and invoice, and then push this to them at the end of the year. Easy enough, but it was a long road to get here. My recommendation is to use Quickbooks, which is available online for $250.00 or so.

Digger: Another really important skill to have. I suggest you head to the beach, and try digging a couple holes and a trench. Do this a couple times a week, so that when it comes time to dig up floors, or shovel dirt, you are in prime shape to make this happen. A key here is to manage your shovel loads. Not too much dirt now …

Marketing: I have always kept marketing separate from sales as I think they are 2 very different things. In short, marketing is the long term plan and vision for your brand, and sales is the day-to-day activity. Read some books, look at other companies, brands and marketing whenever you can, and learn from others who specialize in this to get a better understanding of what you should (and shouldn’t) do. My book recommendation here is Permission Marketing by Seth Godin.

Steelworker: My hands don’t lie, you will need to get good installing and tying rebar and wire. I suggest you go get a job tying rebar for a week at a local construction site. Make a B-Line for the site super and tell them how your baby soft hands are in need of toughening up. Don’t forget to strengthen your lower back as well, as you will be bending over for most of the day. Just find your happy place, and try to think about how great it will be to serve your beer to the world when you are finished.

Decision Maker: You will need to to learn how to make decisions based on the advice of others. It will often involve a complex set of parameters with varying opinions, the exact answer you must decide on your own. Good examples is whether to lease that warehouse that is empty or what floor plan to use for your brewery. You will get opinions from realtors, bankers, lawyers, engineers, accountants, architects, and even your friends and family, but at the end of the day, you make the decisions, so don’t overlook or underestimate what is important to you and how this decision will play out long term. My book recommendation is Crucial Conversations by Kerry Patterson, a must read.

Painter: Up, down, up, down, repeat. Think of Mr Muyagi in the Karate Kid, and practice for painting with painting. This process should actually start with power washing, so find a dirty piece of concrete and let loose about 1,000 PSI to see what it feels like. When you have mastered use of the wand, you can move to painting. This involves a lot of cutting plastic poly, taping, and scraping. So get ready for the time of your life! Remember patience is the key to getting a good paint job.

Social Media: There are some breweries that open and they have put nothing out there, while there are others who tell everyone what they are doing every step of the way. I wouldn’t say one approach is right and the other is wrong, I would just say if you aren’t active in social media, at least understand what is happening and how you will take part in that down the road. My book recommendation here is Guerrilla Marketing

Psychologist: When you are dealing with trades people, construction workers, and general labourers you are going to hear stories that will make you cringe and make you smile all at the same time. Time to talk some sanity into these people!

Human Resources: you are going to hire people down the road, so its important that you understand what skills your team has, and what skills you would like to add to the mix. Without question, every person you hire is important, but the first couple out of the gate will truly make or break you. Hiring for Attitude is my book recommendation for this bucket

Bathroom Cleaner: Thats right! Get down on your hands and knees and scrub. Great preparation would be to head into your local Frat house and start cleaning the toilets. You see, trades people have the aim of a 3 year old boy, and the cleanliness of …. well a construction worker. So rubber gloves and eye protection are mandatory, while hazmat suit and respirator are optional.

Copywriter: A bit of sales and a bit of marketing in here, but that is not the point. You need to be able to convey information to others in written word. Whether it is your brand statement to consumers, a letter to your architects expressing your desire for changes to a plan, or the content on your website, you need to be able to write in concise terms. Personally, I am not the best at this, as those who read my blog with regularity can attest, but it sure is something you can work on … like I do in writing this blog. My book recommendation is Writing that Works.

Phone Hanger Upper: You will get good at hanging up the phone. This is a product of having a lot of phone calls, but also a lot of telemarketers call. I find the best way to get out of the conversation is to cut yourself off mid-sentence, that way the other person will think the line was disconnected. Don’t hang up while they are talking, as it is a giveaway you did the dirty.

Retail Manager: A huge portion of a new breweries sales take place at the tasting room and growler fill area. For a company like Brassneck, the experience they gained from their previous experiences only helped to make their retail experience what it is …. amazing. Same goes for Bomber and others, as their retail experience only helped them to make sure they got the retail area perfect. For us, we need to find help on that front. We need someone who will understand what we are doing, and help us to nail it. We are looking for this person and hopefully they can come on board at the right time.

Mechanic: We have yet to experience this one for the most part, but it would be wise to learn some basic skills around fixing things. I have heard the horror stories of things breaking down and needing repair in a brewhouse are too numerous to mention, so knowing what to do, or who to call is a very important component of keeping operations smooth. Remember, red is positive and black is negative.

Delivery Person: When the production gets going, we know that a good portion of time will be driving around and dropping off product. We view this interaction as very important, and something that we need to do in person.

Production: Maybe I put this last because it is the most important on this list. I still maintain that we can get everything else on this wrong, or not have any skills in those areas, but as long as you make a quality product that is consistent, you will do well. Maybe I am a little naive, but having good beer will make everything else easier. So this is where you need to make a choice: Either find someone who knows and wants to handle production, or learn the skills necessary yourself. Guys like Ben Coli are a good example of someone who wanted to handle production themselves. I would be antithesis of this, as I always knew there would be someone else handling this part of operations. I think at the end of the day, you need to decide what role in the business you want to have, and go for it. Book recommendation here is any and every book that has to do with brewing or production.

The most interesting thing about this list is that you will be doing all of these things on a daily basis. There are days I go from item to item to item, and then I repeat a few of them. That makes the job interesting, but also means you have to get really good at prioritizing, multi tasking, and working in several silos all at the same time. For instance, as I write this post I am also answering emails, texting my partner and yelling at my kids!

This entry was posted in Brewhouse, Business Side of Things, Financial, Marketing, The Journey and tagged 1345 clark drive, 33 Acres, Aaron Jonckheere, Bomber Brewing, Brassneck Brewing, coal harbour brewing, growler fills east vancouver, how to, Iain Hill, main street brewing, Microbrewery, off the rails brewing, old world, Parallel 49 Brewing, postmark brewing, powell street brewing, r and b brewing, Starting A Craft Brewery, steel toad brewing, Storm Brewing, Strange Brew, Strange Fellows Brewing, tasting room Vancouver on May 14, 2014.

Landing Page Is Live

1 Reply

The process of getting all your customer facing material complete is full of ups and downs, set-backs and great moments. For some reason, we always seem to be behind everyone else in getting this stuff complete! If you have followed this blog, you know that things like our name, our logo and our packaging are works in progress. Some days it feels like we will never get all the the items completed in time for launch which is now less than 5 months away. Yikes!

This week we crossed of one small piece of our brand off the list: Our Landing Page. It was completed over the course of about 12 weeks, and while it is pretty simple, the process was full of change and tough decisions. In the end, we are super happy with what we ended up having. If you want to view our landing page, click on this link to be redirected.

Key learnings from landing page development, and web development for that matter:

Start on this sooner rather than later: Don’t wait as long as we did. Consumers want to connect with you, so make sure you allow them the opportunity to do that.

Expect 12 weeks start to finish: If you are anything like us, there will be changes, u-turns, miscommunication, and a few other things that I can’t even mention. All this makes a rather simple task a lot more of a grind.

Prepare a brand guide: This is a key step in the process to getting your brand ideal and message known to yourself, and then to others who are going to work with you. Don’t leave it to a 30 minute meeting to let a web developer get a feel for your brand. There has to be something concrete they can sit and read, minimizing the margin for error.

It takes a while to see progress: It feels like trying to get out of bed some mornings. There are a couple false alarms, there is snooze involved, a little confusion, and a lot of light steps to get going. Sometimes, after getting going, you just head back to bed and let it go for a little. Building a website is a LOT like this.

Stay connected with those helping: No doubt about it, the more leash you give someone, the more likely they are to go down the wrong path and end up at a place that doesn’t mesh with you and your brand plan. So have regular meetings and ask to see enough information to be kept abreast of things.

Get detailed scope of work: When you first sit down to finalize an agreement with a developer lets say, you will agree to a scope of work for your project. If you want to add something down the road that is not in this scope of work, you are going to pay out of pocket. As such, either agree to a rate for extra work, or budget in 10% of the total hours for misc work.

Speak up: If you don’t say what you do and don’t like, you will not end up with a finished product that matches what you thought you would have.

Balance: Not sure what else to put as a heading here. Sometimes you need to let someone else decide what is best for your brand, which goes against your taste or preference. Others you need to get that person to change direction, against what they like. It is a balance and one with no prescribed way of moving forward. Just hope that you, or those you surround yourself with, have enough similarity and differences in opinion for a healthy relationship.

Build from Scratch or use a wordpress: Thats right, you will need to decide whether your website is built from scratch or uses wordpress as the foundation. One costs more, but gives you a very custom website, and the other is much less expensive.

Do something unique: For us, in addition to writing this blog about starting our brewery, we added a webcam to our website, so people who are interested can view what is going on during construction without having to be there. Just having another website with the usual information is not enough in my opinion. Craft beer is booming, which is a great thing in so many ways, but also means you need to stand out a little bit.

Brand Continuity: Make sure that your website reflects who you are, the beer you are going to make, the brewery you are going to build, and what you think you should represent. If you get away from this, you will end up at a place that is entirely what you don’t want.

So there it is. Another set of best practices for starting a brewery. There is so much more to a website than meets the eye, so don’t take this for granted. Get thinking about this early on, and start much sooner than you think you need to.

This entry was posted in Marketing, The Journey and tagged 2014, 33 Acres, beer business plan, Bomber Brewing, Brassneck Brewing, brewery tours, British Columbia, coal harbour, Craft beer, East Vancouver, Growler Fills, how much does it cost to start a brewery, How to start a Brewery, investors, ipa, main street brewing, New Breweries BC, new craft breweries vancouver, Parallel 49 Brewing, process of starting a brewery, r and b brewing, red truck brewing, Sour Beer, Strange Fellows Brewing, Tasting Room, west coast on May 1, 2014.

Webcam is up … and almost working perfect

1 Reply

We have added a webcam to our brewhouse, and after earning a undergraduate degree in this kind of thing, it is now live. While there is nothing to see this weekend, and the feed needs a little refinement, we are now able to broadcast live the process of starting a brewery.

We hope that in combination with this blog, and the other information we have put into the world, we will encourage many others to follow their dream and start a craft brewery. It is a labour of love, but something that you will never regret IMO.

Anyhow, we will be sure to post a schedule of when things are happening, so that you can watch the process of starting a brewery from the comforts of your own home.

Click here for the link and I promise that within a couple days the feed will be more clear. For now, the camera is pointing to the South half of our warehouse, but as things happen it will shift back and forth between both areas, so you can see everything that is going on.

This entry was posted in Brewhouse, Marketing and tagged BC, brewery webcam, budget for brewery, Craft beer, East Vancouver, Growler Fills, How to start a Craft Brewery, Im Starting A Craft Brewery, IT, new breweries in Vancouver, Strange Fellows Brewing, Tasting Room, the process, Vancouver on April 26, 2014.

Another general update on progress and happenings at the Brewery!

1 Reply

It seems like I have been knee deep in the process of starting a brewery, that I have neglected to update the readers on our progress. From the brewhouse to tanks, and forklifts to logos, there is a lot happening at the brewery, and the level of activity seems to have picked up. In addition to the office and administrative items that have kept us busy for the past 6 months, you can add in the retrofit of our space to things to do.

For starters, Iain Hill has officially left his position at Yaletown Brewing Company to join operations full time. For several months Iain has been burning the midnight oil after a long day at the office, and he now has the ability to focus on starting our brewery, which is amazing on many levels. Finding a brewery (and in my case a business partner and equal) is a huge step in the process of starting a brewery. Its one thing to be a home brewer like many of you. You understand some of the components of brewing beer, and you have experience with the lingo and terminology, but its entirely another thing to be in charge of a commercial brewery. With a qualified partner, the beer we make will be of good enough quality that it will offer us a chance to have success. If you want to follow Iain Hill on twitter, his account can be found here.

We have sent out tenders for our warehouse to electrical and mechanical contractors. This has been a bit of a process for us. When you apply for building permit, you have a sense of where things are going to go, and this is reflected in the drawings your architect prepares for you. However, when it comes to the technical details of these aspects of the brewery, you engage with mechanical and electrical engineers to complete these drawings. Getting the details correct on these drawings is critical to getting accurate quotes from trades people that will be doing the work. If you hand over a set of drawings for tender and they change immensely, you will get dinged for additional expenses throughout the build-out phase. My advice would be to push ahead with these drawings at every opportunity, so that when you get your building permit, you are not at a standstill like we were. We will literally lose a month from our possible start-date as we were not ready the next step.

Doing things in the brewery that don’t need a permit is also something that is very important. We have decided to paint the inside walls of the brewery with a marine grade paint, to keep mould from becoming a problem. Well painting a house is a job, but painting 6 metre high walls in a brewhouse that is 9,000 square feet is a little bigger of a job. This is something that we really should have started earlier as well, but given the delays in getting started with the rest of the work, we will have this finished within the week. Once the walls are painted we can move forward with cutting floors open, and getting our brewery ready for building.

If you ever need advice on buying a forklift, I can tell you that we had a great experience and I would love to share it with you. At the end of the day, when you are spending so much money on everything at a brewery, trying to save money on items like forklifts can go a long way. We managed to save about $5,000 against our budget, and while that will get sucked up quickly elsewhere, the point is you need to save money when and where you can. We had a budget of $10,000 for a forklift, charger, and man cage (for doing work on the ceiling of the brewery). After about 30 hours of work, research and seeing what the options were, we purchased an electric forklift that will hopefully meet all our needs for now and into the future. Sure we might have to spend money on repairs, but we are not going to lose much money on this machine as it already has depreciated to nothing. If you are looking; side shift, electric drive, 40 inch forks, 180 inch lift height, and a smart charger that is compatible with your machine are all must haves.

In terms of the voting on our logo, it looks the voting has ended up at 50-50! After all that, we have a divided opinion on what we should be going ahead with! As such, Iain and I are going to meet and make a decision on what we should move forward with. We look forward to making a decision so that we can move forward with other aspects of our marketing.

Our landing page for the website should be up and running in about a week. I know there has been delays (like everything it seems), but we hope to have an interesting landing page that will continue with giving everyone a sneak peak into starting a brewery and our operations. More to come on that front shortly.

I have found an individual that has helped me with odd jobs at the brewery so far, and I would recommend to anyone else who is looking at starting a brewery, to find someone with some technical background in general labour … what I mean is find someone to help you that can do some electrical, plumbing, painting, heavy lifting, etc. We have found a man to help us, and he has been a saviour for us.

From an equipment standpoint, we have ordered our brewhouse and we are very close to ordering our packaging equipment and conditioning/fermenting tanks. We are trying to determine exactly packaging equipment we want, as the choice we make will help determine our entry point into the market. If you go cans, you come across as more of a middle of the road company. If you go with bigger bottles (650ml) then you come across as more of a craft operation. So we are wrestling with what exactly to do, and I hope we can make a decision in the next week. As for the tanks, we are grinding the suppliers on their price, and hope to get our ideal package within our budget. We think it is better to go a little bit smaller on the tank farm, knowing that you may run out of capacity quickly, than spend all your money on equipment and have very little left over for everything else.

Thats it for now. Should there be anything else you want an update on, as always, let me know and I will include it for my next blog.

This entry was posted in Brewhouse, Business Side of Things, Financial, Marketing, Packaging and tagged brewmaster, craft beer BC, East Vancouver, electrical contractors, Finding brewery help, General Contractor, how to buy a forklift, how to buy brewery equipment, how to find a head brewer, How to name a brewery, How to start a Brewery, mechanical contractors, Simcic and Uhrich Architrtects, Vancouver on March 29, 2014.

General Update on Things

5 Replies

I have received some feedback lately around wanting a general update on our progress. There seems to be genuine interest in how the overall project is going versus what we are encountering on a daily basis. As such, this post is a little more of a general update on our progress rather than a general rant about this process, or a specific detail of things.

So as you likely know, we have submitted a development permit to the City of Vancouver for a space in East Vancouver. On Thursday of last week, we were told we’ll be given an answer on this permit in the next couple weeks. We are waiting for this permit, as we can’t lease the space we are interested in without first getting approval to brew there by the City. In Vancouver, the only buildings that you can outright lease and know with certainty you can brew is M2. The trick is that there isn’t a lot of M2 zones, and the buildings we were looking at in M2 just weren’t right for us. So we ended up in an I2 zone, which is one where brewing beer is conditional upon submitting a development permit. Any potential for us to use this space hinges on getting this permit, so we are waiting with fingers crossed to get good news. As of Nov 18th, no news!

Another big process is collecting and securing money from investors. Luckily, an investment in our brewery is eligible for the eBC tax credit, which basically means that 30% of each investors money is returned to them in the form of a credit from the government of BC. It looks like we need to raise over $1,100,000 so everything we can do to help secure “financial partners” is welcomed with open arms. We are going to be collecting money in the next 2 weeks from our investors, so I hope that what people have committed is what they are going to offer us. If not, I am sure I will post something around my frustration with this.

Financing is another part of the business that is really important. We will need both an operating loan and a line of credit in order to make the business float during the crucial first couple years. Opening a brewery can be a recipe for financial hardship, as the line between profit and loss on a monthly basis is razor thin. If sales fall behind a little bit, and costs are a little higher than expected, money can go out the window very quickly. Luckily for us we were approved for a loan and line of credit to make our finances come together. These will total about $450,000, and when added to the money we are raising we feel like we should be in a good position to make things work.

The layout of our space and submission for building permits is something we have been working very hard towards. In fact, this has taken the majority of our time of late. With the arrival of our Development permit by the end of November <fingers crossed>, we would like to have our building permit submission ready to go. This means that we need to have the layout of the space virtually complete, have the work needed by engineers complete, have all the drawings and work from our architect complete, and to have all other inputs ready to go. It seems really easy when I sit here and type this, but the reality is that there are so many moving parts to this, that it is incredibly complicated and difficult to carry out. Finalizing the layout of our space has taken us over 8 weeks, as there are SO MANY variables to consider. For example: Needs now versus in the future when we grow, tasting room connection to brewing space, retail area, production flow and functionality, the location of existing services, proximity of different spaces that need to be connected, etc, etc.

Equipment is something that we need to have ready to go, so that we can be sure it is ready in time for production. We have looked to China, Europe, Canada and the USA for our brewhouse and tanks. To be honest, I can see why this step can be either really easy, or one of the most difficult steps. No two quotes seem to be alike, and the unknown factors of quality, timeliness of delivery, and follow-up support make these intangibles even harder to gauge in terms of importance. A big hurdle to buying Canadian is the price. Companies like Newlands and Specific Mechanical are local and have a good reputation in the business, but their prices are among the highest. Moreover, it sounds as though some of the other start-up breweries have experienced some trouble with them. Then there are the systems from Europe, where the quality is top notch, and the price matches. Moving East to China, the land of cheap equipment, but one where the after sale service is poor, and other local breweries have experienced trouble with having to repair brand new equipment. All of these things make choosing one company to work with very difficult. At the end of the day, it is a balance between all these things, and hopefully one company stands out as the best. At this point, we have no idea which one it will be.

Another huge part of this process is our name. For the time being we are letting this one go for a few weeks. While we don’t have an official name yet, the focus groups we ran were instrumental in getting us closer to making this choice. The only problem is that we are putting out other fires that are more important at this time. Things like financing, layout, legals, accounting, etc. We anticipate having our name by the end of the year, and that should give us 8 months to create a brand around this. I hope this is enough time and that we make decisions that are based on sound principles.

The legal side of things is something we kind of let slip and caused us a lot of grief and unnecessary stress. In order to raise money and run a proper incorporated company you need to have: A shareholders agreement (aka a partnership agreement), a subscription agreement, a set of articles for your company, and a share ownership agreement. All of these documents are tedious to create, and require the hard work of a legal team. Reviewing and revising take a lot of time and mean that you are continually working on getting these documents ready so that you can raise money, and provide a framework to investors on how your company will operate.

There are literally hundreds of other little things to do, some of which are major and some of which are minor pieces of major components. There seems to be nothing that isn’t important in some way to the overall picture of this brewery. To be honest, I would love to find the time to blog about all these things, but I just feel too much pressure to write about them, rather than working away at them.

This entry was posted in Brewhouse, Business Side of Things, Financial, Marketing, The Journey and tagged BC craft beer, British Columbia, Building Permits, Business, City of Vancouver, craft beer to do list, East Vancouver, Entrepreneurs to do list, Im Starting A Craft Brewery, Line of credit, Starting A Craft Brewery, Vancouver on November 18, 2013.

Results from the Focus Groups

4 Replies

Without a doubt, the 2 focus groups we held were the best ideas we have spawned throughout this process. The opportunity to connect with craft beer enthusiasts, and more importantly, to share our basic business premise with individuals who appreciate and seek out craft beer, was amazing.

We held 2 focus groups over the course of 7 days, and they were more than effective in helping us shape the name of our business. To be honest, the results of these focus groups will help not only name our brewery, but also determine the direction of several other important variables that we are looking at. Things such as the layout of our tasting room, the size of bottle we are going to put our beer into, and the types of beer we are going to produce are all facets of the business that we touched on in these focus groups.

What I learned from focus groups is that a name should be short, easy to pronounce and spell, meaningful, genuine, and unique. There was a feeling among both groups that a generic name, or Vancouver based place name (such as False Creek Brewing or Strathcona Brewing) didn’t capture exactly what we are trying to do. More importantly, people feel like these names can come across as horribly disingenuous. Names such as Stanley Park Brewing (brewed on Annacis Island) and Bowen Island Brewing (Northam Brewing) seemed to come to mind when people thought of place names.

For the brewery we are creating, it seemed a name that was representative of what we are doing was most applicable. In other words, a made up name, or a word that is picked for purely interest sake, with some connection to what we are doing will show people the honesty and approach we are taking to things. This really matters to us, and as such we took this feedback to heart.

So we took out the names like Orange Brewing, Strathcona, False Creek and even East Van Brewing Company. What we were left with was a group of about 8 names that really stood out as top of the list. We are currently looking into the legal side of these names, and how that will impact what we choose to do and how that effects the last part of our naming competition.

Until then, thanks for the continued feedback and interest in things …. I really look forward to sharing the last part of the the naming process: The final few choices and letting everyone vote on those names.

This entry was posted in Marketing and tagged British Columbia, can I open a brewery, Craft beer, East Vancouver, focus group, how to open a brewery, name my brewery, opening a brewery, steps to opening a brewery, Vancouver on November 16, 2013.

First Focus Group Results …. coming soon!

Leave a reply

On Tuesday of this week, we had a focus group with the purpose of getting feedback on naming our brewery. It was the first time I’ve planned and implemented a focus group, so it was many things rolled into one, not the least of which was a great learning experience.

Like anything in life, preparation is the key. It was something that I prepared myself for, and even knowing that there was a lot of work for something like this, I was blown away by how much work it actually took. I did keep a total of the amount of time I spent organizing this focus group, and up until the minute things started, it was 48 hours of work. Where the hell did 48 hours go you ask? Let me tell you: Organizing participants, preparing questions, meeting with the moderator, securing the space, getting the food and beverages, printing copies of questions and non-disclosures, etc, etc, etc.

The focus group itself went well in my mind. There are always questions you would change, formatting alterations you would make, and slight differences you would make if you did it again. For the second focus group that we are having this Sunday, I will likely only change one question.

A huge component of the focus group is your moderator. Luckily I had the help of a real craft beer enthusiast and very personable, yet professional individual. I can honestly say, that next to the preparation involved, the moderator can make or break the implementation. Rebecca was so unbiased, and also so personable, and was able to take the outline I gave her, and worked with it in her own way.

The feedback was somewhat expected and completely unexpected all at the same time. While I would love to go into the details, I will wait for our second focus group to complete before commenting on them. What I can say, is that the results will help us pick the name that is right for our brewery. What we do know is the name we pick will represent what we are doing, what words are meaningful and what name fits with the local market.

I will update everyone more after we have our second focus group on Sunday and get closer to having our list of names narrowed down to 2-4 finalists.

This entry was posted in Marketing and tagged British Columbia, Craft beer, focus group, Starting a brewery, Starting A Craft Brewery, Vancouver on October 24, 2013.

Onto Phase #2 of Brewery Name

Leave a reply

OK, so thank you to everyone that has sent in their name request. We had an overwhelming response from the community, and we are grateful for this. I think the name of our brewery is on that list, and I hope we can now move onto phase #2 in order to find out what the general public feels.

So we now move to getting feedback from a small group of individuals in order to move us towards naming our brewery. If you would like to comment on any of the names on the list, please feel free to send me an email, or you can post a comment on this blog. I would love your feedback and it will help us move onto the next stage.

For now, I am going to contact some people for a focus group, and hopefully you can make the dates that are available for discussion.

Lots of other stuff going on, not the least of which is making a decision in the next couple weeks on our space, and whether we are going to remove subjects or not. My fingers are crossed and I hope that things continue to move forward as they have so far.

This entry was posted in Marketing on October 16, 2013.

How Important is the Name???

1 Reply

One item that I have grappled with for some time is the name of my brewery. There seems to be three different avenues people take in naming a brewery, which appear to be popular.

The first is to name the brewery after the owner. Think R and B Brewing, Phillips Brewing, Hoyne Brewing, and even Molson.

The second is to name the brewery after an area or landmark. Think Coal Harbour Brewing, Deep Cove Brewers and Distillers, Granville Island, and Stanley Park Brewing.

The third is to name the brewery after nothing in particular. Think Storm Brewing, 33 Acres Brewing, Bomber Brewing, and Dead Frog Brewing.

There seems to be no rhyme or reason why names are chosen, and some end up being good and others end up being a little less than interesting. My belief is at the end of the day, a name is not that important. In my opinion, If you make shit beer, but have a great name, your chances for success are not going to be great. On the other hand, if you have a shit name, but make great beer, I think you are going to succeed.

I would love to know what people think are good names in the marketplace? I have my opinions, and for the most part, I think having a variety of names in the marketplace is a good thing.