



## **ACSA 2021 Convention Education Session Descriptions**

**Check back for updates! Presentations are listed in alphabetical order by title**

### **2020/2021 Spirits Industry M&A Year in Review: Factors Driving Investment Activity (Kevin O'Brien - Zepponi & Company)**

As the craft spirits industry continues to grow in popularity and influence, there has been a considerable amount of minority and majority investments in the past few years. With the industry continuing to expand, and become more competitive, it is important for craft distillers to understand what transactions have occurred, the rationale behind these investments, and how these deals may impact their business.

This presentation will review the transactions that have occurred in 2020 and into 2021 and provide context as to the logic behind the deals. Supporting information will include relevant spirits industry market data, overall beverage alcohol growth trends, and updated distributor consolidation charts. Additionally, we will be providing some insight into recent trends regarding changing demographics and perceptions relating to alcohol that may have an impact on the spirits industry into the future.

### **A Distillery Disaster: How to be Prepared (Rob Pinson - Waller Law, Paul Steele - Martin & Zerfoss)**

This will be a presentation on how to be prepared if disaster strikes your distillery plus items to consider and steps to take after the disaster occurs. Examples from real events will be used, including California fires, Smoky Mountain fires, recent flooding events, pandemic, and civil unrest. All distillers should know about how to be prepared and what steps are needed during and after a disaster.

### **Cannabis Today (Adam Stites - Mirth Provisions, Austin Stevenson - Vertosa, Paul Hletko - FEW Spirits, Ryan Malkin - Malkin Law)**

How do craft distillers work with and around cannabis beverages? Attendees will leave with a better understanding of the state of cannabis and hemp infused beverages, including the current regulatory landscape, infusion practices, and products currently hitting the market.

### **Developing a Strategy to Operate Your Distillery Safely (Gary Yurt - ISTS)**

Learn practical steps you can take now to protect your distillery and its employees, and how you can implement and promote a safety culture in your workplace.

**Effective Brand Marketing & Trademark Compliance (Aaron Wais, Daniel Hayes - Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp, David Bourne - Ignite Beverage Branding)**

The creation of a unique and recognizable brand is key to capturing and cementing consumer loyalty. An effective branding strategy is something every distillery must work through carefully. Indeed, effective strategies require thoughtful consideration of the creative and business goals sought to be achieved, as well as the legal ramifications of the choices made.

In this presentation, an expert from a branding company and lawyers from Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp will lead the audience through the development of a brand-based marketing strategy and, in doing so, will provide practical steps distillers can employ to establish a strong, effective, and protectable brand and avoid infringing on the intellectual property rights of others.

**Enhancing Your Digital Transformation Strategy (Emily Pennington - Park Street, and panelists TBD)**

2020 marked a turning point as the year consumers widely adopted online sales of beverage alcohol. Having an adequate digital strategy isn't only encouraged, it's necessary to develop a competitive advantage. In this session, experts in online sales, marketing, and supply chain management share their best tips on how to set appropriate goals and drive growth in a digital world.

**Enzymes to improve profitability (Lallemand)**

The mashing or cooking process is the first step in the production of your grain spirit. It is also one of the most influential steps in how much you will end up barreling! Spending some time here to optimize these enzymatic reactions can have dramatic effects on the quality of your spirits and on your profitability.

**Fermentation Optimization to Increase Profitability and Quality (Lallemand)**

Fermentation is kind of a black box. You put sugar in, alcohol comes out. But in reality, it's an incredibly complex and fascinating system. There are a lot of levers in this system we can pull to affect the yield, congeners and aromatic profiles that result, such as temperatures, nutrition management and the strains of yeast used to name a few. These levers have significant effects on your yield and give you many possibilities to create inspired, high-quality and unique spirits.

**The Fire Protection and Life Safety Challenge (Michael Reardon - Fire Protection Engineer/Consultant)**

This presentation focuses on all aspects of fire protection and life safety code requirements throughout all the international building codes, and NFPA codes. The adopted codes are vague

when it comes to distilleries and often confuse owners and design teams. Furthermore, many authorities having jurisdiction are not familiar with the intricate details of a distillery and do not fully understand all the recognizable hazards, often leading to difficulties in obtaining permits and approved design plans. This presentation assists with directing owners and design teams in the right direction and applying the proper codes. The presentation will also focus on other challenges such as combining assembly occupancies with distilling operations and the code challenges that will be faced.

**IMMINENT ARRIVAL: Building and Fire Code Changes Coming to your town (Colleen Moore - Dalkita Architecture and Construction)**

A review of the BIG CHANGES coming to the building and fire codes as jurisdictions across the U.S. start adopting the 2021 codes and how it will impact your expansion plans.

**Increasing Yield, Throughput and Quality of Production (Lallemand)**

This past year has thrown us all through loops, with the many challenges COVID has presented. There were many tactics employed by Craft Distillers to continue to be profitable and adapt to a changing market. However, a major theme was likely focusing on improving the financial viability of your production. In this talk, we will look at several aspects of the upstream process to help achieve this goal, and create distinctive, high quality spirits.

**Making the Rounds with Gin - Where are we Headed Next? (Gary Spedding - BDAS LLC, Molly Troupe - Freeland Spirits, Rob Masters - Family Jones, Tom Anderson -Pickney Bend, Michael Reiber -Dancing Goat Distillery)**

There has been an explosive growth in the world of gin of late. The examples and brands in the marketplace now numbering several hundreds and ranging from the basic to the sublime to the very exotic. Amazingly, over 275 distinct botanical species have found their way into modern gin formulations. European gins have, historically, been juniper forward - but new world examples are pushing the envelope and becoming less juniper (pine forest) dominant. Nevertheless, the geographic and agricultural sourcing of different types of juniper will also be considered: where each comes from, together with their unique essential oil compositions and associated flavors. And, outside of this key defining element, a deeper understanding of the essential oils within each other botanical employed and their contributions to the complex and layered structure of each gin is then needed; a much better appreciation of their individual and combinatorial aromatic and flavor characteristics is called for. Rapid pilot systems, operating under reduced pressure, are being used by the members of the panel to uncover such flavor secrets of many botanical ingredients and leading to novel marketable gins. We now have traditional gins in several classifications and even rested or aged gins. Maturation chemistry and the blending of

spirits previously contained in aging barrels for such rested gins needs to be better explored. Modern developments in distillation technologies have come to bear on production methods around the world, leading on from pilot laboratory studies, and this also lends to novel and interesting flavors. Creativity knows no current bounds with respect to such a beverage and how it may be used to produce wickedly great cocktails.

However, with this global rise in gin production come new marketing challenges. How to maintain a competitive edge? What will allow the growth to continue? Following on from details as outlined above the audience will be better enabled to appreciate the potential future of gin.

The panel, for this round table discussion, represents the industry from most aspects and should provide for a lively question and answer session on the topic. Four accomplished distillers with extensive experience in gin production and one sensory scientist form the group who will handle this session. This team have explored the formulation and sensory aspects of gin production as well as producing the cleanest and freshest and full-flavored examples of the various gin classifications. The issue of balance will be an important part of the discussion.

#### **Microbiological and Biochemical Considerations for Optimized Distillery Operations (Dr. Pat Heist, FermSolutions).**

This is an overview of the process for making distilled spirits focusing on grain based mashes, but also relevant to other feedstocks. Key areas like grain quality and processing, starch conversion and mashing, yeast and fermentation, and bacterial contamination will be discussed in detail with special emphasis on how each affects alcohol production, quality and yield.

#### **Rye Study Part Two (Mike Swanson, Far North Spirits)**

Pick up where we left off in Minneapolis' 2019 Convention and hear the results of Far North's three-year Minnesota Department of Agriculture crop study research grant on rye. The study aimed to examine varieties of rye, and to judge the varieties for distillate yield, initial viscosity, flavor, and aroma.

#### **The Science of Whiskey Maturation - (Jason Parker, Copperworks Distilling Co.)**

Why does oak work so well for barrels? What other woods can be used for barrels? This session will cover the answers to these questions as well as: medullary rays, sawing patterns for a barrel stave, cellulose, hemicellulose, lignins, tannins, lactones, toasting vs. charring, maturation aspects (additive, subtractive, transformative), warehouse conditions, and entry proof.

**Tips and Tricks (Johnny Jeffery, Bently Heritage and John McKee, Headframe Spirits and Manufacturing)**

Hear best practices and lessons learned with a technical focus from veteran distillers

**What to do When You Have an Unusual Product (Chris Thiemann - TTB)**

Have you had a hard time navigating TTB rules and regulations with a unique product? Join Chris Thiemann as he discusses the regulatory aspects of creating creative products while keeping compliant with TTB.

**Work Life Balance in the Distilling Industry (Maggie Campbell - Half Pint Co-Creation LLC, Johnny Jeffery - Bently Heritage, Mark A. Vierthaler- Tenth Ward Distilling Co.)**

When you carry the responsibility of operating a DSP, how do you take care of your health, maintain good boundaries with work, and enjoy a home life? Join the conversation and hear how these three panelists have achieved their work/life balance.