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BeerBoard: Pre-Thanksgiving Draft Sales Tumble as On-Premise 'Right-Sizes' vs. 2021

Jessica Infante Nov. 28, 2022 at 4:12 PM

Draft sales on the night before Thanksgiving declined -17.1% compared to the same day in 2021, on-premise data firm BeerBoard reported.

On what is typically considered “the biggest party night of the year,” draft sales last year increased +79.1% compared to Thanksgiving Eve in 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced many bars and restaurants to constrict operations and caused Americans to alter holiday plans.

BeerBoard considers this year’s deflated draft sales “more as a normalization/right-sizing than signs of decline,” CEO Mark Young told Brewbound. On-premise business boomed in 2021, so Thanksgiving Eve 2022 was facing difficult comps.

“It was due to everything being fully open and really the first holiday to experience that since the initial shutdown,” Young said. “2022 would have had to do massive numbers just to match that.”

However, last Wednesday’s draft sales struggled to compete with those of the previous Wednesday.

“Thanksgiving Eve typically sees a massive spike in draft volume over a ‘regular Wednesday,’” BeerBoard wrote. “When looking at 2022, there was a -2.3% decline on November 23 when compared against November 16. In 2021, there was a +69.2% lift nationally when compared to the previous Wednesday.”

Unlike the national trends, BeerBoard’s hometown of Syracuse, New York, recorded growth both compared to Thanksgiving Eve 2021 (+8.1%) and the prior Wednesday (+107.8%).

Style-wise, light lagers won the day as the most-poured style, with Anheuser-Busch InBev’s Bud Light claiming the top spot, followed by regular lagers, IPAs, Belgian witbier/white ales and European ales.

“This is a change from a regular Wednesday, where Euro ales checks in at No. 14,” Young said. “Strong ales checked in at No. 10, up from its regular position of No. 17.”

After Bud Light at No. 1., the remaining top-selling draft brands are:

- No. 2 Michelob Ultra (A-B)
- No. 3 Miller Lite (Molson Coors)
- No. 4 Modelo Especial (Constellation Brands)
- No. 5 Coors Light (Molson Coors)
- No. 6 Dos Equis Lager Especial (Heineken)
- No. 7 Blue Moon Belgian White (Molson Coors)
- No. 8 Yuengling
- No. 9 Stella Artois (A-B)
- No. 10 Budweiser (A-B)