Tap the mind: The information worlds of American craft brewers
Stephen D. Hollister & Jonathan M. Hollister

Introduction

American craft breweries are distinguished from large breweries by:
- Producing six million or less barrels of beer
- Having less than 25% of their brewery owned by a major non-craft brewery
- Primarily producing beer from fermenting traditional or innovative ingredients (Brewers Association, 2014a)
- May include brewpubs, microbreweries, and regional craft breweries
- Engineers working in Nigerian breweries seek information from the Internet (blogs, wikis, social media), journals (if they have access), and their peers (Nwagwu & Segilola, 2013)
- The information needs and behaviors of American craft brewers are drastically understudied

The craft brewing industry provided $33.9 billion to the economy in 2012 and created 108,440 jobs in breweries and brewpubs alone (Brewers Association, 2014b)
The number of craft breweries in the U.S. grew by 15.3% in 2013, from 2,401 to 2,278 (Brewers Association, 2014c)
- 131 craft breweries in MI, 1.8 breweries per Capita (per 100,000 21+ adults)
- 66 craft breweries in FL, 0.5 breweries per Capita (per 100,000 21+ adults)

Analytical Framework

- Theory of Information Worlds (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010)
  - Social types – socially defined roles within a world
  - Social norms – agreed upon, acceptable forms of observable behavior
  - Normative Information Behavior – all behaviors related to the use or nonuse of information within a world
  - Information value – shared sense of the worth of various kinds of information
  - Boundaries – areas where information worlds come into contact with one another and potentially transfer information

Significance

The information worlds of American craft brewers are drastically understudied

Research Question

- What characterizes the information worlds of American Craft Brewers?

Proposed Method

- Purposes: Exploration & Description
- Semi-Structured Interviews & Qualitative Content analysis

Semi-Structured Interviews

- Purposive, comparative sample of American craft brewers in Michigan & Florida
- Brewers Association members only
- Conducted by phone, Skype, email, or face-to-face

Qualitative Content Analysis

- Transcribe interviews
- Thematic analysis of the qualitative content guided by Information Worlds

Limitations

- Sample size limited to BA members in MI and FL
- Qualitative findings may not be generalizable

Implications & Future Work

- Findings may enable libraries, brewing education programs, and information organizations to better serve and provide resources for local breweries and aspiring home brewers
- Future work may help brewers interface with other information worlds (suppliers, distributors, vendors, other brewers, customers, etc.)

Stephen D. Hollister
MLIS Student
fo5490@wayne.edu

Jonathan M. Hollister
Doctoral Candidate
jmh09k@my.fsu.edu