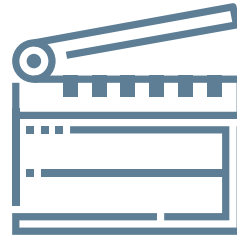


SET THE STAGE FOR BIGGER BAR SALES:

THE ULTIMATE CHECKLIST



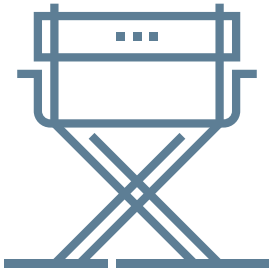


WHY THE BAR BIZ IS LIKE SHOWBIZ

Guests don't come in for a drink. They come in for an experience, entertainment, and escape. If you can provide all three, you'll get two thumbs up from every guest.

What's Included in the Ultimate Checklist:

- Set the Scene with Award-Winning Atmosphere
- Get Your Actors in Place
- and Cut! Time-Saving Strategies
- Raise the Curtain on Bigger Drink Sales
- Your Menu: Best Supporting Actor
- Spotlight on the Best Bar Promotions
- Blockbuster Marketing Strategies
- Practice Your Lines: 5 Phrases That Upsell



Secret of the Stars: ABC (Always Be Cleaning)

When business isn't brisk, your bartenders still need to be busy – or at least look the part. Instruct bartenders to wipe the bar down, polish glassware, wipe off bottles...any task that involves movement. Why?

- *Cleaning behaviors are visual cues to customers that you care about quality and cleanliness*
- *If your bar has a lot of foot traffic outside, the movement attracts the eye – drawing guests in*

SET THE SCENE

Why It Matters: First Impressions Don't Get a Second Chance

Want more repeat business? Give new guests a great first-time visit. You have less than a second to get it right! Princeton researchers found that the trustworthiness of a person was determined in a tenth of a second – your bar is likely sized up in the same amount of time.

Clean Bar

Customers equate quality with cleanliness. If they sit down at a shiny, organized bar they will assume you took the same care with your food and drink preparations. Set up cleaning schedules with your bartenders to ensure the bar top, seats, and bathrooms remain clean at all times.

Ambiance

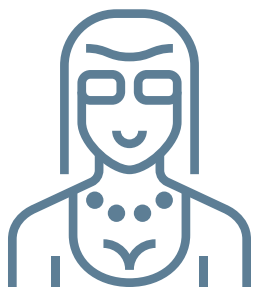
Guests aren't just having a drink - they want an experience. Set the mood with the right lighting and [background music scientifically shown to increase drink sales by up to 40%](#). Whatever vibe you're trying to create can be enhanced with the right elements in place.

The Right Glasses

Using the correct stemware or pint glass shows professionalism and instills confidence that your staff knows the importance of a good pour. Be sure to have the best glasses on hand for your cocktail menu and your bartenders are aware which ones to use for particular drinks.

Stocked Inventory

Few things are more aggravating to customers than being told the bar is out of their favorite drink or appetizer. Some may go with a next-best option, but it may affect their decision to return for a second visit. Keep consistent stock of your inventory and always order more if you're running low.



Secret of the Stars: Team Building Pays Off

Did you know replacing an employee in the foodservice biz can [cost your business](#) around 16% of their wages? Be proactive and build loyalty between your staff – and with you. They'll be less likely to leave and work better together: helping each other out to deliver the best possible customer experience.

GET YOUR ACTORS IN PLACE

Why It Matters: Your Bartenders are the Real Stars of the Customer Experience

The service that your bar delivers could determine if your guests walk away happy and ready to come back for more. Be sure your team has the tools they need to succeed.

Good Attitudes

When hiring new staff, focus on attitude. Anyone can be taught how to run drinks or operate the POS, but only some naturally have the team spirit and charisma that it takes to run a thriving bar.

Expert Bartenders

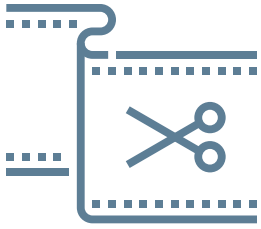
An expert bartender doesn't just pour drinks - they give knowledgeable menu recommendations to guests. Hold meetings so your staff can sample and sip everything on the menu. That way, they can confidently suggest dishes and drinks to guests. Go the extra mile by requiring that your bartenders achieve a certification – like Cicerone Certification for beer.

Enough Staff

Customers can't purchase anything if no one is taking their order! As the operator, know how many people should be on the floor and behind the bar in order for everything to run smoothly. If you're short on staff, try to hire more people as soon as possible. Or, talk with your best team members to see if they'll cover extra shifts.

Incentives for Bartenders

Motivate your staff and increase your bottom line by offering incentives to your team. Gamify the experience by making it a competition - whoever makes the most sales of a featured item wins a prize! The prize can be anything: from cash or gift cards to a free meal after work.



... AND CUT! TIME-SAVING STRATEGIES

Why It Matters: Time is Money

Time is money, and that's definitely true in the bar business. Whether it's reducing labor costs or getting orders in faster, running an efficient operation is a must.

Prepared Drinks

Focus on cocktails that you can prepare in advance, like pitchers of sangria or margaritas. Your bartenders can make a batch at opening then again during shift change to ensure you don't run out. Keeping ready-made drinks on hand will make guests happier with speedy service.

"Mise en place"

Although the term usually applies to cooking, "mise en place" or "everything in its place" is a concept that can streamline your bar operations. Keep garnishes, mixers, strainers, and bottles in specific places at the bar. Set a designated spot for the items your bartenders use most.

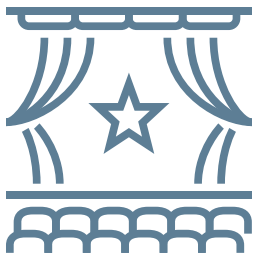
Prep List

Organize a prep list for your bartenders and chefs to ensure that each station has what they need in terms of garnishes, mixers, and spirits. Creating an [effective prep](#) list is easy, and plays a key role in saving time and keeping inventory costs low.



Secret of the Stars: Try Guest-Facing Dining Tech

According to a National Restaurant Association study, 79% of guests believe tech improves convenience. [Use a tablet-based system](#) that gives guests the power to order from a digital menu and securely pay on handheld tablets. Tables turn faster, orders arrive quick and accurate, and guests can check out when they're ready.



RAISE THE CURTAIN ON BIGGER DRINK SALES

Why It Matters: Hello, Healthier Bottom Line!

Flights

Flights are a great way to introduce new beers or wines to your guests. You can even offer small pours of craft whiskeys or vodkas. Plus, they'll be prompted to purchase a full glass of their favorite once they're done, increasing bar sales.

Creative Cocktail Names

Get people talking with creative cocktails. If you're a sports bar, name cocktails and specials after sports terms like a "Punter's Pint Special" or a "Gridiron Gimlet." If you've crafted a cocktail that's a modern twist of a classic, add a twist to the cocktail's name, too. A basic Bloody Mary becomes a "Hail Mary" – boosting drink sales from football fans.

Seasonal Drinks

Tap into seasonal flavors for sales success: like pumpkin spice in the fall or watermelon in the summer. Use fresh, in-season ingredients like local fruit whenever possible. Let customers know these seasonal drinks are available for a limited time, so they better hurry to your place.

Signature Cocktail

Stand out from the crowd by crafting a unique signature cocktail for your bar. Focus on presentation: Use special glassware or garnishes – even down to the ice cubes. Novelty is welcome. Use LED ice cubes to make your drink recognizable from across the room. Or, for a more subtle special touch, use a round ice cube mold.

Alcohol-free Mocktails

Whether they're the designated driver or abstaining from alcohol, these guests still deserve a great cocktail. Err, make that a mocktail! Create fun names and garnishes that make your



Secret of the Stars: House Rules

Each year, the National Restaurant Association surveys over 1,000 chefs. The latest report puts "house-made" everything at the top of the list: from hand-made pickles to house-cured meat, hand-crafted infusions to house-made condiments. Find at least one item to make in house to show you're up on the latest trends.

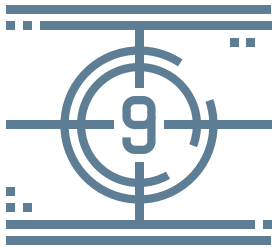
non-alcoholic beverages feel as decadent as the real thing. Plus, your mocktails can increase January sales as record numbers of Americans are now participating in “Dry January.”

Drink of the Week

Craft cocktails are all the rage, topping the National Restaurant Association’s list of top drink trends. Get in on the excitement with a drink of the week. Tap into your bartender’s creativity by concocting an original recipe each week.

House-made Infusions

Add a unique twist to your cocktail menu by using spirits that were infused in-house. Get as creative as you’d like, with ingredients like bacon, fruit, and even jalapeños to add some kick in your cocktails.



YOUR MENU: THE BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

Why It Matters: Like Another Server, Your Menu Can Upsell

Well-Designed Menu

Make sure the menu draws the eye to certain dishes and drinks by framing them with a border or graphic. Consider hiring a graphic designer that specializes in crafting menus.

The Right Price

Customers will pay what they think is fair, so keep in mind your target market when strategizing menu prices. How you write out the prices could impact sales as well. For example, dollar signs and double zeros subconsciously seem more expensive. Drop them both to make the price more appealing (\$8.00 should just be listed as 8).

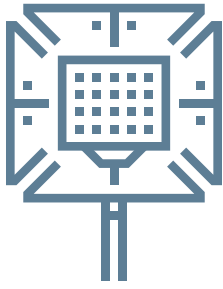
Quality Food and Drinks

No matter your bar concept, the quality of your food and drinks will keep guests returning. Focus on acquiring locally grown produce, sustainable seafood and fresh ingredients when crafting your menu. Offering high-quality meals and drinks will justify higher prices and prompt guests to keep coming back.



Secret of the Stars: Use the Number 9

Customers love the number 9, so make that martini 9 bucks! In a study by MIT and University of Chicago researchers, customers bought more of an item when it was priced at \$39 – even compared to \$34.



Secret of the Stars: Tap Your Liquor Distributor

Your liquor distributor can suggest new brands of booze that may come with some great built-in promotions you can use. Or, they may have “swag” you can give away to guests like keychains, pint glasses, and even apparel.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE BEST BAR PROMOTIONS

Why It Matters: Looking to boost sales on a slower night of the week or during off-peak hours? Run a special promotion to bring in business and build your bottom line.

Happy Hour

Draw in the after-work crowd by running Happy Hour specials. The National Restaurant Association reports that guests can be incentivized to come in early: 77% of consumers would be likely to go to a restaurant or bar during [off-peak hours](#) if they received a discount.

Outside Food

If you're a bar that doesn't serve food, partner with a local food truck to entice patrons into staying for an extra drink, rather than heading elsewhere if they start feeling hungry.

Games

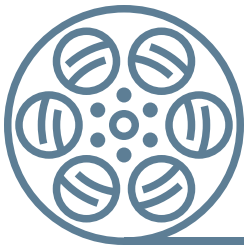
Offer complimentary games for guests – but go digital to stand out from the competition. [Buzztime Tablets](#) put on-demand arcade games in your patrons' hands 24/7. Plus, they can join in nationally scheduled trivia games 7 days a week, 15 hours a day. It's not just fun and games for guests, it's great profit for you: 62% of Buzztime players spend more money on food and drinks. Plus, an Arbitron study showed that Buzztime players spend an average of 21% more per table check.

Concerts

Bringing in local bands is a great way to pack your bar on a slower night. Regulars may come back in for the music, while fans of the band may be introduced to your bar for the first time. A little music can attract a whole new crowd for your business.

Karaoke

Karaoke and libations go hand in hand. Run a few drink specials for anyone that needs some liquid courage to grab the mic. Provide props so singers can level up their act with fun wigs, sunglasses, or boas. Add a twist by making it a contest where guests can vote for their favorite performance.



BLOCKBUSTER MARKETING STRATEGIES

Why It Matters: Build business by making sure everyone knows you are there. These easy marketing strategies will help get the word out.

Social Media

Keep sharing pictures of your food and drink specials on Facebook and Instagram, but add a unique hashtag using your bar's name so your followers can easily find posts about your bar. Go live on Facebook: record a video showing how your chef puts together a signature dish or have your head bartender demonstrate how to mix one of your bestselling drinks.

In-House Marketing

Let guests know what you have going on as soon as they walk through the doors, with signage posted in your venue. Highlight the day's specials, a high-margin cocktail, and upcoming events by adding [digital signage](#) functionality to your TV's. Design templates are provided so you can easily launch eye-catching signage for your guests.

Souvenirs

Souvenirs are a great marketing investment, particularly if you're a well-established bar. T-shirts and hats double as free marketing when worn outside your venue. You can also use serve your signature drink in a souvenir cup or glass for an additional price. Guests can take it home where they'll be reminded of your bar – every time they open the cupboard.

Loyalty Programs

Show your guests that you appreciate their business and they'll keep coming back. You can use a punch card or go digital with a loyalty program app – [learn how with this simple guide](#). It's also a great way to instantly capture valuable information from your customers, like how frequently they return to your venue.



Secret of the Stars: Try Snapchat!

Learning Snapchat is a truly a snap (here's an [easy plan for getting started](#)). With over 60% of millennials using this photo-sharing app, it's a must for any bar trying to market to the under-35 crowd.



PRACTICE YOUR LINES: 5 WAYS TO UPSELL

Why It Matters: Many bartenders shy away from upselling because they're afraid of seeming pushy. In reality, they're helping your customers discover new favorites they wouldn't try without a little encouragement. Train your bartenders talk up your featured items with 5 smooth phrases that boost sales:

1. Emphasis on Add-ons

"If you like our traditional nachos, try them with the pulled pork - our chef just smoked some today."

Selling a customer on an item they already want is the easiest trick to upselling your menu. Just add the benefits of an add-on for a small price and let them know how it will enhance their dish.

2. Complementary Items

"Great Choice! That appetizer pairs so well with our featured Malbec, if you'd like to order a glass to go with it."

Have your bartenders use their knowledge of your menu to make suggestions that complement the customer's choice, whether it's a side dish or glass of wine. For this tip to work, knowing the menu is essential, so be sure to have your whole staff taste everything you offer.

3. Gauge the Mood

"How hungry are you today?"

A basic question like this will help your bartender figure out how much they can upsell a customer without coming across as pushy. If the guest responds that they're starving, your bartender may have a little more wiggle room to offer appetizers, add-ons, and dessert. If they say "I'm not that hungry," your bartender can focus on upselling by quality rather than quantity. An example would be mentioning high-margin cocktails or a new craft beer instead of a domestic.

4. Assume the Sale

“I’d recommend our nachos, we don’t skimp on toppings. What sounds better tonight: traditional, BBQ, or Ultimate Ranchero?”

Don’t wait for the yes before moving onto customization options. Assuming the sale allows your bartender to proceed to a different question, prompting the customer to choose between the presented options rather than answering yes or no.

5. Get Descriptive

“You should try tonight’s special berry mojito. It’s made with local mint, house-made syrup, and muddled with fresh raspberries and strawberries.”

Teach your staff to paint a picture of the dish or drink, throwing in phrases that delight the senses. It isn’t just a mojito... it’s a delicious, decadent, hand-crafted beverage.

With this Ultimate Bar Checklist, your bar is sure to shine! Keep this checklist posted in your office and share these tips with your managers and staff.



CATCH THE BUZZTIME EFFECT.

Looking for a fresh, fun way to bring more guests to your tables – and keep them coming back? Join the Buzztime nation of 3,000 venues like yours serving up fun, games, and good times on our touchscreen tablets. Buzztime's social gaming solution brings everyone together at your place for trivia, live events, predictive sports, card tournaments, and arcade games.

WANT TO LEARN MORE? LET'S CHAT.

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