



Mix it Up in the Name of Charity:

Guest Bartender Promotion


By **Kristy Weinberg**

"Guest Bartender" is an easy bar promotion designed to increase sales on a slow night as well as leverage community relationships and create awareness. From a 30,000-foot overview, charity representatives, local celebrities, media friends, political figures or even loyal guests with a cause, etc., jump behind the bar and pour drinks to raise funds for their cause. Partnering bartenders are awarded \$1 from every drink sold during the event's two-hour time period as well as their tips. (Tips and drink discounts should result from party attendees and be kept separate of non-event related guests.) While cross-promotion is essential for promotion longevity, the majority of fundraising efforts are a direct result of attendance therefore heavily reliant on partner self-promotion.

Steps of execution:


1. Create weekly guest bartender schedule.
2. Provide all guest bartenders with digital and printed POS to self promote.
3. Promote in-store via POS (posters, table tents, bathroom ads, etc.).

4. Ask guest bartender to arrive one hour prior to the event to run through event details and bar logistics.
5. Have the guest bartender sign a general hold harmless waiver prior to going behind the bar and transfer of money waiver post event execution.
6. Have fun!
7. Issue funds to partner.
8. If warranted (based on event size and monies earned), generate press releases to local media friends.
9. Place follow-up calls to these media friends.
10. Track results via a post event tracking sheet.
11. Get busy planning next week's event!

Along with precision planning, key cogs in consistently hosting successful events are ensuring the environment is right and promotional efforts strong. If you lack a resident cheerleader who can make the bar a buzzing place, find someone who can before the event. Frequent partner communication pre-event is essential in packing the house. 


Training Tip

Some of the best training happens in the heat of the moment. That's why trainers and managers need to see themselves as coaches whenever they're interacting with staff and guests. Consider these coaching strategies:

- On the floor, they can observe the service and sales behaviors of developing servers and make performance-enhancing suggestions.
- They can demonstrate "how they do it" during role-plays conducted at pre-shift or month-end team meetings.
- They can lead their own scheduled training sessions, covering topics of importance to your operation.
- They can handle the front-line orientation of new hires. 

Marketing Tip: Improve E-Mail Marketing

Typically, there are two primary reasons why e-mail marketing fails: the list is too small and the e-writing isn't good enough. Here are some tips to improve both:

- **Make an offer.** In every e-mail you send, there should be a compelling reason for the reader to visit your site. The better your offer; the better your response. It's as simple as that.
- **Hire a pro.** Writing for e-readers is a science and if you're doing it without any help from the marketing "lab," you're destined to fail. Research freelancers—they often charge less than you think—and ask for data that reports their past successes.
- **Take names.** Once a quarter, request that subscribers forward your e-mail to friends who might be interested. Coupled with an incentive—sign-up to receive our e-mails and get a free entrée—you'll build awareness of your site *and* your operation while building your list. 

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