



# 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 breweries, this represents a unique convergence of tourism, local culture, and high-margin beverage demand. Success will depend on: maximizing on-site taproom experiences, managing production capacity and inventory, competing with large-scale beer brands and delivering distinctive, local craft experiences

### Industry -Specific

#### Breweries

#### OPPORTUNITY

*Breweries are uniquely positioned at the intersection of production + hospitality, benefiting from on-site taproom sales (high-margin direct-to-consumer revenue), distribution to restaurants, bars, and retailers and experiential tourism (brewery visits, tastings, tours).*

### Global Visibility for KC Area

The World Cup will bring:

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

### Johnson County Advantage

Johnson County will play a major supporting role in brewery demand:

- Visitors staying in suburban areas will seek local, authentic experiences
  - Breweries can attract:
    - Tourists exploring beyond downtown
    - Groups and event-driven visitors
    - Craft beer enthusiasts seeking regional flavors

*Key opportunity to position Kansas City as a craft beer destination, showcasing local brewing culture alongside World Cup excitement.*

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KC GAME PLAN PLAYBOOK](#)



## THE REALITY

- Demand Will Be Strong — But Competitive
  - Large brewers (e.g., AB InBev) are capturing market share with widely distributed, “good enough” craft-style beers
  - Independent breweries face:
    - Reduced shelf space
    - Slower craft beer growth
    - Increased closures vs. openings
- Costs Are Rising
  - Producer prices increased ~1.3–1.4% YoY
  - Input costs (grains, hops) are volatile and supply-dependent
- Profitability Is Tight
  - Recent financial benchmarks show:
    - Profit margins declining
    - Pre-tax profit near break-even or negative in recent years
    - Implication: Increased volume from the World Cup must be managed efficiently to translate into profit.

## WIN THE CUSTOMER

Visitors will choose breweries that are:

- Easy to Access
  - Located near hotels, entertainment districts, or transit routes
  - Clearly visible on maps and tourism guides
- Experiential
  - Brewery tours and tastings
  - Unique taproom environments
  - Opportunities to engage with the brewing process
- Authentic & Local
  - Locally brewed, distinctive products
  - Storytelling around the brand and brewing process

## BUILD THE EXPERIENCE

- Visitors will remember the experience of the brewery—not just the beer.
- Create a World Cup Atmosphere
  - Match watch parties in taprooms
  - Outdoor beer gardens and viewing spaces
  - Themed brews tied to teams or countries
- Lean Into Craft Identity
  - Highlight:
    - IPAs, pale ales, and specialty brews (top craft sellers)
    - Offer limited-edition or seasonal beers
- Expand On-Site Experiences
  - Food trucks or partnerships with local restaurants
  - Live music and events
  - Brewery tours and tastings

## MAXIMIZE THE REVENUE

- Prioritize Direct-to-Consumer Sales
  - Taproom sales deliver higher margins than wholesale
  - On-site consumption and experiences increase per-visitor spend
- Increase Capacity Utilization
  - Breweries have high fixed costs and must maximize production output to remain profitable
    - Consider:
      - Extended hours
      - Increased batch production ahead of peak demand
- Diversify Revenue Streams
  - Contract brewing (using excess capacity)
  - Merchandise and branded goods
  - Events and private bookings



## BE WORLD-READY

- International visitors will expect:
  - Clear, simple product descriptions
  - Familiar payment options
  - Accessible, welcoming environments
- Small details matter:
  - Beer style explanations (for global audiences)
  - Flight options for sampling
  - Multilingual or visual menus

## FIVE THINGS BREWERY OWNERS MUST DO WELL

- Maximize Production Efficiency
  - Avoid idle capacity and meet demand spikes
- Drive Taproom Revenue
  - Focus on high-margin, on-site experiences
- Differentiate from Big Beer
  - Compete through quality, authenticity, and experience
- Control Costs & Supply Chain
  - Manage ingredient volatility and production inputs
- Create Destination Appeal
  - Turn breweries into must-visit tourism experiences

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?  
**CONTACT ECJC TODAY!**



The World Cup is more than a short-term sales opportunity for breweries. For Kansas City and Johnson County breweries, it is a chance to:

- Showcase local craft beer on a global stage
- Increase direct-to-consumer revenue
- Strengthen brand identity and tourism appeal
- The breweries that succeed will focus on:
  - Operational efficiency and capacity utilization
  - High-quality, differentiated products
  - Memorable taproom and visitor experiences
  - Strategic positioning against large competitors