



**Oct
16
2019**

MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT

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Marketing Research Problem

Research how to bring more customers to Top Shelf distillery in Perth, Ontario through private and corporate events.

As craft distilling is on the rise, the experience of seeing the process first hand is also on the rise. Much like visiting a winery.

To increase their sales, Top Shelf needs to take advantage of their distillery and storefront in the quaint historical village of Perth, Ontario by hosting more events resulting in more sales of their product. Even though, they offer alcohol to purchase online, only three of their products are available in LCBO and the price point is higher than most. Giving the target audience the complete local experience by hosting more events and private parties would increase their sales and visibility.

YOU'R BUYING AN EXPERIENCE

Celebrate a Legacy

Perth has rich history in distilling. It is one of the first distilling towns in Canada. Part of Top Shelf's brand is that they celebrate the legacy that came before them. With overwhelming support from the township, Top Shelf Distillers opened on the 200th anniversary of the town, and 100 years after whisky was last produced in Perth.

Top Shelf is a fairly new distillery in Perth, Ontario. Since 2014, they have been producing spirits using locally sourced and natural ingredients. They use a 3-step filtration procedure that ensures extraordinary quality and a remarkable taste.

They offer distillery tours every day at 2 & 4, they are open at 10 am every day and close Monday-Thursday at 10 pm and Friday & Saturday at 11 pm.

Keeping it local is important to Perthite and CEO, Hanna Murphy.

The maple syrup for the moonshine comes from Paul's Maple Syrup north of Lanark (run by her best friend growing up), the apples are from Hall's Apple Market near Brockville, and the corn (the mash for making vodka and gin) is locally grown and milled in Delta. That mash, in turn, is given to a local farmer as feed for their steers.

<https://ottawamagazine.com/eating-and-drinking/wine-and-spirits/perth-dry-no-more-for-its-200th-anniversary-distilling-returns-to-historic-town/>

Being 'local' has many benefits for a community and driving customers in from outside the community is a great way to increase sales for Top Shelf and other local producers.

Two big trends that Top Shelf exhibits is sourcing local and being green.

They distill Top Shelf Vodka, Top Shelf Gin, Canadian whisky and cocktail bitters. Under Reunion Moonshine brand, they produce a 100 Proof moonshine (un-aged whisk) and five varieties of flavoured moonshine.

Top Shelf is working on getting more of their products into the LCBO, restaurants and grocery stores and their hope is to increase their food offerings. Once a month, Top Shelf opens up their back parking lot only during the warmer months for a local bash with local bands and local food trucks.

Perth is a quaint heritage village in close proximity to Ottawa. There are many places to stay including cabins and cottages, hotels, B&B's and camping.

The events they have hosted in the past few years at the distillery has brought in a full house but they are few and far between compared to the events they travel to. They attend events all over Ontario including Rib Fests and Music Concerts, serving their spirits to sold out crowds.

Perth has many attractions and it would be wise of Top Shelf to partner with businesses to offer a truly homegrown and unique experience.

Lanark County in which Perth is situated is the Maple Capital of Ontario. This is another opportunity! They already produce a Maple Moonshine with locally sourced maple syrup. This would be a great partnership opportunity in the early early spring. Events could be held at the Maple farms with a tasting stop at Top Shelf.

Some of the events Top Shelf has been a part of in Perth are:

Festival of the Maples, April 29th

Barns Farms and Wicked Chefs, August 26th

Rib Fest, July 28th – 30th

Garlic Fest, August 12th and 13th



Researching Prism Clusters in Perth, it is obvious, it is home mostly to an older demographic. (Prism 39- Our Time and Prism 66 – Sunset Tours) however there are approximately 2000 people aged 20-55.

Ottawa is one hour away and I encourage Top Shelf targate as a unique venue for corporate events.the demographic of corporations and established businesses, as a unique venue for their events.

Business Events Top Shelf could host:

- Business Dinners
- Networking Events
- Product Launches
- Holiday Parties
- Seminars
- Charity Events
- Trade Shows



CLOSE COMPETITION:

North of 7 is Ottawa's first micro distillery. Their product line includes Triple Beam Gin made with juniper berries sourced from Wakefield, Quebec.

Murphy's Law distillery in Elmira only produces Moonshine with flavours like CherryBomb and Apple pie, bottled in mason jars.

Qualitative Research

The **Great Lakes Distillery** in Milwaukee is a great reference to examine as they host many venet corporate and personal.

"We can make your corporate holiday party planning easy. We offer flexible and approachable room and fee options, on-site catering, and ample free parking."

"Looking to hold a corporate or industry networking event? Great Lakes Distillery can reserve some common use areas in our Tasting Room to use for your networking or meet-up needs."

"Need to plan a birthday, reunion party, graduation party, or fundraiser? The Great Lakes Distillery Tasting Room has hosted many private events over the years. We can offer many options to make your party memorable and unique. We can even accommodate small intimate cocktail style weddings."

"Need a unique experience for your corporate team or out-of-town corporate guests? We offer guided tours and tastings, as well as hands-on cocktail experiences."

<https://www.greatlakesdistillery.com/milwaukee-event-space/>

Trend Data

Hosting events at established businesses are unique and an upcoming trend that we see in Kingston. The Kingston Chamber of Commerce moves its business mixers around to various businesses offering refreshments, networking and exposure of the host business.

Corporate Outings to unique venues boost morale, motivation and internal relationships.

“Events are all about experiences, and in the future, experiences will continue to be a major influence as events increase in number, and participants are spoiled for choice. Apart from the destination, the second biggest feature that is guaranteed to make your event stand out from the competition is the venue. We’ve all seen congress centres and hotel conference rooms in all of their available varieties. But to create a different, unique impression for potential visitors, you need to “think different.”-

<https://weemss.com/blog/10-reasons-ditch-conference-room-book-unusual-event-venue-11-unusual-event-venue-ideas/>

Having a unique venue makes an event stand out, creates social media buzz and leaves long lasting memories.



SWOT ANALYSIS



STRENGTHS

Beautiful space in a historical town
Variety of premium
liquor and variety of in house cocktails
Experience in hosting events
Catering options
Town support
Parking



Large following on Social Media channels to create a buzz
8,658 – Facebook,
8,000 – Instagram, 2,000 – Twitter

WEAKNESSES

Location is 1 hr from Ottawa, their biggest target market
Size of venue limits them to smaller gatherings
Lack of food options
Need to hire occasional staff to accommodate guests
Slightly higher price point than regular liquor
(750 ml Smirnoff- \$27.20,
750 ml Top
Shelf- \$28.75)

OPPORTUNITIES

Introduce guests to all products
Up sell to guests
Call to actions: sign up for newsletter and introduce on-line shopping
Increase repeat purchases
Increase visibility and brand loyalty



THREATS

Competition with established mass market companies
Competition with other craft distilleries in Ontario
Profit margins are low, largely due to inflated
taxes levied on liquor compared to those levied on craft breweries
They can't sell directly to bars and restaurants

PITCH

Unique venues bring unique experiences and that is what Top Shelf can offer. More and more corporations are moving their events and company parties out of hotels and conference centres and into unique spaces. For

Top Shelf, this a great market to tap into while increasing brand awareness and loyalty. Sales would increase through their store front during and after the special events and parties. Unique sources of travel would easily negate the distance factor for their target market and attendees could enjoy a unique cocktail or two. What better way to relax and enjoy with colleagues?

Be entertained , informed and educated?

Top Shelf Distillers

would benefit though social media buzz and the unique local experience they provide would be the 'talk of the town.'

Sometimes corporate shouldn't feel corporate



**SURVEY WOULD BE SENT TO CORPORATIONS AND
BUSINESSES IN THE OTTAWA AREA VIA EMAIL**

Corporate Event Venue Survey

1. How large is your company?

- Under 10 employees
- 11 - 25 employees
- 26 - 50 employees
- 51 - 100 employees
- Over 100 employees

2. How many company events do you hold per year?

- 1 - 5
- 6 - 10
- Over 10
- None

3. What types of events do you hold? Please select all that apply.

- Business Dinners
- Network Events
- Holiday Parties
- Seminars
- Other (please specify)

4. How many people attend your events? Please select all that apply.

- 10 and under
- 11 - 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 100
- More than 100

5. What venues do you currently hold your events? Please select all that apply.

- Restaurants and Bars
- Hotel Conference Rooms
- Local Businesses
- Event Venues
- In House
- Other (please specify)

6. How many of your events require people to travel

- All
- Most
- Some
- A few
- None

7. Have you ever been to a Craft Brewery or Craft Distillery?

- Craft Brewery
- Craft Distillery
- Neither
- Both

8. Rate your experience

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

9. Do you support local Business?


- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

10. What time of year are your events? Please select all that apply.

- Spring
- Summer
- Fall
- Winter

Done

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