

Brewery Support Parts and Equipment

Brewery & Production Planning 101 – Part 3

by Derek Wasak, Plato Brewing & Consulting

Now that you have done your initial business planning, subsequent capacity planning, and identified the brewery's large equipment needs, there is still more to be done! While one may think that spending several hundred thousand dollars on a brewhouse, cellar tanks, and grain handling equipment would come all ready to use, you will need quite a few support parts and equipment for all these pieces to work together to brew. The unsung heroes of the brewery are all the small parts and support equipment you will be using on a daily basis to brew, transfer, process, and package your beer to get it on your tap and into pint glasses for your fans to enjoy! The list is quite long when you get really granular with all the knick knacks, and even though these things may be small, they add up in cost and should be accounted for in your business plan. Here I will cover the most important considerations for your additional parts and equipment needs:

- **Extra Clamps, Gaskets, Hoses, Valves, and other Stainless Steel/Tri-Clamp working parts**

While most of your large equipment will come with all parts needed for that vessel, you will need additional parts to actually use those tanks! Additional hosing, tri clamp stainless parts (T's, elbows, butterfly valves, etc.), quick disconnect fittings, and more are necessary to actually transfer, clean, and connect tanks together for their daily use.

- **Glycol System Piping and Infrastructure Needs**

A glycol cooling system is essential for brewing use. Most units will be sold to you as part of a brewhouse and cellar tank package. Vendors should also help you size it correctly for your current cellar tank needs. However, you will be responsible for the construction needs to power the unit and all the piping to get the glycol to your tanks to cool your beer! This is one of the most important aspects of planning your construction and costing. There are many ways to do this that have pros and cons, but this is where a brewery consultant can be of great assistance. He/she can provide vital information on sizing, material use, and planning for the future.

- **Carbon Dioxide, Oxygen, and Nitrogen Gasses and Infrastructure Parts**

Another essential component of the commercial brewery. Depending on what you are brewing and how you are serving your beer, these needs will vary but are important to consider. From the actual gasses you will need and the space required for the tanks, to the piping runs and

Brewery Support Parts and Equipment (page 2)

regulators needed for cellar drops, all must be planned prior to construction to ensure it is funded and functional for use.

- **Special Equipment Infrastructure Needs – Keg Cleaning, Packaging Lines, Process Piping**

Much like larger tanks, other equipment will come OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) configuration. This means that you will need to provide the infrastructure for its use (electricity, drainage, water, gas, etc.) as well as the parts and equipment to hook the machines up to said infrastructure. This is easy to overlook, and is a relatively small cost but important to identify and budget. Equally important is to be sure all your equipment is interoperable with all of the other components so you aren't constantly changing fittings to do one thing or another. Again, this an area a brewery consultant can provide a lot of assistance with and plan ahead to avoid headaches later on plus save money.

- **Safety, Cleaning, and Chemical Needs**

Rarely considered but extremely important items to build into your space are safety equipment! Eye wash stations, chemical showers, chemical gloves, and goggles for staff are important for the safety of your staff every day. No one wants an accident to happen, but breweries can be a dangerous place. If something does go awry, you and your employees (and your lawyer) will be thankful you have thought ahead to provide critical infrastructure and PPE (personal protective equipment) to avoid an even worse catastrophe.

- **Warehouse Support Equipment**

Storage, Pallet Racks, Smaller Parts Racks, Tools, and other items will always be needed. The more storage you have the better, but the more efficiently you use your space is best! In addition to that, you should have a robust toolkit(s) to fix any basic equipment breakdowns that will inevitably happen after the first year or two of use. Aside from storage and tools, depending on the size of your operation, you will likely need a forklift, pallet jacks, and 2 wheelers for moving and transporting kegs. Perhaps even a delivery van of some type. Be sure to refer to your sales and capacity plan to properly equip yourself and your employees for the work that needs to be done.

- **Water Filtration**

Last but certainly not least, is water filtration equipment. Since water is 90% of beer or more, it is important to be certain what you are brewing with is adequate for the beers you plan to brew. It is not always necessary to go fully Reverse Osmosis and build the profile from scratch,

Brewery Support Parts and Equipment (page 3)

but being aware of the water composition is imperative. Depending on your budget, some basic carbon filtration and softening may be all that is feasible, or maybe full treatment is the path to take. Take some time to talk to your brewing consultant and budget/plan for this component. Your beer quality will be better for it.

End Note

As you can see, there are many considerations beyond simply selecting your large equipment and installing it. Depending on the equipment and size of your brewery, this list can be even longer. However, thinking of and planning for these items will not only help your business succeed in terms of attaining the correct funding, but your beer will be better for it. An experienced brewery consultant can help you along the way and ensure you do not overlook any key infrastructure needs and smaller parts to operate your brewery efficiently.

Need help identifying and planning your brewery parts and equipment needs? [Contact us now for a free consultation!](#)



Contributing Author

Derek Wasak

Owner/Brewery Consultant, Plato Brewing & Consulting

Derek is a graduate of the Siebel Institute/World Brewing Academy and has been a professional brewer specializing in Production and Operations Management since 2009. He is an expert in all things brewing from grain to glass as well as brewery planning, forecasting, budgeting, and construction. He founded Plato Brewing and Consulting Inc. in 2019 to share his knowledge and experience.