

BEVERAGE CONTROL

The word beverage has originated from a French verb 'boire' which means to drink.

Purchasing

The purchasing of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, like that of foodstuffs, has the aim to purchase the very best quality of items, at the lowest price for a specific purpose. The purchasing of beverages should be undertaken by the purchasing manager together with such experts as the food and beverage manager, the head cellar-man and the head wine waiter. As beverages will frequently contribute more to profits than foods, and as they require considerably fewer staff to process them into a finished product for the customer, it is essential that adequate attention is given to this area. What is important to bear in mind always when purchasing beverages is that expensive products or products with pretty labels do not necessarily indicate or guarantee superior quality.

With beverage purchasing the following points are generally noticeable:

1. There are fewer and often restricted sources of supply.
2. The high value of beverage purchases.
3. The free advice and assistance with purchasing are given by the wine and spirit trade.
4. The quality factors are difficult to evaluate and require special training to identify them.
5. There are fewer standard purchasing units than for food.
6. There is an established standard of product. Many items like minerals, spirits, etc. will have standard that will not vary over the years and items such as a well-known wine from an established shipper will be of a standard for a specific year, whereas with food items there may be several

grades and a wide range of ungraded items available. In addition, food items may be purchased in different forms such as fresh, chilled frozen, canned, etc.

7. The prices of alcoholic beverages do not fluctuate to the extent that food prices do.

A beverage selected for a wine list would not only have to be of an acceptable quality to members of the selection team, but also to the type of customer served. It should complement the food menu and be available for purchasing over a long enough period and at a price that is competitive. The continuity of supply of any wine should be established before it is added to a wine list.

There are some five main sources of supply that can be used for purchasing beverages and it is most likely that a purchasing manager would use at least two of them. The methods used for purchasing would vary between establishments because of such criteria as the type of customer; the type, size and location of the establishment; the storage facilities available; and the purchasing power of the buyer.

Wine shippers
Wholesalers
Beverage Manufacturers
Cash & Carry
Auctions

Objectives of food and beverage control

The following are the six major objectives of the food and beverage control mechanism:

1. **Enables to analyse income and expenditure:**
2. **Create, review and maintain Standard Operating Procedures:**
3. **Deciding on Pricing:**
4. **Preventing & minimizing waste:**
5. **Preventing Fraud:**
6. **Information management:**

Purchase specification for beverages:

The purpose of a purchasing specification is to set down in writing the standard of a product for a specific use by an establishment. This is then used by the purchasing manager to inform suppliers exactly what is required and is vital information when negotiating prices. It is also invaluable to the receiving and cellar department staff to know what to accept when deliveries are being made.

Unlike purchasing specifications for food, specifications for beverages are much simpler and to understand. The reason is that beverages are sold and purchased by the brand name label of the product, each having a consistent quality and quantity standard of content for each selling unit, e.g. barrels, kegs, bottles, splits.

Receiving of beverages

The objectives for beverage receiving are similar in many ways to those of food receiving. However, as the value of beverage purchases and the ensuing profits from the sale of beverages are high, it is important that due attention is given to the receiving of beverages.

The main objectives are to insure that:

1. The quantity of beverage delivered matches that which has been ordered. This requires a methodical approach to checking the goods against the purchase order and the delivery note. Items would be in standard units of crates, cases, etc., with standard contents of a specific size. Crates and cases should be opened to check for such things as empty, missing or broken bottles.
2. The quality inspection is simple but again requires a thorough and methodical approach. It involves such things as checking the brand name

and label on each item, the alcohol proof, the vintage and shipper, against the delivery note and the purchase order.

3. The prices stated on the delivery note are in accordance with the negotiated prices shown on the purchase order form.
4. When the quantity or quality (or both) of the beverage delivered is not in accordance with the purchase order, or an item is omitted from the order, that a request for credit note is raised by the receiving clerk or cellar man.
5. An accurate record is made in the goods received book recording details of the delivery.
6. An accurate record is kept of all chargeable empties delivered and returned.
7. Deliveries of beverages are timetabled with the suppliers, often to and afternoon, when receiving and cellar staff are normally not so busy and the receiving area is free from other deliveries.

Storing

Once beverages are received they must be removed immediately to the cellar and a tight level of control maintained at all times. The storage of beverage is ideally separated into five areas as follows:

1. The main storage area for sprits and red wine held at a dry and draught-free temperature 30° C. This area is also used for the general collection and preparation of orders for the various bars and the storage of keg beers when there is a reasonable turnover.
2. A refrigerated area of $10-15^{\circ}$ C for the storage of white and sparkling wines.
3. An area held at a temperature of 5° C for the storage of bottle beers and soft drinks.
4. A totally separate area, from those above, for the storage of empty bottles, kegs and crates. This area needs to be as tightly controlled as the beverage storage area, not only because of the returnable value of the crates and

bottles, etc., but to prevent free access by bar staff when an 'empty for full' bottle method of issuing is in operation.

Bin cards:

These are provided for each individual type of beverage held in stock and record all deliveries and issues made, the cards being fixed on the shelves or racks against each beverage, the bin card numbers referring to the same bin numbers as the wine list and originating from the standard bottle code list.

Advantages of Bin Cards:

- (i) There would be less chances of mistakes being made as entries will be made at the same time as goods are received or issued by the person actually handling the materials.
- (ii) Control over stock can be more effective, in as much as comparison of the actual quantity in hand at any time with the book balance is possible.
- (iii) Identification of the different items of materials is facilitated by reference to the Bin Card the bin or storage receptacle.

BAR FRAUDS

1. Bring in their own bottles of spirits, etc., sell the contents to customers and then pocket the money. This results in a busy bar with disappointing cash takings!
2. Drink at work. Bar staff who help themselves to the odd drink soon get into the habit of it unless it is quickly detected. This results in lower than should be cash takings or customers having short measure drinks which 'compensate' for the bar staff free drinks.
3. Fail to 'ring up' each drink sold and pocket the money taken from the client. This results again in lower cash taken.
4. Provide free drinks for friends, again, resulting in lower bar takings.
5. Dilute drinks. When a group of customers order their third or more 'round of drinks' they are less likely to identify weak drinks, the difference being pocketed by the bar staff.
6. Under-charge the customer. The customer, being an accomplice of the bar staff, orders a drink pays for it and is then given change.