

# Tap Handle Design: Know Your Audience

by Ben Weston, Hoptown Handles



When designing your tap handle, think about who your tap handle is being designed to communicate with and how they will view it. Tap handles at their very core are a marketing tool. They are marketing your brand to the consumer, who is almost always the restaurant or bar patron.

Here are 4 quick tips to help you maximize your tap handle's impact on the end-user:

## **Avoid Small Text**

These handles are usually being seen from a distance, so make sure everything on the handle can be seen from far away. Rarely does a restaurant or bar patron get within a few feet of the handle. Oftentimes they are 10 to 20 feet from the tap handles. On this same note, you should also avoid thin, wispy fonts. Bold fonts that are designed for display are going to be easier to read in a dim bar and by someone with somewhat impaired vision.

## **Don't Worry About The Bartender**

Breweries often become overly concerned with the utilitarian aspects of the tap handle, or how the handle "feels" or even what a bartender would see when looking at the handle. Remember that the bartender isn't the one choosing your beer, and even if for some strange reason they are, it's not going to be because of the feel of your tap handle. The quality of your product will always trump a handle's feel, and a beer that sells lots of pints will inevitably be ordered again.

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### Avoid Clutter

Tap handles that have too many things going on tend to leave the consumer either irritated or confused. Figure out what is essential for your audience to see, and know that they aren't going to be looking at these for more than just a second or two. Your brewery name, logo, and style of beer are probably your must-haves, and any other text or imagery should be damn important if it's going to be on your handle.

### Make It Easy To See

Bold bright colors are going to be easier to pick out of a clutter tap lineup. While a bold color choice might not be used in your core color lineup, think about the benefits of standing out. Maybe even consider having a bold bright color be added to your brewery's color palette. The entire handle doesn't need to be painted this color, but color accents can really make a handle pop, especially on natural wood.

**Good luck designing your taps and always remember to know who you're trying to target with your tap handle.**



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