

Eight Ways To Jump-Start Bar Sales



It used to be if you wanted to increase bar sales you simply poured more alcohol. Prying another sale from one out of every third customer would make revenue jump a cool 33%.

But times have changed. Society has changed. How you increase bar sales has also changed. One option is getting more warm bodies through the doors. That could result in higher sales. However, it's as likely that it will essentially deteriorate into an uncontrollable situation.

Another means of increasing revenue is to raise drink prices. This too is a practice fraught with problems, chief among them is customer and server resistance. You may also find that raising prices effectively lowers sales volume, resulting in a decline in revenue.

The most pragmatic and ultimately successful approach to increasing bar sales is to rely on creativity, training and quality assurance. To start the process, here are seven quick ways to jump-start sales.

- **Shooters** — Ask your bartenders to pick a “shooter of the day” and promote it on table tents and a wipe-off board at the bar. Create a menu listing all of your house specialty shooters. For parties of four or more thirsty patrons, shooters

such as the **Alabama Slammer** and **Sex on the Beach**, drinks made with a predominance of juice, can be marketed in iced, 32 ounce pitchers. Set up the glasses and let the host do the pouring.

While acrylic test tubes, or Tooters, are the most popular method of presenting specialty shooters, there is still room for creativity. At *Duck Soup* in Fort Lauderdale, shooters for two are served in sugar dispensers. Some clubs present shooters in pill bottles. The ingredients are poured in, the cap secured and it's contents shaken and served.

- **Swirl Drinks** — Double the popularity of your frozen drinks by swirling complimentary recipes together in the same glass. The taste and presentation is impressive and sure to grab people's attention. One such recipe is called the **Pain in the Butt**, a swirled blend of a Piña Colada and a Rum Runner. Try swirling a Midori Sour and a raspberry Daiquiri or a frozen lemonade and a Frosted Coke. Great taste and captivating looks make for increased sales.

- **Creative Embellishments** — Eye appealing garnishes and unusual swizzles enhance a drink's production value and help it become something extraordinary. For example,

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make some Jello replacing half the recipe amount of water with the clear spirit of your choice. Pour the Jello into small molds and use them as novel garnishes or market them as semi-flaccid shooters. Steep maraschino cherries in rum or inject oranges and watermelons with vodka using a syringe. The spiked fruit can then be offered for sale or become high-octane garnishes.

- **Super-Premiums** — Don't your guests who appreciate fine tequila deserve a 100% Blue Agave Tequila like El Tesoro de Don Felipe? For your bourbon drinkers, whiskey doesn't get any better than a single-cask like Booker Noe or Rare Breed. There is now at least one super-premium brand name in every major category of spirits. A simple taste comparison will quickly reveal why these brands are considered the finest of their type. The prevailing attitude in many clubs is now if you're not going to drink as much, you might as well drink the best.

- **Float Programs** — A Piña Colada may be a good drink, but a float on top of Kahlua, Chambord or Midori nudges it into the great range. The same is true about a Margarita with a shot of Grand Marnier served on the side, or a Daiquiri with an optional float of Myers's or Bacardi Black Label rum. The program is classic suggestive sales —

your guests receive better tasting drinks and you bank higher sales.

- **Champagne** — A split of Champagne and two glasses is perfect for a couple out on the town celebrating a special occasion. Champagne also has applications behind the bar. A splash of bubbly in an Amaretto Sour, Tom Collins or Screwdriver adds a fabulous pizzazz. It's an excellent ingredient in shooters as well. With a reusable bottle stopper, Champagne will retain its effervescence for days. It's not just for New Year's eve anymore.

- **Non-Alcoholic Beverages** — If you're interested in marketing high profit items that an increasingly large segment of the population is already predisposed to buying, offer your guests a wider selection of non-alcoholic beverages (NABs). Start with lemonade and iced tea. They're thirst-quenching and make excellent mixers. Consider also offering more than one sparkling water. There are vast differences between these products, mostly in the amount of natural carbonation they contain. Likewise, carry at least one still water, such as Evian or Ty Nant. The surging popularity of products such as Snapple and O'Douls suggests NABs are a huge trend waiting to be tapped.

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