



**RESPONSIBLE RETAILING
PRACTICES**

for On-Premises Alcohol
Serving Establishments

Responsible Retailing Practices for On-Premises Alcohol Serving Establishments

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Responsible Retailing Practices for On-Premises Alcohol Serving Establishments

Executive Summary

This report examines measures that can be taken by licensed alcohol serving establishments to prevent unlawful alcohol sales, including sales to minors, to individuals who might in turn furnish alcohol to minors (3rd-party sales), or to intoxicated individuals, and to guard against situations that may pose a risk to customers or staff. These collective measures, what is termed "Responsible Retailing," aim to protect the health and safety of customers, staff and the community, while reducing licensee and employee risk to issues such as penalties for unlawful sales, or legal liabilities associated with alcohol-related injuries.

For on-premise establishments licensed to serve alcohol, Responsible Retailing (RR) is not as simple as one clerk checking an ID to determine age and authenticity. Managing and controlling alcohol consumption in serving establishments can be challenging and staff training must be comprehensive and ongoing. On-premise establishments must also be attentive to the overall environment, preventing over-service and dealing with customers whose intoxication represents a danger to themselves and others.

The central findings of this report are:

1. RR is first and foremost a collective responsibility and management leadership is key.
2. RR is a continuing system of hiring and training practices, point-of-sale protocols, employee policies, supervisory procedures, safety and security measures, and relationships with community stakeholders.
 - RR begins with the interview during the hiring process. Management should emphasize the importance of RR and determine whether the applicant appears willing and able to uphold the licensee's RR policies.

- Server training is an integral and indispensable part of effective RR.
 - On-premise establishments play an important role in the social and economic life of a community. Because of the unique nature of alcohol, serving establishments that do not follow RR practices can pose a high risk to the community.
 - Security practices and policies must be a major concern to owners and managers of on-premises establishments as well as to the communities they serve.
 - Licensees and/or management must be proactive and take advantage of opportunities to meet and work with community stakeholders such as local alcohol coalitions and local licensing boards. Positive collaboration between a business and the community can help promote and sustain high standards of RR performance.
3. There is a stark lack of information about effective RR practices, especially as to how licensees can guard against underage sales and over-consumption during high traffic periods. This examination of RR practices needs to be continued and expanded.
 4. National stakeholders are committed to working with state organizations to promote awareness and adoption of RR practices for serving establishments and to facilitating a dialog on how licensees can successfully respond to the many challenges that they face.

This report is for owner-operators, chains and stakeholders who work with licensed establishments. These stakeholders include regulators, trade associations, distributors, law enforcement and public safety agencies, and public health and prevention agencies and coalitions. It expands an earlier study prepared in 2002 for SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, *Report on Best Practices for Responsible Retailing*.ⁱ That document primarily focused on retail establishments that sell alcohol for off-premise use. The current report has been prepared by a diverse group of experts working under the auspices of the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA) and the Responsible Retailing Forum (RRF). These experts, representing licensed establishments, distributors, brewers and distillers, state alcohol regulators, training organizations and research institutions, canvassed a number of chains, independent licensees, alcohol regulators in states that provide RR programs or

resources, and training organizations to identify RR practices and policies currently in use. The work group identified widely used practices, what the report terms "prevalent practices." The report also identified practices that are not widely used, but offer the potential to raise RR performance, what the report terms "noteworthy practices." Additionally, the report identifies RR practice questions that need further discussion.

Section 1: Purpose of This Report

Purpose of Report:

This report, *Responsible Retailing Practices for On-Premises Alcohol Serving Establishments*, assists licensees achieve and sustain consistently high levels of Responsible Retailing (RR) performance by those who work in alcohol service establishments. This tool that can be used by alcohol regulators, law enforcement, public health and prevention agencies, and by retailers and their associations and distributors to help licensees identify practices that can reduce alcohol sale or service to under 21 individuals and intoxicated customers as well as promote a safe and secure environment for staff, customers and the community.

Context:

In March 2002, a *Report on Best Practices for Responsible Retailing*^[1] was presented to the federal government as a guide to establish the “state of the art” practices for preventing sales of age-restricted products. The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services had commissioned the report to help states achieve the tobacco retailer compliance targets imposed upon them by the federal Synar Regulations. The report, however, addressed RR for all age-restricted products. In fact, the committee that produced the report (consisting of federal and state health and law enforcement agents, retailers and their associations, advocates and researchers), realized that alcohol stakeholders had a greater range and depth of experience in underage sales prevention than tobacco stakeholders. These alcohol stakeholders significantly shaped the report.

The 2002 Report made three contributions to the field of RR:

1. RR is not merely a policy to refuse unlawful sales. Instead, RR is a continuous system consisting of distinct components—hiring, training, point-of-sales practices, and employee and supervisory policies—whose additive effects produce high RR conduct.

2. RR is a management responsibility. Almost every task associated with a comprehensive RR system falls under the manager's job responsibilities. To remain effective, a RR system must be managed and measured.
3. RR performance can best be achieved through a collaborative approach, based upon principals of Community Policing that links regulators, law enforcement and public health and safety stakeholders with retailers and their associations, distributors and suppliers in a problem-solving approach to address underage sales in their communities.

It became apparent, however, that the Report—though quite comprehensive for retailers selling alcohol for off-premises consumption—did not adequately address complex problems faced by on-premise establishments. In restaurants, taverns and clubs, multiple personnel and points-of-service may be involved rather than a single point-of-sale. Staff must not only verify age and refuse service to customers under the age of 21, they must also guard against underage customers being served alcohol by their own friends and companions.

On-premise establishments must additionally monitor:

- Alcohol consumption
- Responsible service
- Service to habitually addicted persons
- Patrons who have over-consumed

It was, therefore, determined that a separate report needed to be conducted to identify responsible retailing practices for on-premises locations.

On-Premises Report:

The on-premise report is a joint project of the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA) and the Responsible Retailing Forum, and its many partners. The process of producing this report is similar to the one used in producing the off-premises report. A work group consisting of regulators, licensees and their associations, brewers, distributors, server training providers and researchers has overseen the development of this report (See Appendix I for the work group members). In its first meeting, the work group members identified the areas of licensee practice that would be examined as well as additional members who might be added to insure inclusive representation and perspectives. The committee canvassed stakeholders

involved in RR and developed six distinct surveys. These surveys examined Hiring, Training, Point-of-Sales Practices (Training and Point-of-Sales Practices were later combined), Supervisory Practices, Safety and Security, and Community Relations. Stakeholders completed the appropriate surveys online through a link provided by NABCA. The surveys were not intended to characterize accurately current licensee RR practices; a much larger number of respondents in each of the segments of the market would have been needed to represent accurately what licensees were doing. Rather, the surveys identified the types of practices used or observed by respondents.

The surveys were distributed to retailers, providers of server training programs and alcohol regulators. Stakeholders completed one or more surveys. The training survey received the largest number of responses. Hiring, Safety and Security, and Community Relations received the smallest number of responses. One of two committees then reviewed all the responses for a particular survey and developed a report that identified:

- **Prevalent Practices:** Practices that were in place for most or all of the respondents
- **Noteworthy Practices:** Practices not commonly in use that appeared to offer promise of effectiveness
- **Discussion Issues:** Issues and questions that emerged from the range of survey responses whose formal examination could benefit the field

A draft report was then circulated to additional stakeholders for review, with an emphasis upon alcohol beverage licensees, who were asked to identify any additional practices that might be added to the report. Two committees reviewed these responses revised the report and then circulated it to additional stakeholders for their input. The current version of the report reflects those critiques and suggestions.

Section 2: Owner / Manager Supervisory Practices

Managers are the key to effective RR. Training programs instruct doormen and staff who sell or serve alcohol how to identify high-risk situations, how to prevent them when possible and how to react. Whether staff actually employ these techniques depends on reinforcement by supervisors and whether managers employ these techniques themselves. Continually discussing with staff the importance of following RR practices regarding under 21 sales and over-service is the surest way for managers to avoid the penalties and liabilities for themselves, their staff, their customers and their communities. Having a strong, consistent, comprehensive alcohol plan in place can be the difference between violations and no violations and lawsuits.

Prevalent Practices

- Management tracks a new employee's date of hire and date of all training through a written record. Results of compliance checks by law enforcement, and mystery shop inspections conducted by the establishment, are recorded in the employee records with date and initial training.
- Owners/managers meet one on one with new employees to conduct or review training, including house policies.
- Regular staff meetings include review/reinforcement of RR policies.

Noteworthy Practices

- The establishment has a strong, comprehensive, written alcohol plan to curb violations and liability.
- Remind staff at shift changes of the date that an individual must be born to be eligible to purchase alcohol. Giving tips on how to prevent patron over-service and how to identify a patron who may have entered the business already intoxicated, under the influence of other drugs, or who may be habitually addicted to alcohol. In addition, using shift

changes and bulletin boards to reinforce times of the year when there is an increase in under 21 or 3rd party purchase attempts, (e.g. prom nights, homecomings).

- Offer rewards to an employee or to the entire staff for passing an under 21-compliance check. Rewards may include (1) praise—verbal recognition during staff meetings and trainings, acknowledgment in an employee newsletter, a letter or certificate of accomplishment for inclusion in employee's personnel file, (2) intangible rewards—being placed on preferred day/shift work schedules or assigned preferred parking, or (3) tangible rewards—receiving a cash bonus or gift card.
- The manager's own performance evaluation and compensation, including bonuses, are based in part by the compliance record of the establishment.
- Mystery Shops—inspections by legal-age customers who look young enough to trigger the establishment's ID-checking requirement provide managers with feedback on how well staff is following the age-verification policy.
- Inspections by "pseudo-intoxicated" mystery shoppers can also provide managers with feedback on how well staff members are following house policies to refuse service to intoxicated and habitually addicted patrons.
- Owners/managers establish written alcohol service policies and procedures. These written policies and procedures codify the business philosophy and provide guidance and reinforcement to employees to assure compliance with responsible retailing practices. Owners/managers provide the written alcohol service policies and procedures to each employee as a quick reference guide and periodic review, and include them in training, retraining and management interaction with employees.
- Owners/managers review video tapes of recent incidents to determine what happened and use video tapes as a teaching tool for staff.
- Owners especially, but managers as well, will make random, unannounced visits to the premises to insure that on-duty staff are complying with laws and house policies.

- Properly train doormen and any staff that serve alcohol about when and how to verify age and refuse sales to individuals under the age of 21 years. Also, train them to recognize signs of intoxication and to identify habituation as well as to refuse serving alcohol to intoxicated patrons. Finally, train them how to alert managers and when it is appropriate to bring in the police.

Discussion

Frequency of RR review / reinforcement: Although reviewing RR policies and procedures is prevalent, the frequency varies widely. Some licensees hold weekly meetings, others hold meetings if a problem or issue arises. A best-case scenario is training as a preventative measure.

Video: The use of video to review staff interactions and sales conduct appears to be under-utilized. Occasionally, video is used to review an incident that occurred inside the business to determine what actually happened, but it can also function as a teaching tool for staff. Video is generally used to monitor the POS systems and entry doors for robbery and theft prevention. Additional cameras can be added to capture employee actions for review by managers and for retraining activities. Consideration should be given to how long the video needs to be retained to be useful. Off-premises video retention seems to be about 15 days on average.

Owner/Manager Training: There was strong consensus among the report committee that training, specifically for owners and managers, was important and necessary. At present, there appears to be little training targeted to owners and managers in alcohol-related businesses. Some national programs cover responsible alcohol service and general management of those services, but very little is specifically targeted to state or county alcohol laws, or to types of business operation (e.g. managing a club or multi-use venue). Both Montgomery County, Maryland and Pennsylvania currently conduct a voluntary owner/manager curriculum that becomes mandatory if the licensee is cited for an alcohol violation. Virginia also has training programs aimed at managers. Florida requires specific training for managers in the development of policies under its Responsible Vendor Act. Part of the rationale for

owner/manager training is to insure that supervisors have received the same training that servers and doormen receive. Would all states benefit from a manager training?

Shadowing: A significant portion of on-premise licensees provide on-the-job training in which new employees shadow an existing employee. More often than not, the senior employee is providing the training without the benefit of a training program or outline. As a result, the trainer often misses the opportunity to present important information and may even provide incorrect and misguided information as appropriate. The use of a training outline reduces incorrect information and helps prevent the omission of needed information.

Policy templates: Policy templates can be of great assistance to businesses that may not know where to start or what should be included in their house policies (e.g. ID checking, recognizing visible signs of intoxication, techniques for intervention, and how to cut off alcohol service to a visibly intoxicated person). The licensee can select and adapt the policies for the particular needs of their business.

Section 3: Hiring Practices

Responsible Retailing begins in the hiring process. Discussing the consequences of violating the alcohol sales laws and the licensee's policies impresses upon the applicant the importance of refusing sales to intoxicated individuals or those under age 21. This discussion can be viewed as the first stage of employee training. The hiring interview is also an opportunity to determine if applicants have the necessary skills to read an ID and to weigh their commitment to preventing illegal alcohol sales. In addition, unless independent background checks are conducted for each applicant, the hiring interview is a means to identify individuals who should be disqualified from serving alcohol, or who show an aptitude for knowingly or unknowingly committing a violation.

Prevalent Practices

In the initial interview with a job applicant, the interviewer explains:

- Laws related to selling or serving alcohol to individuals under age 21 or to visibly intoxicated customers.
- Penalties under state/local laws for staff who sell alcohol to individuals under age 21.
- Employment consequences for not complying with laws and house policies related to selling alcohol to individuals under age 21.

Noteworthy Practices

- The interviewer asks the job applicant to demonstrate math and reading skills by reading an ID to determine age.
- The interviewer inquires whether the job applicant has any prior violations of alcohol sales laws or prior DUI or alcohol-related violations. (See "Background checks" section below.)

- In jurisdictions where this information is available, the licensee contacts the local liquor control authority to check whether potential employees who will serve alcohol have previous liquor law violations on record. (See “Background checks” section below.)

Discussion

Background checks: Background checks are recommended for new hires and are a prevalent practice for chains. However, a mechanism for conducting background checks is not always available. If the mechanism is available, background checks should be conducted. They will reveal whether the applicant has been cited for violations of alcohol sales laws or for alcohol-related accidents/injuries, as well as other information that may weigh significantly on the decision to hire the applicant. If a mechanism for conducting background checks is not available, the interviewer should ask the applicant explicitly about violation history and conduct reference checks and employment verification. The hiring supervisor/employer should set standards/parameters in advance, as to whom they will employ.

Related topics: Although licensees, during job interviews, routinely address the importance of checking IDs and refusing to serve individuals under the age of 21, at the time of hire, licensees rarely address refusing to serve alcohol to intoxicated customers and habitually addicted individuals, high-risk behaviors and trends. Addressing this information through the hiring process clearly conveys the importance the licensee places upon these areas prior to the employee beginning work.

Section 4: Training and Point-of-Sales Practices

Comprehensive training provides staff with knowledge of the alcohol laws and the establishment's own policies to comply with these laws as well as the skills to engage customers in a non-confrontational manner. Training is an integral part of developing a successful work culture. Standards should be determined at the start of employment. Training determines what acceptable behavior is for employees and patrons, and defines staff expectations for the different situations they will encounter. Training can consist of a Responsible Beverage Service (RBS) program or other more specific alcohol training made to complement RBS trainings. A solid training program can be a strong factor in demonstrating reasonable efforts to protect customers and the community with regards to a state's Dram Shop* and civil responsibility/liability issues. * *Note-Dram Shop is not applicable in every state.*

Prevalent Practices

- Train staff in Responsible Beverage Service (RBS).
- Train staff before they sell alcohol and continue education throughout their term of employment.
- Train managers and supervisors in RBS, supervisory responsibilities, and alcohol management practices (see Section 5: Supervisory Practices).

RBS training topics typically include:

- Risks of under 21 alcohol use
- Local and state alcohol laws and regulations
- Penalties for violations
- The age that triggers an ID check
- Acceptable forms of ID
- Detecting false and fraudulent ID
- When to request a secondary ID
- When to refuse service

- How to recognize signs of intoxication and high-risk behavior
- Techniques for monitoring consumption
- Refusing service in a non-confrontational manner
- Handling potentially violent or confrontational situations or illegal activities and when to involve managers
- When and how to maintain a written log to document an unusual occurrence and when to involve police
- Pre- and post-training testing, to insure that the RBS has been successfully understood by the employee
- Role-playing to help employees practice their skills

Point-of-Sale support tools available for staff include:

- A legal age calendar /ID calculator
- 50-state Drivers License Guide
- Signage indicating that IDs will be requested
- ID card scanners

Noteworthy Practices

- Liquor boards further explain alcohol laws and regulations for licensed facilities. Making regulations readily available and easily understood offers licensees' clear information and materials to use in training staff.
- Make written policies and procedures readily available for staff to follow and review.
- Require staff to sign an agreement or pledge acknowledging that he or she fully understands local/state laws, regulations, and licensee policies.
- Involve role-playing on how staff, in a professional, non-confrontational manner can (a) request an ID and deny a sale, and (b) engage a customer in conversation to detect possible intoxication and refuse service. Role-playing enables the newly hired staffer to overcome the awkwardness of asking a customer to furnish an ID or refusing service.

- Include in staff meetings throughout the year, a review of individual segments/modules of RBS.

Discussion

Policy Review: Licensees can reach out to the local liquor board and/or law enforcement agencies to see if they are available to consult with the owner or manager on house policies.

When training should occur: A five-year review of violations for alcohol sales to minors and visibly intoxicated persons in Oregon showed that the highest incidence of these violations occurred in the first year of employment. Research conducted by North Carolina Alcohol Law Enforcement has similarly shown that newly hired employees are far more likely to sell alcohol to an under 21 customer than experienced staff. It is recommended that staff be trained *before* being allowed to serve alcohol. If training is segmented, for instance, if a new hire receives in-person training by a manager, followed by in-depth training later, that employee should be carefully monitored.

Periodic Review of Training: View training as an ongoing process. Some states require repeating RBS every two to four years, both as a refresher and as a means of staying current with laws and policies. Recertification varies greatly from state to state. Further training from local entities may be available at no cost to fill in the gaps.

Training modalities: Widely used training programs include (a) In-person classes taught by an instructor, (b) online training programs, and (c) computer-based training. The different training modalities employed in RBS seem to reflect the types of businesses. Chains with human resource departments and in-house training programs may have more sophisticated training with multiple modalities (video and/or PowerPoint, interactive computer training programs, live instructor presentations). Use computer and/or web-based programs when in-person classes are unavailable or offered infrequently.

Connecting training to point-of-sales practices: Frequently, establishments depend upon a third-party vendor to provide RBS training. Generally, when a third-party RBS provider conducts training, there is a potential concern about the “hand-off” from the RBS provider to the licensee. These concerns are:

- 1) Do managers and supervisors reinforce the practices taught in RBS (e.g., what apparent age of a customer should trigger an ID check)?
- 2) Does the licensed establishment clearly identify and communicate in writing changes it makes to RBS policies and practices?
- 3) Similarly, managers and supervisors should instruct staff on additional policies, point-of-sales practices and local regulations that may not have been addressed in the RBS program. ^[2]

The value of a server tracking system: In some states, an individual who completes an approved RBS program receives a certificate (or “server permit” or “[server] license”) that allows that individual to serve alcohol in a licensed establishment in that state. Certification may also fulfill a state requirement to have an RBS-trained person or manager on the premise. The certificate may be valid for a period of time and/or until a violation, e.g. sales to youth under 21 or an intoxicated customer, leads to a suspension.

However, in most states, an individual cited for selling alcohol to a youth under 21 or to an intoxicated customer is free to continue to serve alcohol; and, if terminated by the licensee for an alcohol sales violation, that individual is free to serve alcohol for another employer. Would licensees and the public be better served by a system that requires the individual server to be certified in an RBS program, or that violations of alcohol sales laws lead to a suspension of certification and thus affects the individual's ability to work as a server, and/or mandates that the individual take additional training?

One concern about instituting a certification process is that this may lead beverage retailers to believe that responsible beverage service is an individual employee's, rather than a managerial, responsibility, and may lead managers to neglect additional training or management intervention because the staff member is certified.

Section 5: Safety and Security Practices

Licensed beverage establishments play an important role in the social and economic life of a community, but because of the unique nature of alcohol and its effects upon the human body, serving establishments that do not follow RR practices can pose a high risk. The harm of excessive drinking upon the still-developing brain, and the tragedies caused by youth who are under 21 and driving under the influence, have correctly focused attention upon the importance of preventing under 21 sales and service. Additionally, excessive consumption is important for adults and is associated with sexual assault, domestic violence, aggravated assault, burglary, robbery and other crimes. This is why security practices and policies should be a priority to owners and managers of on-premises establishments.

A comprehensive security plan for interior/exterior security typically includes the following policies:

- The handling of intoxicated customers: The goal is never to serve any customer to the point of intoxication. However, should a customer become intoxicated, or arrive already intoxicated, a plan should be in place for staff conduct in that situation.
- Escalation of incidents and appropriate protocol: Creating a plan that outlines when incidents should be brought to the attention of a manager or when law enforcement should be contacted can help alleviate a potential problem.
- When to complete an incident report: Tracking incidents is a very important part of proving reasonable effort and can serve as evidence in a crime.

Incident logs provide owners with valuable information about business operations and practices, which can be used to head off potential problems in the future. Incident logs offer defenses against negative situations and provide data for positive enhancements to the business. Incident logs are maintained for the number of years corresponding to the individual state's dram shop or tort law/civil responsibility law. [Note: Tort law refers to proving a civil responsibility or duty was present and the person failed to exercise the standard of care that a reasonable person would render.]

- Operational standards: This includes appropriate staffing ratios, equipment and the environmental design necessary to effectively carry out the required security practices.

Prevalent Practices

- Law enforcement is called for assistance when a customer who has been asked to leave refuses to do so, or if an intoxicated customer is leaving the bar and has refused offers of an alternate ride home.
- Alternative transportation home is provided for customers who have become impaired. Note that providing for safe transportation home does not justify over-service.

Noteworthy Practices

- Keep a banned or “86” list—a list of customers who are no longer allowed to return to the business, either for that night or permanently, because they continually cause a problem. In addition, the beverage retailer will develop a process through which the employees can determine if a person is on the “86” list.
- Owners in some communities have established a phone tree with neighboring serving establishments and an agreement to alert each other when they ban or “86” a problem customer. Customers that are turned away at one place are likely to seek alcohol at another. The alerts could include minors trying to obtain alcohol or intoxicated customers who refuse alternative transportation home and walk out the door.
- The use of a doorman will depend on the specific licensed establishment. They can be very useful in maintaining order, screening who enters, and enforcing house policies. Evaluating the activities of a business can help determine if a doorman is warranted. Having a doorman check IDs at the entrance does not necessarily relieve the server of the obligation of verifying age, depending on the state.
- Designated driver and holiday taxi programs are offered to patrons. Keep in mind that having a designated driver program does not mean that over-service of the other

customers in the party is allowable. Some establishments reward a designated driver with non-alcoholic beverages or a discount on food items.

Discussion

When to Alert Law Enforcement: Many licensees are concerned about calling the police for assistance in addressing problematic situations because they fear that their call will be treated as an *incident* instead of a *call for assistance* and will be held against them. This underscores the importance for licensed establishments to have a relationship with law enforcement before there is a problem and to share a common understanding of how such calls are viewed (see Section 6: Community Relations). Beverage retailers will utilize police services proactively when they believe that law enforcement is focused on assisting them and their customers to comply with the law. It is imperative to embrace the community policing philosophy of collective partnership and problem solving.

Phone tree: The phone tree is an interesting and potentially valuable tool. Phone trees have existed for many years, especially in areas with small numbers of license holders. It allows businesses to call one another about unruly patrons and impaired customers floating from bar to bar. Note, however, that often the same phone tree is used when the Liquor Investigator is in town conducting inspections.

Proactive vs. Re-active: How do we encourage businesses to take a proactive approach to security instead of reacting to problems as they occur? Crime prevention philosophy functions off the crime triangle. The three sides represent the *desire* to commit the crime, the *ability* to commit the crime, and the *opportunity* to commit the crime. If proactive safety and security practices remove the *opportunity* for crime or incidents to occur, the triangle collapses.

Section 6: Community Relations

Connecting with community stakeholders, including coalition groups, local boards, PTA's and councils, hospitality groups and community services offices, provide the license holder with a means to better connect with fellow citizens, law enforcement and their licensing boards. When licensees work closely and cooperatively to address alcohol concerns with public health and safety stakeholders, including law enforcement and licensing/regulatory agencies, licensees are more apt to be regarded as part of the "solution" than as the "problem." This also addresses issues more effectively as they occur.

Prevalent Practices

- Licensees communicate their responsible retailer policies to the public. Posting RR policies within the establishment for public view, and/or communicating those policies to community organizations and coalitions, directly or through media, convey that the licensee has taken steps to insure compliance with the law and is sensitive to community concerns. Alcohol polices can also be posted in an inconspicuous manner such as on a drink menu or place card. Posting policies, e.g. that the establishment requires an ID of every customer under the age of 30, or uses an ID verification system or a surveillance system, may also deter attempted under 21 and 3rd-party purchases.

Collaborating with licensing agencies and law enforcement is more prevalent for nightclub and tavern-type businesses, with a higher percentage of alcohol-to-food sales. It is less prevalent for businesses that offer more food than alcohol.

Noteworthy Practices

- Participating in public training sends a positive message to both the establishment's employees and the community.
- Agreeing to use educational materials, e.g. signs for posting, and participating in an educational campaign sponsored by the liquor authority and/or local coalitions, build positive community relations.

- Sponsoring sports teams in local leagues and offering to host fundraisers for community groups. Both build good will, both associate business names with positive community efforts, and both potentially bring more customers into the business.

Discussion

Survey responses: The survey on Community Relations received few responses. This in part reflects that many respondents, which include training programs, providers and regulators, do not address the licensee's relationship with the community. It may also reflect that community relations is not routinely considered as an aspect of Responsible Retailing by licensees, or that occurrences are simply not considered by establishments as community relations.

Coalition involvement: Licensed establishments can be understandably cautious when meeting with community organizations since some coalition members may view licensees as the source of a community problem. Clearly, building trust early is key to breaking down barriers and stereotypes.

It is important to gauge the thoughts about these topics from active community coalitions to identify and develop responsible practices.

Community involvement: Retailers involved in local hospitality groups that encompass many stakeholders have success in bringing many groups together. Hospitality-minded groups exist nationwide and can be developed as needed.

It is up to establishments to understand the local marketing laws governing alcohol promotion. Reaching out to local Liquor Control boards is one way to gather this type of information to share with management.

Retail associations can also seek out and collaborate with prevention groups. Associations can be a great resource for local groups that do not totally understand the liquor laws or the industry. Most association members are willing to work with local or state prevention groups on campaigns to prevent under 21 drinking and drunk driving.

The alcohol beverage industry can be seen as a separate “community” and largely functions that way. Within the alcohol beverage community, there are leaders and followers, early adapters and nonparticipants, both among retailers and wholesalers. Developing a comprehensive and collective alcohol beverage community could be very effective in achieving industry compliance and positively changing industry norms. Inviting sales representatives to the table is a great first step.

^[1] Downloadable at www.rforum.org under “Reports”

^[2] Inconsistencies between RBS content and licensee policies may be less of a concern in the few states in which the RBS program is provided by the state, or the content of RBS programs is defined or approved by the state, and for chains and independent licensees that send in-house staff to be trained as trainers for an RBS program.

Appendix I

Report Contributors

Work Group

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Diane Wagner	MillerCoors
Mark Willingham	Alcohol Solutions LLC
Steve Waldo	Vermont Dept of Liquor Control

Appendix II

Additional Security Issues

Other policies for consideration in a security plan, may not relate to alcohol per se, include:

- Fire safety precautions: Initially, a business would have been required to pass a fire marshal inspection prior to opening. Continuing a dialog with local fire marshals and including a policy to check emergency exits for proper function and accessibility on a monthly basis is proactive.
- Monitoring Entrances: The more entrances a business has, the less control it has over who enters. Consider using one main entrance, subject, of course, to local fire codes, which may dictate how many exits there must be. Check all doors at least monthly to ensure proper functioning.

- Isolated High Risk Policies:

Use of force policies: A policy helps set an expected level of behavior in a business and can prevent future problems with lawsuits.

Procedures for dealing with drug use and trafficking on the premises: Businesses that ignore these types of problems inside and outside can attract undesirable behavior and individuals to itself.

Medical situations: This section typically includes the level, if any, of medical assistance allowed by employees, e.g. CPR or the Heimlich Maneuver, which can help to alleviate potential civil liabilities stemming from medical incidents.

- Video: Using security cameras in parking lots can be a useful tool to monitor the activities outside a business. A business can be held responsible or liable for what happens outside the premises or in the immediate vicinity. Security cameras inside can help law enforcement identify a customer if an incident occurs. Having security cameras also demonstrates that the establishment took a reasonable effort to maintain safety.

- Clear line-of-sight: A clear line-of-sight out and in windows is an important safety issue. Employees should be able to see clearly out windows to observe what is going on outside, as well as, provide a clear view to the inside of the business for passing law enforcement. Local laws often dictate policies on window coverage.
- Minimum staff: For the safety of employees, including a policy calling for a set ratio of staff to patrons is important. When leaving the establishment at night, for their safety, employees leave in pairs.
- Money deposits: Money deposits are regularly carried out by an armored car pick up service or by an owner or manager. A policy for deposits should include varying the day of week and time of day that money runs are conducted, using a non-obvious moneybag, keeping money run schedules confidential from employees, and taking alternate routes to the bank, if possible. Also, consider keeping up when possible, with bank technologies including scanned checks and electronic deposits.
- Lighting: Implement a policy to once a month fix and replace broken or missing light bulbs. Lighting inside a business is important as is maintaining proper lighting in all areas leading to and from parking areas.
- Loitering signage: Posting “no loitering” signs that show and reinforce state laws can help keep unwanted activity out of a business.
- Security: Using security will depend on the type of business. Security personnel can be useful in maintaining order, for screening who enters the establishment and for enforcing certain house policies. A business can evaluate its activities to determine if security is warranted. Never assume that a security guard has had formal training. Be diligent in training all security staff on the establishment’s policies.
- Increased Communication: Certain areas of a business may benefit from having a landline phone installed for emergencies. These areas include places where a register is present, behind a bar, manager’s office, back room, cash room, and employee break/lunch room. This will increase an employee or customer’s ability to

call for help if an incident occurs. Likewise, all doormen and any other security should be able to talk to each other and contact service staff quickly via radios or cell phones.

- Alarm systems: Alarm systems are another security feature. Some common features are a break-in notification system, a panic alarm or both. Properly training all employees to activate and de-activate the system is important. Decide what type of system will work best for the needs of your establishment.
- Safe ride programs: Keep in mind that having a designated driver program does not signify that over service is allowable to the other customers in the party. The program can include rewarding designated drivers with non-alcohol beverages or discounts on food item. Reach out to taxi companies to inform them of dates of high capacity events so they can make themselves available to patrons via extra cars or taxi stands. Also, seek out local programs that offer free taxi rides during high-risk holidays.

^[1] Downloadable at www.rforum.org under "Reports"



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This report has been prepared by a diverse group of experts working under the auspices of the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA) and the Responsible Retailing Forum (RRF).