

# trading insight

Commercial info for students' unions

May 2021

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# We're back!

**W**elcome to your latest edition of Trading insight which coincides with the re-run of Trade Show - your last opportunity to order on-deal stock before the next academic year!

With further lockdowns unlikely (fingers crossed), I think we can all now feel positive about the future, but we also need to be mindful that everyone's experience of the pandemic has been different and adapting to the 'new norm' may be a more difficult journey for some than others.

While I'm on the subject of change...From 1 July, following reform, NUS membership will be structured in a tiered system:

**NUS UK:** Campaigning nationally to improve the lives of students and delivering tangible impact for the student movement.

And **NUS Charity:** Developing and championing strong students' unions through advice, guidance and crisis support. Connecting members and curating services.

For you as commercial professionals, NUS Charity will help students' unions to make the most of their commercial enterprise income.

The aim is to have a dynamic, cyclical relationship between NUS Trading Support, SU commercial functions and NUS Charity, so we can maximise revenue at a local level, and optimise the work NUS Charity does at a National level. I encourage you to attend [Funding the Future](#) on 15 June which will talk about this in more detail.

It just remains for me to say 'welcome back'! It's been a while! It's great to see so many of you delivering outdoor experiences for your students and what an impact! Some of your revenue

figures are simply stunning - well done to you and your teams.

That said, we still have a lot of hard work ahead of us - but this movement has always been a force to be reckoned with, so I'm certain, by ensuring our outlets are safe, by working together, and supporting one another, we can put the pandemic behind us and focus on the future.

Enjoy the read.

Lynn King  
Trading Support Director



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The customer services helpline is open 8.30am-5.30pm Monday to Friday. All calls directed through the helpline are charged at local rates, and may be monitored or recorded for training and security purposes only.

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# Are your team ready?

*As hospitality venues start to welcome back customers, CPL Learning and CGA asked frontline workers how they felt about reopening, the future of the sector, and their long-term career prospects.*

**T**he findings of the survey have been used to help operators shape communications, support and training in the lead up to reopening.

As your students start to return to campus, we've summarised the key points that commercial outlets in students' unions should consider to ensure employees feel assured and safe.

## Renewed confidence

The research suggests that the recent developments in the Government's roadmap planning and early successful progress of the vaccination programme have had a positive effect on team members. Three quarters (78%) said they felt confident about returning to work, with 'motivated', 'excited' and 'hopeful' the three words most used to describe their sentiments.

But while teams are feeling more motivated to return to work, some safety concerns remain, with just over half (54%) admitting to at least a little apprehension about returning and 77% expecting an increased focus on hygiene initiatives. The respondents cited mental and physical wellbeing and regular communication from employers as their top short-term priorities, suggesting that many team members would benefit from increased communications and support in the lead-up to reopening.

## To do:

- Speak to your staff regularly to gauge how they're feeling
- Make sure your employees know they've got your support at all times.

## Employee engagement

The survey also revealed how hospitality professionals feel about the level of engagement they have received from their employers, with team members reporting higher levels of satisfaction with support during



the latest lockdown (42% very satisfied, up 6 percentage points since October and 22% somewhat satisfied, up 15 percentage points since October). And while this reflects an increase in employee satisfaction, there is still room for improvement. 1 in 6 reported that level of support was worse and 1 in 5 feel that wellbeing was not prioritised.

And for those employers who have invested in team engagement, the rewards are substantial. Highly engaged team members show greater optimism, feel more confident and have improved opinions of their employer according to the research. In addition, of the highly engaged respondents, more are committed to staying in the industry longer-term which translates into lower churn for employers.

#### **To do:**

- **Conduct your own survey to identify areas for improvement**
- **Keep talking with your staff and make sure they have access to support resources if needed.**

### **Looking ahead**

With more easing of restrictions over the coming months, whether your teams are currently working or not, there's still a lot employers can do to engage teams and keep them motivated. In the longer run, employee engagement needs to focus on cultivating the right culture and delivering good learning, development, and

career progression strategies with 48% saying they would like to see career progression programmes made available in the future. More than three quarters (78%) of professionals say that they have actively looked for ways to work on their personal or professional development during lockdown, while a third (33%) have felt more motivated to complete courses.

In the short term, 24% of the survey respondents said they would like to see mental health prioritised and 36% want to receive regular communications and updates.

Only 2 in 5 respondents felt very satisfied with the learning and development generally provided, so ensuring you're delivering the right kind of support to engage teams is vital. Our hospitality professionals rated personal development and skills training as the greatest immediate priorities for learning and development.

#### **To do:**

- **Brush up on your mental health first aid. As an employer, it's good practice to know the signs and know what to do when you spot them**
- **Make sure your employees are offered relevant development and skills training.**

***Mental wellbeing and skills training are an important part of the CPL Learning Prepped Pathway that is available as part of the CPL Training Hub.***

***To access your free trial until 30 August, email [jo.heuston@nus.org.uk](mailto:jo.heuston@nus.org.uk)***







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# Introducing... 'Wine Club' on ClickNDrink; A New Way for Students to Enjoy Mouth-Watering Wines

Following the success of the joint partnership between NUS Charity as 'Your Union' and On-Trade wholesaler LWC Drinks' eCommerce site, ClickNDrink, a new 'Wine Club' has been introduced on the site for students, offering bundle deals on a selection of wines, from rich and ripe reds to light and refreshing wines perfect for spring.

As part of the new 'Wine Club', a number of bundle deals will be listed on ClickNDrink which allows students to purchase wine collections for home delivery, at a discounted rate. These collections include six premium wines – a spring bundle, an Italian bundle and a red bundle – which cost £45 including VAT and delivery.



## The Spring Bundle

An assortment of high-quality wines featuring stunning examples of both white and rosé wines; all with a lighter, fresher taste perfect for longer, warmer days and all fantastically easy-to-drink.



## Rich and Ripe Reds

Classic yet complex, this collection of red wines includes everything a red wine lover favours; Merlots to Cabernet Sauvignon's. Including a mixture of wines from Italy, France and Australia, it's the perfect fruity wine variety to enjoy with friends.



## The Italian Bundle

Hailing from the orchards of Italy, the Italian bundle is ideal for those who prefer a mix of varying wines; from Pinot Grigio's to Sparkling Rosé's. Renowned around the world, Italy provides the perfect climate for producing wine and this collection is ideal for sampling a range of much-loved wine varieties.



The joint NUS Charity and ClickNDrink portal was launched earlier in the year as NUS Charity endeavoured to support Students Union Members with an online COVID secure platform that generates income for their students' unions as well as offering students a great deal. With free home delivery and restaurant quality wines to enjoy at home, the 'Your Union' student shop on ClickN-Drink follows the growing trend of consumers turning to online retailers to purchase their wine collections along with other alcoholic drinks.

Students can register for exclusive access to the ClickNDrink student bundle deals and exclusive discounts using their university email address at <https://www.clickndrink.co.uk/student-discount-home/> and will have access to a range of products ranging from spirits to wines including the new 'Wine Club' collections.

For more information on Wine Club or information on how to promote Wine Club and the ClickNDrink platform, please contact  
Adam.Alexander@lwc-drinks.co.uk or  
Sheryl.Foster@lwc-drinks.co.uk

# Return to Trade and Programmes for 21/22



***As we eye-up what a 'normal' academic year could look like post-pandemic, recovery and how to future-proof are at the forefront of everyone's minds.***

**W**hat trends will we see in the short, medium and long term? What behaviours have shifted for the long-term, and how does this impact students and what they will likely want from their commercial services within students' unions?

There's a wealth of information available at your fingertips that will help you to answer key questions. Instead of looking back to what once was, operators are looking forward and have rapidly introduced strategy planned for down-the-line.

There's no doubt that some elements of trading during the pandemic will be here to stay, and it's no surprise that digital technology and an omni channel approach, alongside your existing on-premise services, will be key to success. On-device ordering,

takeaway and delivery, and subscription models for services are all here to stay as part of an overall offering.

Giving back, benefitting the environment and making a difference through everyday purchases is now something that is fast becoming part of the DNA of successful brands. Mindfulness in menu development and ranging will make a difference to many student consumers as an additional reinforcement of what you do, alongside your charitable status and impact on student experience.

Then there's the old chestnut of value vs cost. Undeniably student finances have been impacted over the course of the last 12 months. Value is polarised, and while it's clear price is important; it's not the only factor. Premiumisation is a

macro trend that is still incredibly relevant to students and students' unions. A clear category ladder approach to ranging will be essential to attracting and winning back students who have been enjoying what the high street has to offer.

With this in mind, we're re-launching the programme calendars for 21/22 so please keep an eye on Workplace and NUS Connect for updates as whilst in the main the calendars will re-run from last year, there will be some product tweaks to take into account of where we are today.

We'll also be running an [online event](#) on 15 June to go through every programme in detail and set out how to get the most from each (more details on the next page).



# Funding the Future

## Market trends and the return-to-trade

It has never been more important to ensure students' union operations and services survive and thrive now and into the future. There is a positive outlook, there are positive steps you can take and support is available.

This event will explore the link between NUS Trading Support, the commercial functions within students' unions, and NUS Charity with a particular emphasis on direct funding and how various workstreams affect funding for the charity and the work it does.

The event will also look at each of the programmes in-depth, explaining the impacts on funding, and how to maximise funding for your students' union alongside the support available from key suppliers.

The event will take place on **Tuesday 15 June** and [registration is open now.](#)



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## New design, old bottle.

Say hello to the new Ribena bottle, made from 100% recycled plastic and optimised for bottle-to-bottle recycling.

We've rolled up our purple sleeves to reveal a brand-new design aimed at getting our bottles back.

Why? Although Ribena's bottles have always been recyclable, our new 500ml bottle now features a significantly shorter label. This means we're using less plastic and our bottle can now be recycled into the clear plastic waste stream to be turned back into another bottle.

A move that will help keep our bottles out of the environment and in circulation.

Available now, the new bottle also features plenty of recycling prompts to help give Ribena fans a nudge in the right direction. So, join us and help turn bottles back into bottles!

Ribena, striving for sustainability from bush to bottle.



RIBENA is a registered trade mark of Lucozade Ribena Suntory Ltd.

# Giving back through your ranging

*The environment is, quite rightly, a huge priority to almost everyone these days. As students become much more aware of how their actions affect the world around them, they are making purchasing decisions from companies that can demonstrate ethical or social impact.*

*Your ranging can make all the difference and help you to stand out from your competitors on issues students care about. We've highlighted three recommendations for your ranging this academic year that will ensure your students can give back on issues they're passionate about by purchasing from your students' union.*

## Raise a Toast!

Trusted supplier and planet-saving craft beer producers Toast recently won a Queens Enterprise Award for sustainable development. Billed as the highest official UK awards for British businesses – this is a huge accolade.

David Ryan, Chief Breadwinner said: **'NUS has been a huge part of our journey to-date so a big thank you to you and the entire team for playing such a key part in helping to make this happen'.**





# WHAT MAKES SEA CHANGE WINE SPECIAL?

We are a small team of wine enthusiasts who wanted to create a wine range built on environmental, ethical, and sustainable principles; a blueprint which we believe all products should be based on. There are 3 key pillars to Sea Change Wine:

## PACKAGING



We have minimised all Sea Change packaging to reduce our environmental impact:

- No unnecessary plastic wrap covering the cork
- Sustainably managed, natural cork that is produced without using any solvents
- Label paper from sustainable FSC forests, made in part from grape waste
- Lighter weight bottles, minimising product weight and our carbon footprint when shipping

## CHARITIES



Every bottle of Sea Change sold helps fund ocean conservation projects globally by donating a minimum of 25 Euro cents per bottle to our charity partners. We work with 10 charities worldwide, from Ocean Generation and Sea-Changers in the UK, to Olive Ridley Project in the Indian Ocean who rehabilitate sea turtles that have sustained injuries from discarded fishing gear. To date, we have raised over €90,000 for these amazing causes.

## WINE



We ensure that our wine is not only delicious but ethical too. We only work with wineries who have the correct ethical accreditations, offer a fair price to their farmers and workforce, and have the correct policies on racism and equality.

We also choose wines, like this wonderful Italian range, that are the best of quality. Wines that are IGT and DOC accredited have met the standards of stringent wine laws regarding their growing, sourcing and production.

Our aim is simple: to create great tasting wines for people to enjoy that actively contribute to making the world a better place, whilst also making as little impact on the environment as possible.

# Sharp's cleans up

Sustainability is high on the agenda of Sharp's Brewery, based just a mile from the coast in Rock, North Cornwall, and it is this coastline which has inspired much of their corporate social responsibility work.

In the last six years, Sharp's have donated over £50,000 to support the work of coastal community volunteers by funding the applications for beach awards that signal to locals and visitors alike that beaches have the highest qualities of water, facilities, safety, Keep Clean programmes and environmental education and management. The Sharp's team takes part in regular beach cleans in Cornwall, and recently donated a number of litter pickers to the community interest group, Beach Guardian.

Sharp's commitment to the Cornish coast also drives much of their work in collaborating with partners. In 2019, Sharp's partnered with Universal Music and Mercury Music Prize nominee Nick Mulvey to produce the first playable vinyl made from recycled ocean plastic found on the Cornish coast. Proceeds from sales of the vinyl plus digital streams of Mulvey's track 'In The Anthropocene' continue to go to Surfers Against Sewage to help protect British coastlines from pollution, including plastic waste. Sharp's is an official partner of Surfers Against Sewage, supporting their Million Mile Beach Clean campaign in 2021.

Much of Sharp's focus on sustainability goes on behind the scenes in the brewhouse, however. Molson Coors, who have owned Sharp's since 2011, recently announced that they are the first major brewer in the UK to produce all of its beers and ciders using 100% renewable electricity. The agreement with RWE, one of the world's leading renewable energy companies, will deliver around 75 gigawatt hours of green electricity per year to power all of Molson Coors' UK sites, including the breweries at Burton, Tadcaster and Sharp's in Cornwall, as well as the Aspsall Cyder House in Suffolk, and all of its offices.

Globally, Molson Coors has signed up to the Science Based Targets initiative and is committed to a series of emissions targets in line with the 1.5°C goal set out in the Paris Climate Change Agreement. As part of this plan, Molson Coors committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 50% across all of its direct operations by 2025. They have also committed to ensuring that 100% of their packaging is reusable, recyclable or compostable, and a target of 30% recycled content in their packaging.

Back to the brewhouse in Cornwall, the Sharp's team work to strict utility targets to reduce their energy usage, which has been significantly reduced in recent years. The team achieved 'zero waste to landfill' in 2018, recover as much water in the brewery as possible using reverse osmosis machines and have a number of future energy reduction projects planned. In the brewery shop, all of the packaging is made from waste material (no plastic) and is compostable or recyclable and they have switched couriers to the UK's greenest service DPD who are implementing electric deliveries even in rural areas. They use paper bags and paper tape, no plastic, in the shop and compostable glassware at events and in 2019 implemented a reusable plastic cup scheme with the ten grassroots rugby clubs they sponsor.

Rachel Williams, Communications Manager for Sharp's Brewery says: "Sustainability continues to be at the heart of our business, whether that's innovating with ways to reduce our packaging or supporting marine conservation charities. Finding ways to reduce our footprint on our environment is top of our agenda and we're really proud of the activity we've done to date, but equally excited for initiatives we have in the pipeline to reduce our footprint on our environment even further".





# SAVE THE OCEAN WITH WINE

## THE ECO-CONSCIOUS WINE RANGE



**Contact** Sheryl.foster@lwc-drinks.co.uk and Adam.alexander@lwc-drinks.co.uk **for details.**

# SEA CHANGE

[www.seachangewine.com](http://www.seachangewine.com)

# Natasha's Law



*From 1 October 2021, the UK Food Information Amendment of 2019, more commonly known as Natasha's Law, will come in to force which means the way we provide information on allergens must change.*

**T**he main change is the way pre-packaged for direct sale (PPDS) foods are labelled.

PPDS foods are those that are packaged on the premises before being offered or sold to customers. Once packaged, no further changes are made to the food before it is ordered or selected.

It can include food that customers select themselves (from a display cabinet), as well as products kept behind a counter, and some food sold at mobile or temporary outlets.

Examples of this could be:

- Sandwiches made inhouse, prepacked and then sold to the customer
- Burgers that are premade and wrapped, placed on a warming chute and then handed out to the customer
- Pots of soup, curry and rice etc.

that you make inhouse and pot up ready and then hold in a self-serve hot cabinet.

From 1 October, these items will need labelling with **full name of product, full ingredient listing** and **allergenic information clearly emphasized** within the ingredient listing.

Food that is not in packaging or packaged after the consumer has ordered it, does not require a label, but allergen information should be given via another method e.g. poster or verbally.

If you're selling pre-packed food that comes in from another business then this must have the label with the name, full ingredient listing and allergenic ingredients emphasised within it.

The UK Food Information Amendment 2019 (Natasha's Law) will apply in England,

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to all businesses selling pre-packed for direct sale foods (PPDS). Once you've determined to what extent the new law will affect your business, you'll need to consider four key areas: **SUPPLIERS, STOCK, TRAINING** and **IMPLEMENTATION** to ensure legal compliance.

Allergen management should be treated like any other process change that affects your business. Considering what aspects of the law will affect the day-to-day running of your outlets, and what risk management processes need to be put in place, will help you reduce potential concerns around allergen management.

If we start to consider the risks attached with allergen control, we can start to implement ways to reduce and control the risk.

### SUPPLIERS

Are your suppliers able to provide you with up-to-date allergen information for all the ingredients you purchase from them? For example, if you're making a recipe for a PPDS product, it won't be sufficient to just state 'tex mex seasoning': The label must clearly set out what is in the seasoning so you can include it on your labelling and communications about the product. Any ingredients you order should adhere to the new law and your suppliers must be able to provide you with the 14 listed allergens and full list of ingredients for every product purchased.

One of the many benefits of being a purchasing consortium member, is that students' unions can be confident all listed suppliers can provide this information for you to use, whether that be for labelling, allergen guides, app-based menus, or union websites.

With this in mind, we strongly recommend students' unions not only order from compulsory listed suppliers, but also endorsed category suppliers so that allergen information is easy to access from our nominated supply chain.

### STOCK

Menus have been created and allergen information shared, but your supplier hasn't been able to source the usual seasoning and sends a substitution so you can continue to make the menu item.

One of your kitchen staff accepts the substitution which your chef then uses to make the dish, not realising that the usual seasoning, which was celery free, has now come from a different supplier and contains celery; one of the 14 listed allergens. From 1 October, this is breaking the law and puts your customers at risk.

To avoid such situations, it's vital every member of staff has receives allergen training. In these circumstances, the kitchen

staff member could have alerted the chef or a line manager who would have decided whether to accept the substitution. If they had accepted it, any allergen information could have been requested from the supplier, staff informed, labelling updated and shared with consumers. If they refused it, the item could have simply been removed from the menu.

Nothing should appear on your menus until all the allergen information for each menu item has been gathered, loaded into your system, staff have been trained, and your communications channels updated. This is particularly important when introducing seasonal ranges and weekly specials.





# IS YOUR HOT FOOD GRAB & GO READY FOR THE NEW TERM?

After a year of lockdown, one thing you can guarantee when the new term starts: students are going to be in even more of a hurry. They'll want to make up for lost time - and experiences.

Our award winning Stone Willy's 'Kitchen' is an expansion of our pizza & wrap concept that has been operating within Student Unions for over 10 years. We've taken the most popular parts of our menu that have been served in the S.U. bars and packaged them up into our hot towers that can be installed in just 600mm of floor space with no shop fitting required.

- FULL BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER MENU OPTIONS
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- AVERAGE GROSS MARGIN OF 60%

## CASE STUDY: UCL

UCL expanded their Stone Willy's Grab & Go in September 2019 to include one of our hot towers to speed up service for students in a hurry. With our hot wraps holding for 3 hours, food can be freshly prepared in advance of peak periods and held hot without losing quality. The hot wrap menu range was kept to 4 key flavours with guest products added in throughout the calendar year.

Between September 2019 - February 2020 (before the pandemic forced the site to shut), over **26,000 hot wraps** were sold generating **£80,000 of income**.



OUR HALF PIZZAS  
TYPICALLY RETAIL FROM  
£3.65 AND ARE HUGE  
POPULAR ALTERNATIVE  
A COLD SANDWICH  
AT LUNCH



"The additional revenue generated from Stone Willy's Kitchen from a previously underused space within the retail shop has been way beyond our expectations and the feedback from the students has been brilliant."

**Dan Hill-Roger,**  
Commercial Development Manager at UCL SU

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

T 0800 028 28 80

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**STONE WILLY'S  
KITCHEN**



### TRAINING

Correctly inputting allergen information in to your recipe management system is critical.

This information is going to be seen by your customers who trust that the information you provide is correct.

It's advisable that this is checked by another member of the team to reduce the risk of inputting errors and harm to your consumers.

Ensure your staff are fully trained and understand their responsibility in recipe accuracy, also ensure you are allowing appropriate time for the creating and updating of recipes.

All staff prior to handling food, serving food and dealing with consumer queries need to have completed allergen training. The CPL Learning platform available to students' unions has an allergen management module along with resources in the library section, this will ensure your staff are receiving the required level of training. There's currently a free trial until 30 August (link to jo's email) so it's certainly worth considering. Training is also available through the FSA (food standards agency).

### IMPLEMENTATION

If you're serving PPDS food items, please be aware that the labelling of these items is one of the major changes within Natasha's Law.

Please visit the [FSA website](https://www.food.gov.uk/) and follow the guidelines on labelling as this includes the size of the label, the font used, the order to list ingredients, the use of BOLD for allergens plus other requirements. <https://www.food.gov.uk/>

With only **five months to get this right** it's important that you have a plan in place to look at all aspects of your business and be confident that come 1 October you're ready for the changes.

The UK Food Labeling Resource have put together a road map to help you plan your allergen implementation (see next page).



# NATASHA'S LAW...

## May

### Audit supplier and stock

- Can I simplify my menu and the number of ingredients I need?
- Are the suppliers I use able to provide the allergen information I require?
- Do my suppliers provide the information in an easy to use format?
- How will I retain this information and ensure it's accurately transferred to my labels?
- What is my procedure for updates and changes?
- Do I trust the suppliers I currently use or is it time for change?

## June

### Focus on software and hardware

- Are the stock and recipe management systems we use fit for purpose?
- Is it time to invest in an automated system where there is ease of operation and less chance of human error?
- Does the automated system we have integrate recipe and allergen entry with a labelling process?
- Have I taken time to familiarise myself with the FSA's requirements around labelling?

## July

### Staff education and training

- Ensure all my staff are fully trained on Natasha's Law and that progress is recorded and held in training files.
- Take advantage of the CPL Learning platform where allergen modules are available.
- Do not miss out any staff! At some point they may be asked a question regarding allergens or have to work in an area where food is prepared.
- Do I have an allergen champion available on all shifts to ensure allergen compliance?

## August

### Trial run

- Organise a trial run once all stock, systems and training has taken place.
- Adjust any menus, suppliers, stock and retrain.
- Ensure contingency plans are in place if substitutions are sent.
- Plan another run through.

## September

### Final review and refine

- Final check of suppliers, ingredients and last minute changes.
- Last minute tweaks to labels if required.
- If training with staff was completed a few months prior, then pop a refresher quiz in to ensure staff are 100% confident.
- Remind staff of what to do if a customer has queries, and ensure this is communicated to all staff.

## 1 October 21

### Natasha's Law is a legal requirement

Don't forget it doesn't end here! Remember:

- NEW STAFF NEED TRAINING
- REFRESHER TRAINING
- MENU CHANGES
- SUBSTITUTIONS ARE SENT
- SEASONAL MENUS
- CUSTOMERS WILL ASK QUESTIONS





#1 FAVOURITE  
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for the facts [drinkaware.co.uk](http://drinkaware.co.uk)

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