

# Craft Beverage Trail Collaborations in Pennsylvania

**A Resource for Breweries and Destination Marketing Organizations**



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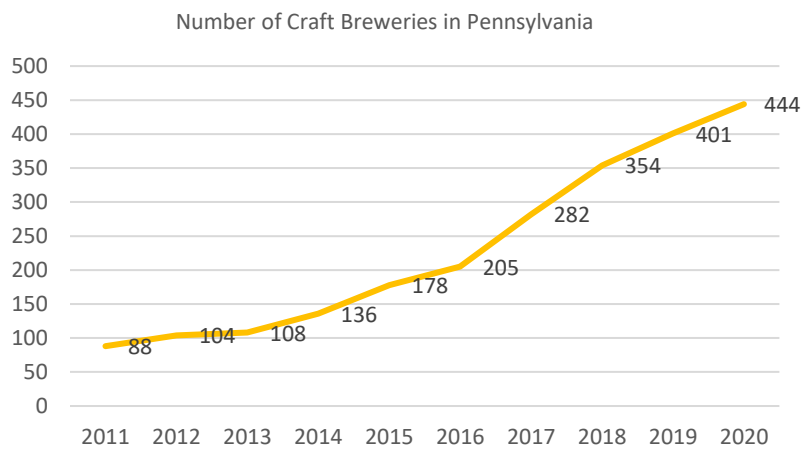
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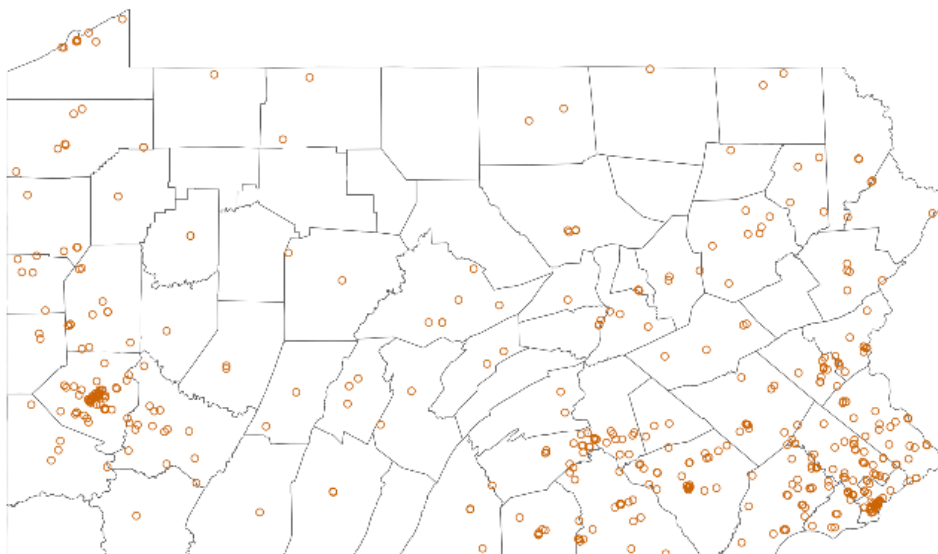
# 1 Introduction

Pennsylvania is second in the nation when it comes to the amount of craft beer produced (3,156,074 barrels in 2020). The number of breweries in Pennsylvania has increased steadily over the past decade. According to the Brewers Association, Pennsylvania had 4.6 craft breweries per capita in 2020. Most of these engage in some form of beer tourism, defined as "visitation to breweries, beer festivals and beer shows for which beer tasting and experiencing the attributes of the beer region are the prime motivating factors for visitors."<sup>1</sup>



Breweries can add to the local and regional tourism by offering brewery events on site, attending craft beverage/ale/local festivals, participating in craft beverage trails, and being part of brewery bus tours. These activities attract more tourists to the area, increasing hotel occupancy tax income, local shopping, and restaurant expenditures. Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) can play an important role in developing and marketing local beer tourism.

**Figure 1 Location of Breweries in Pennsylvania**



Data Source: Breweries of PA, Map: Zheng Tian, NERC RD

<sup>1</sup> Plummer et al. (2005, p. 449)

Figure 1 shows the location of breweries in Pennsylvania (source: Breweries of PA). Large numbers of breweries are clustered within the major metro areas of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Pennsylvania has 19 urban and 48 rural counties<sup>2</sup> and breweries can be found in most of them, resulting in many opportunities for beer tourism.

## 1.1 Our Study

We selected six beer trails across the commonwealth and asked their managers/administrators about how their trails began, gamification components (passports and memberships), the challenges they encountered and what recommendations they might have for others who would like to establish a trail in their county.

The Lake Erie Ale Trail and the Pittsburgh Brewery Trail are both 'pure' beer trails, run by their members. The Centre County Tasting Trail is a craft beverage trail, run as a not for profit by its members. The Bucks County Ale Trail is a brewery trail operated by the DMO Visit Bucks County. The Go Laurel Highland Pour Tour and the Adams County Pour Tour are craft beverage trails operated by their respective DMOs. Lessons learned are summarized in section 4 'Beer Trail Establishment'.

This project report is organized as follows. In the background section we provide an overview about the regulatory environment for beer tourism in Pennsylvania and the profile of beer tourism visitors/craft beer drinkers. This is followed by a report of our research results from our interviews. We conclude with an overview of how to measure success and how to survey craft beverage establishment customers.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Regulatory Environment

Pennsylvania has one of the most favorable direct-to-consumer brewery laws in the country. The regulatory environment in which Pennsylvania breweries operate has improved significantly since the passing of Act 39 of 2016<sup>3</sup>. One significant change Act 39 introduced, which has impacted collaborations between craft beverage *producers*, allows breweries to sell wines and liquors produced by limited winery licensees and limited distilleries and vice versa. Breweries are also permitted to participate in "malt or brewed beverages and food expositions," defined as

"affairs held indoors or outdoors with the intent of educating those in attendance of the availability, nature and quality of malt or brewed beverages in conjunction with suitable food displays, demonstrations and sales. These expositions may also include activities other than malt or brewed beverages and food displays, including arts and crafts, musical activities, cultural exhibits, agricultural exhibits and farmers markets" (Summary of Act 39, p. 6), under certain conditions.

Breweries are also allowed to obtain farmers market permits.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Act 39 created two boards to support Pennsylvania-made wines and malt and brewed beverages through research and marketing grants. The Pennsylvania Malt and Brewed Beverages Industry Promotion Board, commonly called the

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.rural.palegislature.us/rural\\_urban.html](https://www.rural.palegislature.us/rural_urban.html)

<sup>3</sup> Matt Andersen, Attorney, personal communication.

<sup>4</sup> Summary of Act 39 of 2016: <https://www.lcb.pa.gov/Legal/Documents/003462.pdf>

"Beer Board," has supported the industry with \$3.8 million in research and marketing grants since its inception in 2017<sup>5</sup>.

According to Matt Anderson, an attorney specializing in liquor law, improvements could still be made despite the overall beneficial regulatory environment. For example, while Act 39 expanded the number of additional locations where limited distilleries and wineries can sell alcoholic beverages to five PLCB-approved locations, breweries are limited to only two additional locations. Having only two additional taproom locations limits expansion opportunities of breweries significantly. Also, breweries must offer food and maintain at least ten seats, while distilleries and wineries do not have these requirements<sup>6</sup>.

Location-based regulations are another barrier to entry for breweries. Pennsylvania distinguishes between dry and wet municipalities. Out of the 2,560 municipalities in Pennsylvania, 680 are partially or fully 'dry' (March 2021)<sup>7</sup>. Across municipalities allowing alcohol sales partially, restrictions vary significantly; some allow beer and not liquor sales, while others may only allow sales at Fine Wine & Good Spirits stores and beer distributors. Voters in a municipality can ban the sale of alcohol. In 2019 Act 48 was passed, giving voters the ability to determine whether manufacturing licenses (breweries are manufacturers) are to be permitted within their municipality.

While many communities across Pennsylvania welcome breweries and have adjusted their zoning ordinances, there continues to be uncertainty around how a township assesses a brewery. For example, some townships treat breweries as a restaurant or as an industrial user (which may place them in an industrial park with warehouses), while others may require a craft beverage establishment to have a minimum acreage to allow for agritourism.

Breweries face regulatory hurdles beyond permitting and zoning. Signage on state highways is a great opportunity for breweries in more rural counties to advertise their locations. However, the approval process can be difficult, with issues such as not having a paved driveway preventing participation.

## **2.2 Who's Coming for a Beer?**

Effective marketing stems from an understanding of not just the "who", but also the "why." As craft brewery entrepreneurship progresses, individual breweries, local communities and tourism bureaus are tasked with effectively marketing individual businesses, events, trails, brewery districts or regions. It is important to understand why beer tourists want to visit breweries. Beer tourists are different than other tourists that visit breweries or beer-themed events. According to a study of North Carolina brewery tourists, four motivational factors drove the decision to visit a brewery; the craft brewery experience, enjoyment, socialization, and beer consumption.<sup>11</sup> The craft brewery experience, described as wanting to experience beer, taste new beer, and increase beer knowledge<sup>11</sup>, aligns with the beer tourism definition.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.media.pa.gov/pages/liquor-control-board-details.aspx?newsid=607>

<sup>6</sup> <https://norrismclaughlin.com/articles/new-craft-beverage-tastes-run-afoul-of-distribution-laws/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.lcb.pa.gov/Licensing/Topics-of-Interest/Pages/Wet-and-Dry.aspx>

Differences in beer tourists' motivations spill over to differences in behavior and travel. Beer tourist trips are shorter than those of other tourists, and they come from nearby locations.<sup>11,13,8,9</sup> Neil Reid, professor of geography and planning at The University of Toledo, recommends that marketing efforts focus on a 150-mile radius of a community. He recommends marketing efforts to be coupled with complimentary activities and destinations. Beer tourism is considered a subset of culinary and beverage tourism, with 42% greater daily spending on food and beverages by beer tourists,<sup>10</sup> so partnering with and cross-promoting other breweries, beer-pubs, and restaurants can be advantageous. Beer tourists are also more adventurous than their non-beer tourist counterparts. Described as "cultural omnivores,"<sup>10</sup> beer tourists participate in a greater number of other activities such as sporting events and hiking when traveling.

The higher participation in culinary experiences by beer tourists can be explained by their beliefs regarding their knowledge of food and beverages and the importance of food and beverage to their travel experiences, reported as higher than that of other non-beer tourists.<sup>10</sup>

Demographically, beer tourists have been found to be, on average, male, married, college educated, and under 50 with full-time employment contributing to a household middle income classification.<sup>11,12,13</sup> However, it would be a mistake to focus solely on male beer tourists. The Brewers Association reports that women between the ages of 21-34 account for 15% of craft beer consumption<sup>14</sup> And, according to a survey of Pennsylvania craft beer consumers, while males made more trips to breweries and to a greater number of different breweries, there was no significant difference "between men and women in regard to the number of beer festivals attended or the number of trips of 50 miles or more taken to visit a brewery or beer-pub."<sup>15</sup>

### **2.3 Support for Beer Tourism in Pennsylvania**

A number of organizations – governmental and private – support beer tourism activities in Pennsylvania.

#### **Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB)**

Since the first 'beer grants' were approved in 2017 (Act 39, mentioned above) The Pennsylvania Malt and Brewed Beverages Industry Promotion Board has supported the industry with \$3.8 million in research and marketing grants since its inception in 2017<sup>16</sup>. As mentioned in the case studies (pp. 14-

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<sup>8</sup> Reid, Neil. Feb. 27, 2020. [Craft Beer Tourism and Its Role in Neighborhood Revitalization](#). Presentation to the Nebraska Agritourism & Adventure Travel Workshop, Nebraska City, NE.

<sup>9</sup> Reid, Neil. March 8, 2020. [Understanding Beer Tourists](#).

<sup>10</sup> Stone, M., R. Garibaldi, and A. Pozzi. (2020). Motivation, Behavior, and Travel Activities of Beer Tourists. *Tourism Review International*, Vol. 24, pp. 167-178

<sup>11</sup> Francioni Kraftchick, J., E. Byrd, B. Canziani, and N. Gladwell. (2014). Understanding Beer Tourist Motivation. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, Vol. 12, pp. 41-47

<sup>12</sup> Menasce Horowitz, J., R. Igielnik, and R. Kochhar. (January 9, 2020). [Most Americans Say There is Too Much Economic Inequality in the U.S., But Fewer Than Half Call it a Top Priority](#). Pew Research Center.

<sup>13</sup> Plummer, R., D. Telfer, A. Hashimoto, and R. Summers. (2005). Beer Tourism in Canada along the Waterloo-Wellington Ale Trail. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 26, pp. 447-458.

<sup>14</sup> Watson, B. [The Demographics of Craft Beer Lovers](#). Brewers Association.

<sup>15</sup> Grafe, D. and A. Grafe. (2021). Gender and Craft Beer: Participations and Preferences in Pennsylvania. *International Journal of the Sociology of Leisure*, Vol. 4, pp. 45-60.

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.media.pa.gov/pages/liquor-control-board-details.aspx?newsid=607>

23), the support of the PLCB has been instrumental in developing and supporting beer trails in Pennsylvania.

In each funding round a portion is allocated to beer tourism expansion and research. The following are examples for beer tourism projects from the 2019 funding round:

- *Beer Tourism Grant for the Craft Beer Trail of Greater Philadelphia (\$150,000)*
- *Allegheny County Craft Brewery Tourism Campaign (\$75,000)*
- *Pittsburgh Brewers Guild Update and Expansion: (\$75,000)*
- *Cumberland Valley Beer Trail Marketing & Visitation Increase (\$35,000)*

### **Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) - VisitPA**

VisitPA, with its slogan “Pennsylvania Pursue Your Happiness,” promotes Pennsylvania craft beer under the theme of “Foodie Fun.” The website promotes 10 beer trails with a short write up and a link to each trail’s website. In addition, the website has a “Brewery Finder”, which allows users to filter through PA’s breweries with criteria such as family friendliness, live music and pet friendliness.

### **Brewers of Pennsylvania**

The Brewers of Pennsylvania trade association developed the “Digital Ale Trail App”<sup>17</sup> with the support of PLCB funding. The app features over 200 breweries. Visitors can log in via the app’s geo verification and earn rewards and prizes through its integrated passport program. For example, users can redeem 50 stamps for a Brewers of PA Beanie, 75 stamps for a BOP Renaissance Glass, and 100 stamps for a PA Flavor VIP Ticket. The app lists details of the brewery, a list of beers and events. The content of the app relies heavily on the information entered by the breweries; hence information completeness differs. In addition, the association also promote events of their members. The association hosts numerous events to promote craft beer in Pennsylvania and beyond. One upcoming event is PA Flavor: The Ultimate Beer & Food Pairing at the PA Farm Show.

### **Breweries in PA**

Breweries in PA is a Pennsylvania-based venture that is run by two beer enthusiasts: Matt Kozar and Chad Balbi. Their website, social media platforms and events support the development of beer tourism by bringing information to craft brewery customers in an easily accessible format, and by supporting networking and collaborations between breweries. They have an avid following with over 12k Twitter, 36k Instagram and over 21k Facebook followers.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.brewersofpa.org/digital-ale-trail-app/>



Breweries in PA was developed in 2016 out of a need, as the two felt that there was not enough information available about the craft brewery industry, even though the number of craft breweries was expanding at a rapid pace. The website started with brewery and beer reviews, but quickly developed into *the* resource for Pennsylvania breweries, beer consumers, and visitors. The site showcases a list of all open and upcoming craft breweries, 18 beer and craft beverage trails in Pennsylvania, and events. Every time a new brewery opens in PA the team approaches them for an interview, which is also available on the website. The team also organizes beer festivals like ‘Philly invades Pittsburgh’ and ‘Pittsburgh invades Philly.’ These are more intimate events, with about 300 tickets available that take visitors through different breweries in these cities. The website is supported by advertisement and event proceeds. In addition, the team also supports charitable events like ‘Black is Beautiful’ and a veterans beer collaboration, which brings together over 20 veteran-run breweries. (in 2019, Breweries in PA raised \$20,000 for the Pennsylvania Veteran’s Association with a Veterans beer collaboration.)

We love the craft brewery industry in Pennsylvania, and we want to support it! While we help people to learn more about their local breweries, our goal is to also provide a platform for people in Pittsburgh to enjoy Philadelphia beer and vice versa.

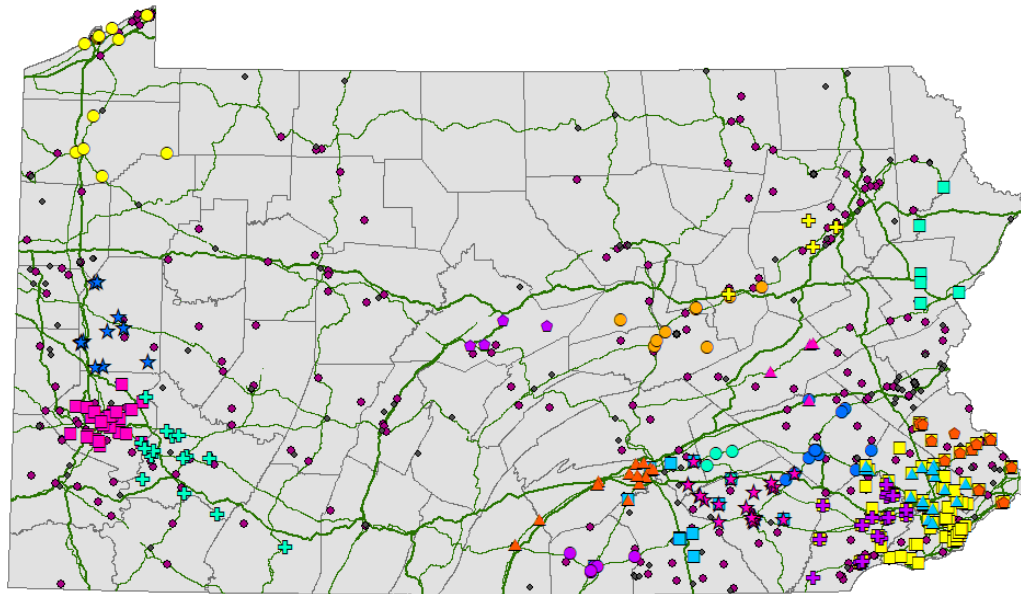
~ Matt Kozar *Breweries in PA.*

### 3 Beer Trails

Slocum (2018, p. 85) defines a beer trail as a “collaboration of breweries, located in close proximity to each other, and often involves joint marketing efforts to promote beer consumption as a tourist activity”. In Pennsylvania, we have many collaborations between breweries and other craft beverage establishments. Often, beer trails are “gamified” by featuring passports and/or prizes or rewards for visiting a certain number of breweries. Currently, Pennsylvania is home to 19 beer and craft beverage trails. The map below (figure 4) shows the location of the trails and the number of breweries in each trail with a focus on regional/county based trails(it does not feature the previously mentioned Digital Trail App.). Especially in rural areas, trails often collaborate across wineries, cideries, meaderies and distilleries, and the map demonstrates that many establishments in a trail are not necessarily “in close proximity”.

One of the first craft beverage trails organized was the Centre County Tasting Trail in 2013. Since then, numerous ‘pure’ beer and ale trails, and craft beverage trails were formed across the commonwealth. Since the beginning of our project, a new trail, ‘The Brew Barrons Trail’ in Harrisburg was added. ‘The Lebanon Valley Libations Trail’ is defunct for now as businesses either moved or closed, because the ‘critical mass’ was missing. Most of the beer trails in Pennsylvania are self-guided. However, a couple of brewery tour companies either create their itineraries or work with local trails to establish tours.

Figure 2: Beer and Craft Beverage Trails in Pennsylvania



**Beer Trails in Pennsylvania**

- |                                   |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| ● Adams County Pour Tour (7)      | ■ Craft Beer Trail of Greater Philadelphia (118) | ■ Pocono Beverage Trail (6)                  |
| ⊕ Beer, Wine, & Shine Trail (4)   | ▲ Cumberland Valley Beer Trail (19)              | ● River Rat Brew Trail (11)                  |
| ● Bucks County Ale Trail (17)     | ● Lake Erie Ale Trail (13)                       | ▲ Schuylkill County Craft Beverage Trail (4) |
| ★ Butler County Beer Circuit (12) | ★ Lancaster Ale Trail (20)                       | ■ Susquehanna Ale Trail (14)                 |
| ⊕ BV Brew Scene (23)              | ⊕ Laurel Highlands Pour Tour (15)                | ● Brew Ha Ha Trail (13)                      |
| ● Central PA Tasting Trail (4)    | ● Lebanon Valley Libations Trail (4)             | ◆ Breweries not in a trail                   |
| ▲ Montco Makers (20)              | ■ Pittsburgh Brewery Guild (38)                  | ● Wineries, 2017                             |

Another trend we found during our interviews is collaborations with agricultural producers to create themed trails. Agritourism operators are in a unique position to collaborate with craft beverage producers for type of offering, showcasing hop or other agricultural ingredient production. There are numerous opportunities for collaborations - Pennsylvania has over 700 agricultural operators across most counties engaged in agritourism on their farm.

One of the first studies documenting the "rise and fall" of an ale trail was Plummer et al. (2005, 2006). The authors investigated the establishment and eventual dissolution of the Waterloo-Wellington Ale trail in Ontario, Canada. While visitors to the region appreciated the trail, it eventually failed because of a lack of coordination between the participating breweries.

### 3.1 Laurel Highlands Pour Tour

The Laurel Highlands Pour Tour<sup>18</sup> is a craft beverage trail located in southwestern Pennsylvania. The Pour Tour was launched in September 2019 and consists of 17 breweries, 13 wineries, nine distilleries, two meaderies, and one cidery across Fayette, Somerset, and Westmoreland Counties. The three



counties have a total population of approximately 560,600. The trail also benefits from its close proximity to Pittsburgh.

*The trail:* The Laurel Highlands Pour Tour was developed and is operated by the GO Laurel Highlands marketing team. The Pour Tour had a long development time; the team conducted extensive research by studying other destinations' trail formats and held numerous discussions within the team. The team decided

that the trail would utilize a passport-based program with the DMO absorbing all of the participants' costs (both craft beverage establishments and visitors). They also set a relatively low threshold for gamification, where the first prize can be claimed after eight check-ins. Each property has a unique, custom sticker that can be obtained at the establishment with a purchase, or if using the APP, by submitting a photo of your beverage along with the GPS location verification established. These are then manually approved or disqualified by GO LH staff through the APP interface.

The trail framework was then presented to stakeholders (breweries, wineries, cideries, distilleries, meaderies). The trail program is open to all craft beverage producers in the three-county region. Currently, about half of the trail participants are members of GO Laurel Highlands. Trail participants must sign an agreement promising to adhere to program guidelines, fulfill their obligations, and meet an insurance coverage threshold required by legal counsel.

*"The Laurel Highlands Pour Tour has been fantastic for us!" (respondent, brewery survey, 2019)*

The participating establishments are responsible for training their staff and using the tools and

*"Because we are financed with taxpayer dollars, we wanted the program to be open to all craft beverage producers in the region. The trail benefits the entire region and we absorb all the expenses and provide participants with all the necessary tools." Kristin Ecker, Senior Director of Marketing, GO Laurel Highlands*

<sup>18</sup> The information presented in this section is based on an interview with Kristin Ecker, Senior Director of Marketing, GO Laurel Highlands.

promotional materials provided by the DMO. The team decided to offer a paper-based passport knowing that some users prefer a keepsake. The Pour Tour also has an app version for more digitally inclined users. This virtual passport requires the user to submit a photo proof-of-purchase as well as geolinking, which can be a challenge where broadband and cell connection is not always reliable. The costs for the trail were the greatest in the first year due to logo design fees and passport layout and printing. The design and print costs for the entire starting set of custom stickers, posters, instructional materials, 30,000 passports, etc. totalled approximately \$30,000. Additional program costs include prize merchandise, postage, press kit items, tradeshow materials such as banners and table cloths, sponsorships and supporting advertising campaigns. To support the further trail development, the DMO has started offering Pour Tour sponsorships to offset program costs, which also allows other businesses to have a presence in the program.

*Covid Impact:* 2020 was a phenomenal year for the region because of the increased demand for outdoor activities; campgrounds and ski resorts were bustling, and the slow lifting of restrictions did not lead to an immediate slow down.

*"The Pour Tour has really saved our business this year. It is very appreciated." (Brewery feedback, 2020)*

*Impact and visitors:* Data collected from the passport program show that primarily locals of the region, southwest Pennsylvania, frequent the tour. However, a number of visitors are also coming from Maryland and Ohio. Most visitors are between 40 and 60 years old, and many couples use the trail as the basis for a weekend visit to the region.

Through COVID, while all other events have tapered off, the one thing people were still looking for was the pour tour. Many breweries and wineries have outdoor spaces, which support this. ~ *Kristin Ecker, Senior Director of Marketing, GO Laurel Highlands.*

The app has, on average, 800 monthly users. In the first month of COVID (March 2020), user numbers decreased by half but climbed back up during the summer and have since surpassed pre-pandemic usage numbers. Establishments participating in the trail have reported an average 25 percent increase in business revenue directly associated with the

*"We have people that have never visited, coming in just for the Pour Tour. Glad to be a part of it." (Brewery feedback)*

program. The impact of the trail program is estimated by the number of redemptions, stickers distributed to participating establishments, average drink cost, and the average visitor purchase price per ticket at the participating properties. Using these available metrics, the DMO estimates that customers have spent more than \$1,000,000 on

***What is the most important part when developing a craft beverage trail?*** "Avoid passing on the program costs to the end users and try to find a way to offer the program for little to no cost. If you want to create a successful trail, you need to have the end-goal and end-users in mind. We want our craft beverage establishments to benefit from the trail, which only works if the trail is not cost-prohibitive for visitors and establishments. Visitors need to be happy – the program should be easy to use, navigate, and accessible. That's why we offer a paper and an app passport. Visitors don't have to buy their way in, and we offer prizes that they find appealing as a strong incentive. As a DMO, our goal is to drive tourism in the area and gauge its impact. Compared to our investment - the return has been incredible."

~ *Kristin Ecker, Senior Director of Marketing, GO Laurel Highlands.*

Pour Tour related purchases since the inception of the program. Twenty months into the program, GO Laurel Highlands has distributed 40,000 passports out to users. More than 80,000 stickers have been distributed from participating establishments and more than 350 individuals have fully completed the program.

### 3.2 Lake Erie Ale Trail

The Lake Erie Ale Trail<sup>19</sup> is located at the shore of Lake Erie – spanning Erie County and Crawford County in PA and Chautauqua County in New York. The trail was conceptualized and implemented by the participating breweries. The trail started in 2015, when four breweries came together and decided to collaborate. Visit Erie, the local DMO, was very helpful in getting the trail started by supporting



advertising efforts. With more breweries joining over the years, the trail has expanded to include 15 breweries. The trail had a passport program in the beginning, but this was substituted with an “enthusiasm membership.” This gamification strategy is unique in Pennsylvania as no other trail has implemented this type of incentive (see Appendix A). Members pay \$75 to get one growler fill (or equivalent), at each member brewery. Like the Centre County Tasting Trail, members formed an official 501 C (6) – nonprofit, which was supported by The Nonprofit Partnership<sup>20</sup>, an Erie based nonprofit support organization.

They have bylaws and rules in how the organization is set up. To join, breweries must be opened and licensed, and located within 45 miles, in order to keep the trail regional. The partnership has a traditional nonprofit setup with a president, secretary, treasurer and a board. The only voting members are brewery representatives. While non-brewery members are allowed, most voting members must be breweries, so that the brewers can act in their own self-interest as a group. One member of the board is from Visit Erie. COVID impacted all breweries in the trail. The trail started to purchase ads on local

Organizing as a non-for profit was crucial for us. If we were just ‘casually doing it’, we would have failed. The support of “The Nonprofit Partnership” was essential in setting up our trail collaboration.

*~Jeff McCullor, Erie Ale Works*



stations to make potential customers aware of the fact that they are still around and an important part of “buying local”. Because of the incentive system the trail is geared more towards locals. In 2021 about 150 customers bought memberships, in 2020, 225 memberships were sold.

The trail is financed through grant money, and the PLCB grant has been crucial in the further development of the trail, memberships and

<sup>19</sup> The information presented in this section is based on an interview with Jeff McCullor, Erie Ale Works

<sup>20</sup> [www.yournpp.org](http://www.yournpp.org)

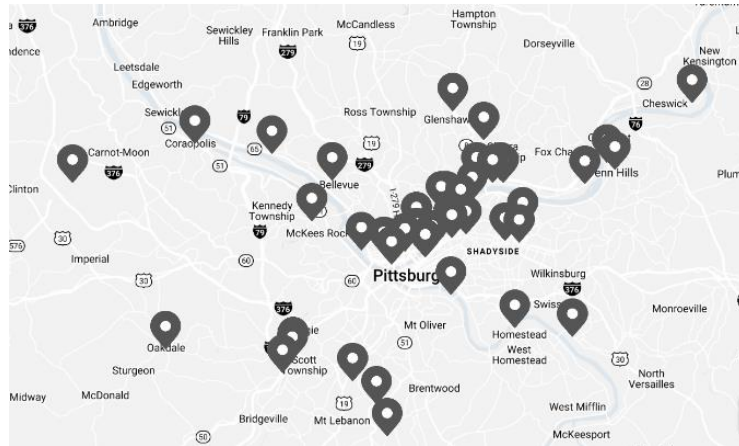
two signature events (Erie Craft Beer Week and American Craft Beer Week).

**What is the most important part when developing a craft beverage trail?** “The most important aspect is to establish accountability among the members. Everyone has great ideas on what could be done, but you must find a way to ensure that everyone delivers. It is important to establish a hierarchy. We have a formal organization with very clear responsibilities. Having measurable goals and executing action with an assigned committee structure towards these goals is critical.

~ Jeff McCullor, Erie Ale Works

### 3.3 Pittsburgh Brewery Trail

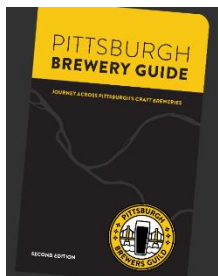
The Pittsburgh Brewery Trail<sup>21</sup> is operated by the participating breweries and has undergone several changes since its launch in 2018. Pittsburgh, located in Allegheny County, has a population of approximately 1.2 million (2017)<sup>22</sup>.



**How it started:** The brewery trail began as a collaboration among more than 30 breweries and was launched in August 2018 by the Pittsburgh Brewers Guild. The Guild was formed in late 2017 with the goal of establishing the trail. Visit Pittsburgh (DMO) and the Guild have an informal partnership and, in the beginning, the DMO helped with advertising and distributing the prizes for trail completion. The Guild received funding from the PLCB to develop the

trail website, passport, and printing of passport and promotional materials.

**The Brewery Trail – first edition:** The Pittsburgh Brewery Trail is not a trail, but rather an agglomeration of different trails. Because of the large number of breweries, visitors can choose between suggested



trails, or develop one themselves using the website. However, based on website visitor history, the Guild saw that the pre-determined trails were most popular. Participating breweries must be a member of the Guild. Visitors pay \$10 for a paper copy of the Pittsburgh Brewery Guide. According to Guild Member Brian Eaton, besides covering the print costs, the passport fee is also an incentive for visitors to complete the trail. (They'll also receive a branded beer glass once they've accrued

<sup>21</sup> The information presented in this section is based on an interview with Brian Eaton, Grist House Craft Brewery and Pittsburgh Brewery Guild member

<sup>22</sup> <https://aese.psu.edu/research/centers/cecd/publications/2019-county-profile-reports/download-2019-county-profile-reports-2192/allegheny-county-profile-report-2019>

30 passport stamps.) Another highly used website feature is the share function. Once a trail is developed by a visitor, they can send it to their friends and family.

The passport has a two-page spread for every brewery, which includes a short history of the brewery and guide on accessibility, amenities, and hours. It is printed on water- and beer-proof paper. Additional

*“A lot of our members see the value in the trail in that it drives in business. It helps to bring in visitors that would not have visited before. People from the north might have never gone south of the city to visit a brewery, but in order to get the stamps they are encouraged.”*

empty pages at the end of the passport allow for new breweries, an important feature in the fast-changing brewery market.

The passport was very popular from the start. The Guild initially printed 2,000 passports which sold out in three months. They then printed an additional 3,000 passports which sold out by the end of summer 2019.

An additional marketing strategy was implemented in mid-2019 in collaboration with Visit Pittsburgh. A palm card listing the trail breweries was developed to attract weekend visitors, especially (see Figure 2). Visitors received a co-branded koozie after visiting five breweries. The card was available free of charge at major travel stops around the city (airport, turnpike stops etc.) and at each brewery for visitors. However, card distribution stopped after the emergence of COVID-19. The card program did not place an additional burden on the participating breweries as they were already working with the stamped passports. While there are no actual utilization numbers available, the Guild perceives the card program as a great success, as the breweries indicated that this attracted additional customers.

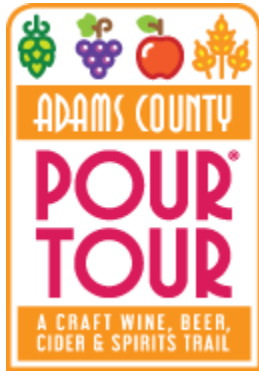
Figure 2: Palm card (2019)



**The Brewery Trail – second edition:** The Guild decided to update the passport layout and incentive structure in 2019 and they received funding for this from the PLCB. In the recently launched update, visitors can receive a branded koozie when redeeming 10 stamps, a guild glass for 20 stamps or an insulated growler for 30 stamps. The Guild decided against a mobile app, as the paper passport is working very well. However, the website has a mobile-friendly design. As the pre-set trails were very successful on the website, the new guide focuses on seven developed trails. Brewery members are now listed by trail instead of by alphabetical order. Another change was to eliminate brewery hours because of the uncertainties brought by COVID. Instead, passport users are directed to brewery websites throughout the guide. Each of the seven trails has a brewery that acts as a fulfillment center for the prizes, where visitors can arrange for a prize pick up. In the beginning, prizes were never mailed, so visitor demographic information was not collected. However, gauging from the website analytics, most traffic comes from not just Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh area, but also New York, Ohio and Maryland.

**What is the most important part when developing a craft beverage trail?** In my opinion, it makes sense for the breweries to design and operate a beer trail. We know the industry best and we are the ones that benefit from it. When changes are required, we can discuss and implement them when needed. Our lesson learned was that pre-designed trails make the most sense for visitors and locals of the Pittsburgh area. We don't track our number closely, but we believe that the trail has driven new and repeat customers to our breweries. *Brian Eaton, Grist House Craft Brewery and Pittsburgh Brewery Guild member*

### 3.4 Adams County Pour Tour



The Adams County Pour Tour<sup>23</sup> is a craft beverage trail that features 20 partners. Adams County is a well-known destination not only for its Civil War battlefields, but also its agricultural production. In 2017, the county’s population was 102,336 . Nearby large population centers are Baltimore and Philadelphia.

**The trail:** The Adams County Pour Tour was initiated in 2017 and launched in May 2018. A wine-focused trail existed previously in the county but disbanded a year earlier. Destination Gettysburg, Adam County’s DMO, saw an opportunity to provide critical support for craft beverage establishments in the county interested in participating in a trail. The concept was developed by the DMO (Kristi Cramer, Director of Marketing, Destination Gettysburg) and Pittsburgh-

based external creative agency, Boom Creative. The trail structure is loosely based on Loudoun County in Virginia after visiting with their DMO staff.

After the initial trail idea was developed, the DMO reached out to potential venues organizing an introductory meeting to share the potential timeline, business plan, and marketing strategy.

“In just one year the pour tour has impacted Reid's Winery and Cider House in the greatest way possible! It has brought in tons of new guests and gave returning guests even more reasons to come back try more of our wines and ciders! More often than not, customers who come into our winery aren't familiar with hard cider. The Pour Tour gets these guests to step out of their comfort zone, try something new and receive more stamps!” – Laken Wiles, Reid’s Winery: The Cider House

Participating craft beverage producers pay \$595 for their first location in the trail, and \$200 for their second location. These funds are used to finance a part-time manager and to pay for advertisements and merchandise. The trail does not currently have a mobile app, but the DMO is looking to transition to an electronic app in the near future. To date, the paper passport has been very successful, and visitors appreciate it as a keepsake/memento. It is an open passport, meaning that the pages are not allocated to specific establishments. Many visitors appreciate this feature as they do not have to search for a location, allowing them to take tasting notes. Another distinguishing feature is that the trail has no time limit for completion.

The Trail helps our partners to reach customers they would not otherwise be able to reach. With our combined resources we are able to reach a much broader audience.

~ Kristi Cramer, Director of Marketing, Destination Gettysburg.

Since its inception, the trail has grown from 14 partners to 20. Over 26,000 passports have been distributed since the 2018 launch, resulting in 35,807 stamps received and 3,780 prizes earned as of March 2021.

<sup>23</sup> The information presented in this section is based on an interview with Kristi Cramer, Director of Marketing, Destination Gettysburg.



Instant gratification is important to visitors. Each partner has an inventory of prizes at their location. While this is more costly, our visitors appreciate the immediate gratification and that they do not have to wait for a prize to be shipped. In addition, all the partners also have the passports available at their locations, so visitors can start collecting stamps right away.

~ Kristi Cramer, Director of Marketing, Destination Gettysburg.

Destination Gettysburg allocates the fees and a portion of their budget to promote the Pour Tour. The DMO supplies passports, counter displays, prizes, and stamps. All members of the trail track the number of visitors on tracking sheets provided to them. The sheets enable the DMO to measure the success of the trail in addition to tracking the number of passports and prizes handed out through the partners and the DMO office. Each partner has an inventory of prizes at all locations. Individuals visiting all locations may enter a drawing, providing an opportunity for the DMO to collect additional demographic information. The Pour Tour Manager is the liaison for the

participating members. The partners meet a minimum of three times a year at a partner location (pre-Covid). Social media marketing is managed by the social media manager of Destination Gettysburg. Pre-Covid, the DMO promoted the trail at local wine festivals and other craft beverage festivals in Pennsylvania and surrounding states.

Throughout the early months of COVID, visitor business in Adams county was down by over 50 percent compared to the previous year. Passport requests decreased significantly in mid-2020.

“Since we have joined the Pour Tour, we have had many new customers that are now also returning customers! It has brought guests our way that may not have ventured to this side of Adams County since the majority of the craft beverages are in or near Gettysburg. We hear often "I never knew you were here" so the Pour Tour has definitely been worth being a part of and we look forward to seeing what else it will do for us!” – Alisha Carr, Brookmere Wine &

Many partners in the Pour Tour could not operate under the mandated restrictions and had to close. However, business has been bouncing back. In April 2021, traffic on the Pour Tour website was over 1,120% higher than that in April 2020 and 24.74% higher than April 2019. Website tracking shows that most interest is coming from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Washington D.C, New Jersey, New York, and Ohio.

***What is the most important part when developing a craft beverage trail?*** Businesses owners are busy. It is important to develop a business plan in advance and have answers for common questions regarding time commitment and effort needed to get the trail working and secure stakeholder buy in. It is also very important to have one person/the right team dedicated to the trail. Many trails fail because they get lost in the day-to-day business.

~ Kristi Cramer, Director of Marketing, Destination Gettysburg.

### 3.5 Central PA Tasting Trail

Probably one of the first craft beverage trails in Pennsylvania is the Central PA Tasting Trail, established in 2013<sup>24</sup>. Centre County has a population of about 162,660. One brewer we talked to referred to the region as the "Beermuda triangle," because it is somewhat isolated in the middle of Pennsylvania.



*The Trail:* In 2013, a group of craft beverage producers in Centre County got together and discussed potential collaboration opportunities. They started with a craft beverage expo in Bellefonte and then discussed the possibility of a craft beverage trail. In developing the trail, they took inspiration from wine trails in the Finger Lakes Region.

The local DMO (now called the Happy Valley Adventure Bureau) was instrumental in the set-up of the trail as

they provided meeting rooms and initial advertisement support. However, much like the Lake Erie Ale Trail (see below), the trail is entirely run by its members. The trail, a not-for profit - 501 C (6), is currently supported by a part-time manager, who is an independent contractor. The trail consists of three breweries, four wineries, two distilleries and two cideries. The law change in 2016 (Act 36) has been a game changer for the trail participants, as the members were allowed to offer each other's products in their respective establishments.

Having a positive impact on our community is important to our trail members. Celesta Powell, Managing Director, Central PA Tasting Trail.

The members of the trail have established several rules. For example, members must; produce their products in Centre County, have been in business for more than one year and have a live website. In addition, members also need to attend at least 75 percent of all the meetings, although this rule has been relaxed a bit during COVID. The collaboration is supported by a passport fee and revenue from the Annual Craft Beverage Expo—a small local festival-type event that runs one day a year from 2:00- 6:00 pm.

**What is the most important part when developing a craft beverage trail?** Having a sense of camaraderie and a great working relationship between the establishments is important for a trail that is run as a not for profit by its members. I also think it is important to offer a variety of craft beverages. First, it broadens the potential of the number of establishments to work with and second, you can reach a more diversified customer base. In addition, there is also a customer education component that's important – there is a great potential to expose customers to different types of craft beverages. Celesta Powell, Managing Director, Central PA Tasting Trail.

<sup>24</sup> The information presented in this section is based on an interview with Celesta Powell, managing director of the Central PA Tasting Trail.

*COVID impact:* Customers who bought a trail pass in 2019 have an additional year to use the passport. The sales of passport went up during the holiday season with a buy one, get one free campaign.

*Impact and visitors:* On average, 375 trail passports are sold per year. Several customers buy the passport multiple times a couple of years apart. It is a great opportunity to meet regularly with a group of friends in the Centre County region. The Beverage Expo attracts about 1,500 people each year.

### 3.6 Bucks County Ale Trail

The Bucks County Ale Trail is operated by the Bucks County DMO “Visit Bucks County.” Bucks County, located in the southeast of Pennsylvania, is close to Philadelphia (population, 1.5 million) and has a population of approximately 628,300. Bucks County is traditionally a family-oriented vacation destination for locals and visitors from the tri-state area, with hiking trails and attractions like ‘Sesame Place,’ the nation’s only theme park dedicated entirely to Sesame Street. Many breweries are kid-friendly, so the trail was viewed as fitting in with the sense of family orientation. In response to positive feedback on the Ale Trail, the DMO also developed a Sweet Spots Trail, launched in Fall 2019. Including trails in the itinerary suggestions on the website encourages visitors to extend their stay in the County.



**The Trail:** As early as 2014, the DMO listed breweries in the County as the ‘Bucks County Ale Trail’ on their website, but without a gamification component. The trail, in its current format, was launched in May 2019. After conducting extensive research and comparing existing trails with passport programs, the DMO decided to introduce a paper passport and a digital version. The existing relationship with the breweries helped expedite the passport idea – they received a 100 percent participation

“In order to receive a free Bucks County Ale Trail t-shirt, visitors only need to stop by and “check-in” digitally or by receiving a stamp at 5 breweries. The t-shirt has been a very effective marketing piece for Bucks County. We see locals and visitors wearing them often at events and beer festivals.” ~ Heather Walters, Visit Bucks County

rate from the start.

The DMO engaged Bandwango, a “destination marketing, and commerce platform” to develop the online version of the passport. The threshold for earning a prize is relatively low, as visitors receive a t-shirt after five stamps or check-ins. There is no cost to the breweries as the DMO handles the organization of the trail and shipment of the prizes. There is also no formal contract or insurance requirement for the participating breweries. Any changes to brewery hours are communicated via Google business listings by the breweries, which automatically updates the online passport information. Due to higher costs associated with the printed passports and COVID transmission concerns, the DMO decided to phase out the printed passport this year.

“People keep coming in for that t-shirt. The Bucks County Ale Trail has been a great marketing resource for our brewery. We know the word is getting out there and can keep our focus on brewing great beer.” ~ Shawn Dulee, VP of Brewing Operations at Naked Brewing Company

Upon launch, the DMO marketed the trail extensively. Billboards and local beer festival participation were employed, as well as a marketing campaign on the mobile app Untappd, which would notify visitors about the Trail through geo-targeting in the DMO’s target markets of New

York, Northern New Jersey and locally. Visitors could also get a Bucks County Ale Trail Badge on Untappd. In addition, the DMO collaborated with “What’s Brewing,” a program that runs on NBC Sports Philly following the broadcast of Philadelphia sporting events. Another marketing strategy involved collaborating with participating breweries on seasonal beer collaborations with beer cans featuring custom Bucks County labels and Ale Trail logos being distributed through the breweries and in outside target markets. In return, the DMO agreed to purchase \$2,000 worth of the beer, which was used in media kits to attract press attention. As some of the collaborating breweries have a regional distribution system, these beers were also sold in New York and New Jersey, extending the reach of this campaign.

Measuring Success: The DMO measures trail progress and success via website traffic, visits and check-ins to breweries, sign-ups for the online passport, and redemptions of the paper passports. Website traffic comes from a variety of markets including Philadelphia, New York, New Jersey, D.C. and locally as well. In 2019 and 2020 the trail website was in the top-10 landing pages for the DMO website from all target markets. Since its inception, over 8,000 visitors have registered on the Ale Trail website. Close to 3,000 individuals have checked in at five breweries, earning a prize from gamification inception through March 2021.

***What is the most important part when developing a craft beverage trail?*** Make sure that you have a spirit of camaraderie of all the establishments involved. This is important for cross promotion. In our area we experienced that the brewers were all very collaborative and willing to help each other out across the County and different sized breweries. It is also important for the staff at the brewery to convey the enthusiasm about the trail to the customers. They need to be informed on how the trail is functioning so that all customer questions can be answered, and they are encouraged to visit other breweries as well. It’s also important to reinvigorate every couple of months with new advertisement strategies to keep the trail interesting and top of visitor’s mind.

*~ Kelley Keeling, Visitor Experience & Partner Outreach Manager and Heather Walter, Marketing Director, Visit Bucks County*

## 4 Beer Trail Establishment

The short case studies of existing trails in Pennsylvania show many ways in which beer and craft beverage trails can be established. Below, we provide some questions that we hope will guide you in the decision of whether to develop and/or operate a trail.

### 4.1 Deciding to Start a Trail

The decision to establish a trail should be thoroughly considered before launching. As shown through the case studies, many of the trails evolved over time, and they can require significant operational oversight. It is essential to determine whether motivation, support, and resources exist for the creation of a successful trail.

***Are there potential collaborators? Who are they?*** Depending on location, there might not be the 'critical mass' for a beer or ale trail. Collaborating with other craft beverage producers (wineries, distilleries, meaderies, cideries), or agritourism operators and restaurants may allow you to build a trail or collaboration, nonetheless.

***What is the objective for establishing a trail?*** There are many reasons for creating a trail, and the parties involved (breweries, DMO, county, etc.) may have objectives that are a priority to them. For trail success, it is necessary to clearly define the primary objective and prioritize others. Possible objectives include:

- Grow customer base
- Increase profit
- Grow occupancy tax
- Share advertisement resources
- Opportunity to apply for assistance (public grant funding)
- Create goodwill in the community
- Build local business collaborations
- Attract more tourists to the region

***What are the craft beverage options in your region?*** Understanding the prospective competition for a new trail will be valuable in determining whether to establish a new trail, and how it might be positioned. Assess the number and locations of any competing trails. Also, consider how the new trail is distinguished from others.

***What is your region/area known for?*** Connecting to an established tourism foundation can help improve the likelihood of trail success. It connects with existing customer perceptions and experiences; it will also provide ideas for establishing the marketing framework of the trail. Consider making a list of the region's attractions (outdoor recreation, specific type of agriculture, parks, etc.) and whether the trail can be combined with these other attractions. Where do the visitors currently come from, and why are they coming? If the local DMO is involved with establishing a new trail, they can likely provide much of this information.

***Who is the target visitor group?*** Consider who the target visitor group is for a new trail and whether a 'critical mass' of individuals fitting that profile can be reached with advertising and promotions. Information to assess includes the demographic characteristics of the local population, visitors, and

potential visitors. Are these individuals craft-beverage consumers? Resources available to learn more about your county include:

- [Economic Profile System](#)
- [2019 PA County Profile Reports](#)
- [Consumer Expenditure Survey](#)
- [U.S. Census](#)

***What is the tourism infrastructure in your area?*** Tourism infrastructure can impact the ability to successfully target certain visitor groups. For instance, if the target visitor group is consumers who would have to travel a significant distance, assess whether there are opportunities for visitors to stay overnight. Options would include hotels, AirBnB, Bed & Breakfast, camping/Hipcamp, etc. Similarly, assess whether there are opportunities for cross-promotion with these establishments. If they view a potential trail and the potential for increased visitors positively, they may be more likely to collaborate.

***How will revenue be generated?*** Generating sufficient revenue to manage, promote, and operate a trail is vital. While trail operating budget is covered in the next section, it's important prior to establishing a trail to identify opportunities for revenue generation that will in turn provide the funds for the operating budget. Possibilities for generating revenue include:

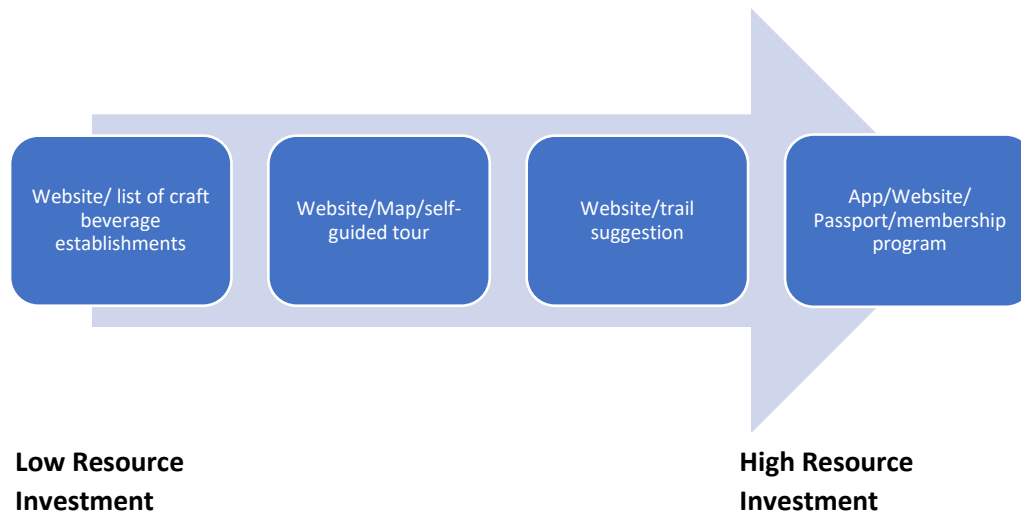
- Member financed through a participation fee
- Advertisement placed on trail website, passport, and brochures
- Grant money (e.g., PA Liquor Control Board, USDA Rural Development, etc.)

***How will the trail be organized, managed and administered?*** Trail organization can be informal and straightforward or more complex and formalized. For instance, organizing as a not-for-profit may be an option to consider. Look to the objectives in establishing the trail to guide decisions regarding organization. Are there resources in your area that can help with the setup? Is there a designated person that can make sure that the trail is working for visitors and partners?

## **4.2 Operating a Trail**

Upon deciding to establish a beer trail, several next steps should be completed.

***Determine how to engage visitors/customers.*** Many trails start slowly, with a listing of craft beverage establishments on either the DMO website or a designated trail website. A step up from this is a web-based self-guided tour. The advantage to both options is that they require fewer resources and management than a passport program, which may include additional incentives. Managerial and administrative effort and monetary resources devoted to a trail increase when including a gamification component; however, so does customer involvement and the likelihood of repeat customers. Gamification may look like a passport or membership program (see Appendix A for a list of current trails and their incentive programs).



**Develop a budget.** The costs to set up a new trail can vary widely depending on what is done in-house versus being outsourced. From our interviews, we learned that a passport program with associated website design and hosting, graphic design and initial printing of passport/stamps/stickers for the first year could fall between \$25,000 to \$35,000, with additional costs for prizes and shipping, if applicable.

**Measure success.** Measuring the trail's success is crucial for determining whether changes should be made, and if so, what those changes should be. How this occurs can take many forms:

- Website visits, number of passports handed out, stamps/stickers used; consumer surveys, tally sheets, and tabs for total business created through trail customers

If a formal partnership is established (such as a not-for-profit), incorporating specific measurement requirements in the agreement may be desirable to ensure that all partners fulfill their responsibilities.

### 4.3 What's in it for Breweries and DMO's?

**If you do not measure it, you cannot track it.** According to Audra Gaiziunas<sup>25</sup>, a management consultant for the beer industry, breweries need to define their metrics carefully and design them into their point-of-sale system to measure impact of events they host and attend. The point-of-sale systems, already in place, should be tailored to gather sales information over a time period or a specific event. This can be incorporated either as a line item or a time gate. For example, if there is a brewery bus tour coming on a Wednesday afternoon, a time gate can be created, which can be compared with revenues from four to six weeks around this event.

Another tip to track engagement and returning customers from bus tours, festivals and trails is to give patrons tokens, as a form of currency for redemption, during these events and keep track of them when they come back and get claimed. While a pint is an additional cost, most of the time, customers stay for more. If guest tabs that have a token attached to them are accounted for, this allows the brewery to keep track of returning customers and additional revenue. Breweries could also negotiate for tokens to be incorporated in contracts with brewery bus tours and festival organizers.

For DMOs the goal is to increase occupancy tax income. For beer trails, passport information provides input on the type of visitors attracted. Depending on the set up of the passport program, income created for breweries can be tracked as well. According to Gaiziunas, it is essential to get buy-in from breweries early on during the process of building a trail or event, like a local festival. The more breweries are involved in the initial process of brainstorming the ideas and potential community impact, the more likely they will be interested in promoting the trail/event and measuring its impact.

### 4.4 Do You Give Your Visitors What They Want? How Surveys Can Help You Find Out

Customer surveys are an excellent tool to learn directly from visitors. You can ask what they think about different issues and topics, their visit experience, your products, future events, and so forth<sup>26</sup>. The data and information collected through surveys can reinforce, in a formal manner, what you are seeing on a day-to-day basis and any informal conclusions you've drawn. Surveys can also attune you to emerging trends or new markets earlier than they may have otherwise been identified. You can also use surveys to align the business or events with visitor expectations and feedback, thereby improving the likelihood of their return and advocacy of your business within their social networks<sup>27</sup>.

The questions you ask in a survey should be guided by your purpose in conducting the survey. Are you interested in learning more about the characteristics of visitors, increasing attendance or participation in

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<sup>25</sup> Brewed for her Ledger: Accounting, Finance, Operations Strategy For The Beer Industry: <https://brewedforherledger.com/>

<sup>26</sup> Pletcher, S. (February 24, 2021). [Customer Surveys for the Beer, Wine and Food Industries](#). Zephyr Conferences.

<sup>27</sup> Littlefield, D. and C. Schmidt. Thirsty for Data: Beer Tourism – What's in it for Brewers? Beer Marketing and Tourism Conference.



an event, or another goal? By identifying your survey purpose, you'll be able to design a focused and reasonable length survey with clear and specific questions.

Categorizing questions can assist with survey development. Question categories may include:

- Visitor Demographics
- The Product
- The Experience
- Other Activities
- Personal Motivations, Beliefs, Loyalty

For each category, compiling a list of survey questions that you can quickly draw from can accelerate survey development. Example survey questions include<sup>28</sup>:

- What is your age, gender, educational attainment, income bracket, etc.?
- How far did you travel? From where did you travel?
- How did you learn about us?
- Why are you visiting today?
- How many people did you visit with?
- Have you visited previously?
- How would you rate the product?
- How would you rate the service?
- What other restaurants, activities have you visited/participated in while in the area?

When it comes to choosing how to survey visitors, you have several options.

***In-person.*** A short in-person survey with visitors as they enter your business, a festival, or event provides real time information that can quickly be utilized. The key to an in-person survey is to have one or two focused questions that visitors can quickly answer as their focus is most likely on the experience or activities they are engaged in and you don't want to detract from that. Be aware that with an in-person survey, visitors may be less likely to provide any feedback that could be construed as negative.

***Paper/Postcard.*** Paper-based surveys are accessible to everyone, including those without internet or smart devices. While ideally completed on-site, the survey can also be off premises if it can be returned by the visitor easily, perhaps by mail. However, drawbacks to a paper-based survey include needing to allocate time to enter data into a spreadsheet or other tool for analysis and legibility of written answers. In addition, it can be difficult to customize survey questions to an individual's experience, beliefs or demographic attributes.

***Online.*** Online surveys are an option that may allow visitors to complete the survey either at the time of their visit or at another time convenient to them, off premises. As with in-person and paper/postcard surveys, online surveys should be relatively short to encourage completion. One benefit to an online survey however, is the ability to customize questions based on answers to previous questions. For

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<sup>28</sup> Kelley, K. (December 18, 2105). [Customer Survey Opportunity for Wineries](#). Penn State Extension Wine & Grapes U.

instance, you may want to ask different questions of a visitor that has indicated that they have traveled. There are several free and paid options for creating, distributing and analyzing online surveys.

Participation is vital for survey relevancy. You want as many visitors as possible to complete your survey. Reminders and incentives are two ways to encourage visitors to participate<sup>29</sup>. Reminders keep your survey front of mind and can be achieved through social media, emails, or text. If you have a newsletter, including a link or QR code directing recipients to the survey is another option.

Surveys are only effective if you use the data and feedback gathered. While keeping surveys relatively short means you be limited in the number of questions that you ask, by asking specific, defined questions on a regular basis or in conjunction with certain events you will have data that you can use to benchmark your business over time and respond to visitor feedback.

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<sup>29</sup> Kelley, K. (June 10, 2014). [Surveys: A Simple but Effective Tool](#). Penn State Extension Wine & Grapes U.

Appendix: Beer and Craft Beverage trails in Pennsylvania

Trail	County	Members	Map on website?	Visitor engagement	Incentives	Supported by	Website
<b>Adams County Pour Tour</b>	Adams	22: 8 breweries, 10 wineries, 2 meaderies, 2 cideries	Yes, OpenStreetMap	Passport. Cost: free.	Prizes/rewards for different levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 stamps – coasters</li> <li>• 12 stamps – tote bag</li> <li>• 20 stamps – pint glass</li> <li>• 31 stamps – entry to win an overnight get away.</li> </ul> Use #GetPoured on social media to be entered to win an Adams County Pour Tour t-shirt.	DMO; Destination Gettysburg	<a href="https://destinationgettysburg.com/pourtour/">https://destinationgettysburg.com/pourtour/</a>
<b>Beer, Wine, and Shine Trail</b>	Luzerne	12: 4 breweries, 7 wineries, 1 distillery	Yes, graphic/artistic map			DMO; Visit Luzerne County	<a href="https://www.visitluzernecounty.com/150/Beer-Wine-Shine">https://www.visitluzernecounty.com/150/Beer-Wine-Shine</a>
<b>The Brew Barrons</b>	Cities of Hershey and Harrisburg	24 breweries	Yes, Google map	Phone App. 1 passport per person per app. Cost: free	Prizes/rewards for different levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 check-ins – playing cards</li> <li>• 15 check-ins – ale can glass</li> <li>• 21 check-ins - steel growler</li> </ul>	DMO; Visit Hershey & Harrisburg	<a href="https://www.visitsheshyharrisburg.org/things-to-do/beer-trails/">https://www.visitsheshyharrisburg.org/things-to-do/beer-trails/</a>
<b>Butler County Beer Circuit</b>	Butler	13 breweries	Yes, Google Map	Passport. Cost: free	Claim a specialty mug "and more"	DMO; Butler County Tourism and Convention Bureau	<a href="https://www.visitbutlercounty.com/BeerCircuit">https://www.visitbutlercounty.com/BeerCircuit</a>
<b>BV Brew Scene</b>	Chester	23 brewery locations	Yes. Artistic Trail Map, Individual brewery Google maps			Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau	<a href="https://www.bvbrewscene.com/">https://www.bvbrewscene.com/</a>
<b>Bucks County Ale Trail</b>	Bucks	26 brewery locations	Yes, Google Map	Passport (digital or printed). Cost: free	T-shirt for visiting 5 breweries	Visit Bucks County	<a href="https://www.visitbuckscounty.com/things-to-do/planning-ideas/beer/follow-bucks-countys-ale-trail/">https://www.visitbuckscounty.com/things-to-do/planning-ideas/beer/follow-bucks-countys-ale-trail/</a>
<b>Central PA Tasting Trail</b>	Centre	11: 3 breweries, 2 cideries, 4 wineries, 2 distillers	Yes, graphic/artistic map	Passport. Cost: \$35 Valid for one year	Unique sweatshirt for completion		<a href="https://www.centralpatastingtrail.com/">https://www.centralpatastingtrail.com/</a>
<b>The Craft Beer Trail of Greater Philadelphia</b>	Greater Philadelphia area	91 breweries	Yes, Google mapping of individual breweries, breweries organized by Untappd rating			DMO; Visit Philadelphia	<a href="https://www.visitphilly.com/articles/philadelphia/the-breweries-brewpubs-and-craft-beer-trail-of-greater-philadelphia/">https://www.visitphilly.com/articles/philadelphia/the-breweries-brewpubs-and-craft-beer-trail-of-greater-philadelphia/</a>

<b>Cumberland Valley Beer Trail</b>	Cumberland and Dauphin	23 breweries	No	Passport (digital or printed). Cost: free. Valid for one year	Prizes/rewards for different levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 stickers – bottle opener</li> <li>• 15 stickers – bottle opener &amp; t-shirt</li> <li>• 20 stickers – bottle opener, t-shirt, &amp; cooler</li> </ul>	Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau	<a href="https://www.visitcumberlandvalley.com/cumberland-valley-beer-trail/">https://www.visitcumberlandvalley.com/cumberland-valley-beer-trail/</a>
<b>Lake Erie Ale Trail</b>	Erie	13 breweries	No	One year membership. Cost: \$75	1 Growler refill at each member brewery	VisitErie (DMO) and Lake Erie Wine Country	<a href="https://www.lakeeriealetrail.com/">https://www.lakeeriealetrail.com/</a>
<b>Lancaster Ale Trail</b>	Lancaster	34: 6 featured, 26 add'l listings	No			Discover Lancaster	<a href="https://www.discoverlancaster.com/where-to-eat/breweries/">https://www.discoverlancaster.com/where-to-eat/breweries/</a>
<b>Laurel Highlands Pour Tour</b>	Fayette, Somerset, and Westmoreland	45: 20 breweries; 1 cidery; 2 meaderies; 9 distilleries; 13 wineries	Yes, graphic/artistic map	Passport (online and on location). Cost: free, but purchase required; OR Pour Tour App: make picture of the purchase and post on app	Prizes/rewards for different levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 check-ins – wine cork</li> <li>• 18 check-ins – t-shirt</li> <li>• 38 check-ins – insulated cooler &amp; grand prize drawing entry</li> </ul>	GO Laurel Highlands	<a href="https://www.LHPourtour.com">https://www.LHPourtour.com</a>
<b>Montco Makers</b>	Montgomery	39: 31 breweries; 3 distilleries; 5 wineries	No	Phone App. Cost: Free	Prizes/rewards for different levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apprentice (1 check-in) – discounts</li> <li>• Journeyman (5 check-ins) – Montco Makers branded cozi &amp; coaster, Crave Montco dining guide</li> <li>• Craftsman (10 check-ins) – Montco Makers hat</li> <li>• Master Maker (20 check-ins) – Exclusive Tour/VIP Experience to one Brewery, Winery, or Distillery</li> </ul>	Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board	<a href="https://www.valleyforge.org/montco-makers/">https://www.valleyforge.org/montco-makers/</a>
<b>Pittsburgh Brewery Trail</b>	Allegheny	39 breweries	Yes, Google Map	Guide/passport. Cost: \$10; no expiration	Participants who complete the guide are eligible to receive an exclusive Pittsburgh Brewers Guild glass.	DMO; Visit Pittsburgh	<a href="https://pittsburghbreweries.com/#brewery-trail">https://pittsburghbreweries.com/#brewery-trail</a>
<b>Pocono Beverage Trail</b>	Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne	29: 7 breweries; 4 Distilleries; 8 wineries	Yes, Google Map			Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau	<a href="https://www.poconomountains.com/pocono-beverage-trail/">https://www.poconomountains.com/pocono-beverage-trail/</a>
<b>River Rat Brew Trail</b>	Union	12 breweries	Yes, graphic/artistic map	Passport. Valid June 1 – Oct. 31. Cost: \$35	Collect koozies at each participating brewery. Completed passports can be mailed in for an item of themed	Susquehanna River Valley Visitors Bureau, Columbia-	<a href="https://riverratbrewtrail.com/">https://riverratbrewtrail.com/</a>

					apparel and entrance for grand prize drawing.	Montour Visitors Bureau	
<b>Susquehanna Ale Trail</b>	York, Adams, Lancaster, and Dauphin	16: 5 Breweries; 8 wineries, 3 distilleries	Yes, Google Map	Passport. Cost: free	Collect 6 stamps to receive a prize.	Explore York	<a href="https://www.yorkpa.org/wine-beer-spirits/susquehanna-ale-trail/">https://www.yorkpa.org/wine-beer-spirits/susquehanna-ale-trail/</a>
<b>Schuylkill County Craft Beverage Trail</b>	Schuylkill	15: 4 breweries; 2 distilleries; 7 wineries	Yes, Google Map			Explore Schuylkill/Schuylkill Co. Visitors' Bureau	<a href="https://schuylkill.org/pour-tours-and-more/">https://schuylkill.org/pour-tours-and-more/</a>
<b>York County Ale Trail</b>	York	21 breweries	No	Walking or bus tour of 3 unnamed breweries. Group & Charter tours available on request. Virtual "ladies" night also offered.	Tour ticket holders receive a discount at 5 community/business partners		<a href="https://www.yorkcountyaletail.com/">https://www.yorkcountyaletail.com/</a>