Independent beer distributors enable fair and fierce competition and fuel the growth of craft by preventing established brewers from monopolizing limited space on store shelves, at bars, and in restaurants to block consumer access to new brewers. This modern system drives down consumer costs while offering unprecedented freedom of choice with more than 13,000 diverse labels. That’s why the beer aisle offers consumers a wide range of labels from brewers of all sizes – in stark contrast to the soda aisle which is limited to just a few familiar mega brands.

**CONSUMER CHOICE**

**BEER DISTRIBUTORS OFFER CONSUMERS INCREDIBLE CHOICE AND VARIETY**

Independent Beer Distributors:

- Deliver consumers the freedom to choose their preference in beer by providing customers access to global brands as well as local craft beers from across the nation and around the world with 13,000+ labels to choose from.
  - In 2007, the average beer distributor only carried 262 different SKUs, today they carry on average 657 SKUs.
  - Consider diverse choices on the beer aisle versus two familiar mega brands on the soda aisle.
- Prevent established brewer monopolies by helping craft brewers gain competitive access to precious space on store shelves, at bars and in restaurants.
  - Independent distributors stock the beer aisle and offer consumers a wide range of labels from brewers of all sizes – in stark contrast to the soda aisle which is limited to just a few familiar mega brands.
  - Next time you are at a restaurant, note the availability of either Coke or Pepsi, not both – that is what happens when independent distributors don’t exist to fuel completion and carry multiple brands.
  - In contrast to the U.S., without an independent beer distribution system in Mexico, there virtually no craft beers available to consumers because the marketplace is owned by the big FEMSA or Modelo brands.
- Prevent vertical monopolies, which are widely recognized as limiting consumer choice.
- Compete effectively with each other and can lower distribution costs and consumer prices. At the same time, this prevents brewers from establishing high prices on a popular brand.
- Provide craft brewers access to licensed retailers – grocery store, bars, restaurants for example – that an emerging brewer might not have had the ability to reach due to of high costs associated with owning their own refrigerated warehousing, delivery trucks, and related distribution personnel.

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• Build brands through store level merchandising, product promotion, marketing initiatives and local event sponsorships.

**ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

**BEER DISTRIBUTORS GENERATE QUALITY JOBS AND INVEST HEAVILY IN BRANDS OF ALL SIZES**

**Independent Beer Distributors:**

• Fuel craft beer’s incredible 18 percent growth since independent distributors (unlike those owned by individual brewers themselves) are incentivized to expand the market and deliver more, not fewer brands.
• Enable small craft brewers to reach consumers beyond their immediate geographic areas by gaining competitive access to the same means of product marketing and methods of distribution used by global brands – craft brands are literally riding the same trucks and sharing the same shelf and bar space. This allows smaller brewers to compete on a level playing field while avoiding far higher distribution costs of going it alone.
• Invest heavily in promoting beer brands of all sizes.
• Offer considerable financial advantages to brewers of all sizes (marketing, operational, etc.)
• Generate more than 130,000 quality, full-time good jobs (above minimum wage) with healthcare and other benefits, as well as thousands of additional part-time and seasonal jobs.
• Invest in warehousing, equipment and other capital intensive services, which provides economic boosts in the local communities where they operate.

**REGULATORY SAFEGUARDS**

**BEER DISTRIBUTORS ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY WHILE PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE COMPETITION**

**Independent Beer Distributors:**

• Play a vital role in the state-based system of brewers, distributors and retailers working together to ensure a safe, strong and transparent regulatory system for alcohol, because alcohol is far different from other consumer products.
• Are accountable for compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations designed to ensure safe handling, fair trade practice and responsible consumption of alcohol.
• Promote responsible competition among brands of all sizes.
• Abide by trade practice laws which reflect local customs and community values.
• Maintain detailed records that make the chain of custody of alcohol from supplier to retailer transparent.
• Protect against illegal distribution of alcohol by ensuring sales and deliveries are made only by licensed retailers.
• Ensure consumers enjoy a safe product through strict quality controls and can – more than almost all other consumer products – quickly trace any recalled products to prevent their sale to the public.