



INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC BRIEFING KC SMALL BUSINESSES

Surviving the World Cup Surge

Overview

Kansas City and its regional partners will welcome hundreds of thousands of domestic and international visitors during the 2026 FIFA World Cup™. For bars and nightclubs, this represents a high-revenue, high-risk moment driven by nightlife demand, late-night entertainment, and global fan culture. Success will depend on: managing intense, short-duration demand spikes, delivering high-energy, memorable experiences, controlling labor and inventory costs, and adapting to changing alcohol consumption trends.

Industry -Specific

Bars & Nightclubs

OPPORTUNITY

Position KC nightlife as a global entertainment destination, blending:

- Live music
- Sports viewing
- Midwest hospitality

Global Visibility for KC Area

The World Cup will bring:

- International fans
- Corporate sponsors
- Media organizations
- Team staff and families

Johnson County Advantage

Regional advantage mirrors hotel/lodging trends:

- Visitors staying in Johnson County will seek nearby nightlife options
- Suburban bars may benefit from:
 - Less crowded environments
 - Safer, more accessible late-night options
 - Group and corporate event spillover

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THE REALITY

- Demand Will Be Intense — But Time-Compressed
 - Revenue is concentrated in 4–5 hour peak windows on weekend nights
 - World Cup will amplify this with:
 - Post-match surges
 - Late-night international viewing
- Costs Are Rising
 - Wages have increased significantly (up ~95% over 10 years)
 - Payroll is the largest expense (19–21% of sales)
- Consumer Behavior Is Shifting
 - Only 54% of U.S. adults now identify as drinkers
 - Growth in:
 - “Sober curious” consumers
 - Mocktails and low-alcohol options

Implication: Revenue must come from experience + premium offerings, not just volume.

WIN THE CUSTOMER

Visitors will choose venues that are:

- High-Energy & Accessible
 - Easy entry and crowd flow management
 - Clear transportation options (rideshare, shuttles)
- Fast & Efficient
 - Quick bar service (minimize wait times)
 - Multiple POS systems per bar station
- Memorable
 - Music, DJs, themed events
 - Staff that creates an engaging atmosphere

Key insight: Bars compete not just with each other—but with home entertainment and streaming options

BUILD THE EXPERIENCE

- Create a World Cup Nightlife Atmosphere
 - Live DJ sets tied to match days
 - International-themed nights (country-specific events)
 - Large-screen match viewing parties
- Lean Into Entertainment
 - Music (EDM, live DJs, themed playlists)
 - Interactive elements (games, dance floors, VIP areas)

Entertainment is a core revenue driver and differentiator

- Offer Premium Experiences
 - Bottle service (high-margin revenue stream)
 - VIP seating packages
 - Exclusive event access

MAXIMIZE THE REVENUE

- Leverage High-Margin Alcohol Sales
 - Alcohol markups:
 - Spirits: 400–700%
 - Beer/Wine: 200–400%
- Increase Average Spend Per Guest
 - Upselling premium drinks
 - Group packages (bottle service, reserved tables)
 - Cover charges and event tickets
- Diversify Revenue Streams
 - Food/snacks (19% of sales)
 - Non-alcoholic beverages (growing demand)
 - Event-based revenue (tickets, themed nights)

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BE WORLD-READY

- International visitors will expect:
 - Clear communication (visual menus, simple ordering)
 - Familiar payment options (contactless, mobile pay)
 - Safe, well-managed environments
- Adapt to Global Trends
 - Offer:
 - Mocktails and alcohol-free options
 - Premium craft beverages
 - Balance pricing carefully—NA drinks can face price resistance

FIVE THINGS BAR & NIGHTCLUB OWNERS MUST DO WELL

- Control Peak-Time Operations
 - Maximize throughput during short, high-demand windows
- Drive High-Margin Sales
 - Focus on alcohol, premium offerings, and upselling
- Create a Unique Experience
 - Entertainment, music, and atmosphere drive repeat traffic
- Manage Costs & Inventory
 - Control pours, prevent waste, and monitor theft
- Build a Loyal Customer Base
 - Repeat customers (“regulars”) are critical to long-term success

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?
CONTACT ECJC TODAY!

The World Cup represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for bars and nightclubs in Kansas City and Johnson County. Those that succeed will:

- Turn nightlife into a destination experience
- Maximize high-margin revenue streams
- Adapt to evolving drinking behaviors
- Deliver fast, exciting, and memorable service

The winners won't just serve drinks—they'll create the atmosphere fans remember.

