

3 Ways A Brewery Consultant Will Bring Value to your Brewery in Planning

by Derek Wasak, Plato Brewing & Consulting

Hiring a Brewery Consultant for your brewery in planning or expansion can be an invaluable first step toward your brewery's success. As Laura Lodge points out in her [article on brewery consultants](#): *"Consultants can really be a godsend, saving you money with their expertise and positioning your business to succeed way over and above the relative cost of their services."* I wanted to take a moment to dive into not only the importance of hiring a professional consultant, but exactly *how* it can help set your brewery up for success. Whether it is an accounting professional, lawyer, architect, general contractor, or brewery and business planning consultant, there are a few common ways in which their expertise tends to benefit the new business or brewery owner.

1. Providing Experience and Knowledge that will Save You Time

By far the biggest asset to all of us is time, especially during the start-up phase when revenue has yet to be generated. Once you start your project, the clock is ticking on how far your budget will get you until you must begin generating positive cashflow. The number one asset a consultant affords you is time. In most cases a veteran consultant has spent their whole career in their area of expertise. Years or even decades of experience and knowledge is not only a wealth of information, but an enormous amount of time saved. This can be in the form of avoiding mistakes, wading through government regulation, efficiently planning your operations and business model, and deep knowledge of the more granular aspects of your business and brewery. This time savings will come in handy not only by dramatically reducing your research efforts, but also lowering the length of time before positive cashflow begins.

2. Cost Planning, Management, and Savings to Set You up for Success

Second only to time, cost is a constant consideration for all brewery and business owners. It is what keeps everything in motion. While we all enjoy brewing and drinking our wares, we are running a business after all. Cost management is of utmost importance, starting with your business plan, equipment selection, and brewery design. This is where a brewery operations consultant can save you tens, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars, depending on your project size and needs.

An experienced consultant can give you reliable data to properly forecast and budget your brewery before you open to ensure your business model is set up for success. In addition to sales and production planning, selecting the proper equipment and

3 Ways A Brewery Consultant Will Bring Value to your Brewery in Planning (page 2)

designing your brewery for workflow/process efficiency as well as future expansion considerations can save you big on long term efficiency costs. At the end of the day, an efficient brewery (or business of any kind) is much more likely to be a successful brewery. Spending a little on a consultant, an extra piece of equipment, or an infrastructure upgrade in the near term can pay dividends down the road.

3. Peace of Mind and Ongoing Support

At the end of the day, the reason you hire anyone is so that you can trust a job will get done well and free you up to do more important things for your business. While you will inevitably work hand in hand with your consultant(s) on many things, ultimately you will have peace of mind knowing that nothing major will get overlooked. In addition to the knowledge they arm you with to better operate your business, most give ongoing support throughout the process of planning and opening. They are only a phone call away and many have an extensive rolodex so that if there is a need beyond their means, they can point you to a trusted contact who can help as well. Again, peace of mind to know you will be taken care of.

As anyone will tell you, even the best laid plans often go awry – especially when planning and opening a brewery. However, a brewery consultant can be a huge asset to craft your plan in the best way possible for success and avoid costly pitfalls and wasted time. That said, interview your consultant(s) thoroughly, ask for references, and understand that some have limitations to their field of expertise. Regardless, a brewery consultant is generally a wise investment that will pay long term dividends.



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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.