



Are Most Bartenders Honest?

Five Warning Signs for the Operator

*By Ian Foster
BEVINCO Auditor*

Not all bartenders are dishonest.

In fact, in our company's ten-year history of helping bar owner's cut down losses, we have been happy to find that most bartenders are the same as everyone else. That is, they are honorable and honest (especially when they are expected to be).

Unfortunately, the average shrinkage in our business is over 20% so a proprietor cannot afford to be naïve. Here are five things to look for. If you find any of them in your bar it's time to take a closer look at your bar staff:

1. Heavy use of "Open liquor" keys

Many bars have a good P.O.S. system that has a pre-assigned key for each type of drink that the bar sells. Even these systems, however, often have an OPEN LIQUOR key that the bartender uses for special drink requests or items that don't have a pre-assigned key.

A dishonest bartender will often use this key extensively. That way, he can sell drinks to his friends for much cheaper than the price list. Some bartenders will also employ the age-old trick of charging customers full price but ringing in a discounted price. The open liquor key makes this very easy to accomplish and hard for the owner to be sure of. (Even if you catch the bartender keying a drink at the wrong price the culprit will simply claim ignorance of the proper key to use).

2. You find Happy Hour drinks rung in during non-Happy Hour times

This is another way for bartenders to charge your customers full price and ring in less. Using Happy Hour pricing is especially profitable. Consider the case where highballs are usually \$4 but are half that during the 5pm – 6pm Happy Hour. If the bartender gets an order for a highball at 8pm, he can charge the customer \$4 but ring in the drink at Happy Hour pricing. Your bartender then makes a clear profit of \$2 per drink (probably more than you do).

You should periodically check your Journal Tape to see if any Happy Hour drinks have been rung in at the wrong time.

3. Your cash is often over

A well-run bar will always insist that the bartenders keep their tips separate from the cash. You will also ensure that the cash is counted by someone other than the bartender.

Bartenders that are trying to scam the bar will usually hide their dishonest practice by putting receipts and tips into the register drawer. Then, at the end of their shift, they will remove the money that they scammed from the till. On a busy night, however, the bartender is usually never 100% sure how much he stole. Rather than risk the chance of a shortage, the dishonest bartender will underestimate his "take." Thus, your cash count will often show significant overages.

4. You find out that the last staff member left your bar 3 hours after closing

There is absolutely no reason for any of your staff to be at the bar more than 90 minutes after closing. Closing duties rarely, if ever, take longer. If you get reports that your staff are still at the bar later, you can usually assume the worst. After all, besides drinking, what else could they be doing at a bar three or four hours after closing?

Needless to say, drinks are rarely, if ever, rung in after close.

5. Your bartender carries a duffel bag

One of the easiest scams is for the bartender to bring his own bottle to your bar. Then he can sell all the liquor he wants without ringing it up. The money will go in his pocket, but it won't affect your pour cost or inventory counts in any way.

The only problem for the bartender is how to get his bottle onto your bar. A bartender bringing in his own bottle will bring a change of clothes to work in an athletic or duffel bag (in which, of course, is hidden his personal liquor bottle). Be very wary of bartenders who try to bring their personal belongings behind your bar.

At BEVINCO, our business is plugging all these leaks. We account for every drop of liquor, wine, beer and even draft beer at your bar. By using our unique service, you will receive a report each week that details usage and sales brand by brand.

The fact is that you can hold your staff accountable for what they pour at your bar.

Classic Cocktails *Cont. from p. 4*

Rum & Coke

The classic Rum & Coke is often called a Cuba Libre. It was invented in 1898 during the Spanish-American war. U.S. soldiers used to frequent Cuban bars and many started mixing the native light rum with the newest American popular drink – Coca Cola and topping the whole thing with a lime. The Americans used to toast “A Free Cuba,” or Cuba Libre in Spanish.

Manhattan

The inspiration for this drink was Winston Churchill’s mother, Lady Randolph Churchill. The recipe was created for a banquet she attended in 1874 at the Manhattan Club, New York.

Bloody Mary

A “Bucket of Blood,” the original name for the Bloody Mary, was invented in 1921. Fernand Petiot, the bartender at Harry’s Bar in Paris, wanted to find a drink that would be appropriate for the dreaded “day after.” The Bloody Mary really became popular after it was spiced up with a little Tabasco sauce which was added thanks to a suggestion by Prince Serge Obolensky.

Planter’s Punch

Fred Myers founded the Myer’s Rum distillery in Jamaica in 1879. To celebrate he created the Planter’s Punch based on his now-famous dark rum. This concoction was adopted by Kelly’s Bar in Sugar Wharf, Jamaica as the house specialty.

Collins

John Collins was a waiter at Lipmmer’s Old House in London. The drink we know today mixed with whiskey was named after him. The Tom Collins was an adaptation that simply substituted gin for the whiskey. It was named Tom because the brand of gin was Old Tom.

Frozen Daiquiri

Invented by Constante Ribailagua of La Floridita Bar in Havana, Cuba in the 1930’s. Constante believed that the key to this drink was to squeeze the lime juice by hand directly into the blender, thus releasing the critical spray of lime oil. Earnest Hemingway was a regular customer and the Daiquiri’s biggest fan.

The Long Island Iced Tea

This dangerous drink was actually thought of in Long Island at the Oak Beach Inn by bartender Robert Butt. The original recipe called for ½ oz each of the clear spirits (Vodka, Gin Tequila and Light Rum plus Triple Sec). It is completed with a splash of Cola and some lemon juice.

Harvey Wallbanger

In the 1970’s a California surfer named ‘Harvey’ asked for his usual screwdriver with a little Galliano. After several of these, he was seen to bump into furniture and a wall and a drink was born.

Irish Coffee

Appropriately enough, this coffee drink was invented in Ireland by Joe Sheridan, the head bartender at Shannon Airport. His original recipe was very strong – about half coffee and half whiskey. This drink really became popular when the San Francisco restaurant, Buena Vista became the first bar to really promote it.

Mai Tai

In 1944, Trader Vic decided to make a cocktail from the finest ingredients he could find for his chain of eponymous restaurants. He came up with this recipe that originally called for 17year old J.Wray & Nephew rum. When the Mai Tai was introduced to Hawaii in 1953 it was too successful. Soon the entire world’s supply of 17year old rum had run out and the recipe was modified to use a blend of rums.

Moscow Mule

Prior to 1947, vodka was not at all popular in the U.S. In that year, John Martin, who had acquired the rights to Smirnoff Vodka was trying to find a way to promote his new product. His friend, Jack Morgan of the Cock’n’Bull in Los Angeles told John one day that he was stuck with an over-supply of ginger ale. They mixed the two and were pleased to find that the result was delicious. This new cocktail became famous and today vodka is the number one selling spirit in America (and Smirnoff the #1 brand).

The Rum Flip

This mixture of rum and beer isn’t seen much today. It was invented by Benjamin Franklin and was a major “influence” for the Boston Tea Party.

Sidecar

Another drink created at Harry’s Bar in Paris. An army captain was a regular at Harry’s and always arrived in a chauffeur-driven motorcycle sidecar. Harry created this drink for him.

Blue Blazer

Created in 1849 by ‘Professor’ Jerry Thomas at the El Dorado Saloon in San Francisco. Thomas was known throughout America as a bartending genius who invented many of the most popular drinks of the time – hence the Professor nickname. He made this drink by perfecting the technique of igniting the whisky and tossing the flaming liquid between two silver tankards.

-From “Bartending for Dummies” and “The Classic 1000 Cocktails”

Who is BEVINCO?

BEVINCO is an international liquor auditing service. We work for thousands of bar and restaurant owners throughout North America. Your BEVINCO auditor uses a computerized program to weigh every container of liquor, wine and beer in your establishment.

Our weekly reports will then compare the usage and the sales of every drop of alcohol in your bar. BEVINCO will uncover hidden losses and give you the tool needed to eliminate any theft, over-pouring and bartender sloppiness.

BEVINCO has found that the average bar or restaurant is short by over 20%.

We will be happy to send you more information on our service. We have over 150 offices throughout the world. One of our auditors and consultants will give you a free demonstration, please call us anytime at:

1-888-BEVINCO



Scott Brown, BEVINCO Burnaby, BC Canada
-1 of 150 BEVINCO offices world-wide-

Scotch Whisky

“There is no such thing as a bad whiskey. Some whiskeys just happen to be better than others.”

William Faulkner (1897-1962)

1. **Single-malt Scotch sales are up more than 35% over the last two years.**
2. **The U.S. is the largest market for scotch, followed closely by France. The French drink scotch as an aperitif (in fact, they drink more scotch than Cognac).**
3. **A dram simply means a “measure” of scotch – the amount can vary according to the generosity of the server.**
4. **In Scotland, a serving of scotch is 1½ oz, while the English traditionally serve only one ounce.**
5. **A true Scotch connoisseur will order his drink straight up or with a splash of water – but never on the rocks.**

“Glenmorangie, the Bible and Shakespeare”

World-traveler Eric Newby’s survival kit
Desert Island Discs, BBC Radio 1982

6. **A significant portion of the valuable whisky simply evaporates as it is distilled. The Scots call this the “The Angel’s Share.”**
7. **Until the 1800’s all scotches were single-malt. Andrew Usher started blending different single-malts and the blended scotch was born. Some blends use more than 50 malts.**
8. **Scotch does not improve or age after it is bottled.**
9. **Most bars run a theoretical pour cost on single-malt scotch of between 20% - 27%**

“When you think there are only ninety distilleries in Scotland, and only six make malt by hand, that means there are forty maltmen in the world...in fact, there are probably more astronauts than there are stillmen. These guys, the Donalds, the Anguses and Hughs, they are the elite.”

Jim MacEwan, Morrison Bowmore Distillers



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Mixology History?

The history of mixology is one of the most interesting aspects of our business. Who invented the Margarita? Why is Vodka so popular? Who thought up the names for all these classic drinks?

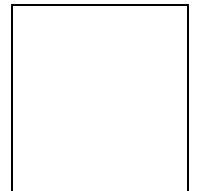
Bar owners can even sell more product by sharing these fascinating stories with their customers. Just hearing the origins of the classic cocktails makes you want to try one.

The Margarita

The world's #1 selling cocktail was invented in Tijuana, Mexico in 1948 by Danny Herrera at his Rancho La Gloria restaurant. It was named after actress Marjorie King and named for her – Margarita is Spanish for Marjorie.


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