StammBar
New Age System Gastronomy

A consistent problem appears to occur regardless of the type of gastronomy business, be it in a Wirtshaus, biergarten, sports bars, night club, restaurant and even in hotel bars, availability of experienced staff that understand good service. StammBar set out to develop a concept that could address that problem and also manage other challenges present in gastronomy:

The Challenges
- Create better service without the need for experienced staff
- Have faster service and reduce the waiting time for guests
- Reduce staffing costs
- An easier and faster payment process
- A concept that is easily scalable and adaptable to fit any gastronomy business
- A concept that does not comprimise on Gastfrendschaft

StammBar's Concept
StammBar's solution took its inspiration from the much loved food buffet:

Buffet /ˈbʊfeɪ,ˈbʌfeɪ/
"a meal consisting of several dishes from which guests serve themselves."

Who doesn't like a good buffet! So many dishes to try, helping yourself to just the amount you desire, and when you want more simply go back to the buffet. This was the basis of StammBar's concept, to create a drinks buffet where guests could try a variety of beverages, serve themselves when they want and with as much as they desire in the glass.

StammBar's Drinks Buffet System

To ensure that the guest enjoys the experience of pouring their own beverage it was important to develop a system that did not appear too complicated. It was decided to develop a system that had no buttons or computer touch screens with menus and also not to integrated payment system directly in the pouring experience but use a traditional approach. For that reason StammBar developed hardware and programmed software to create a system that works with standard beer taps. The information for the beverage would be simply displayed on an LCD screen next to the tap. To unlock the tap, that is, to enable the guest to pour the beverage, we

chose to use a key-like system in the form of a gastrobutton, the iButton. This electronic key is easily docked on the small magnetic circular button reader positioned below the LCD screen. The system would then read the iButton to check if drink credit was available to pour from the tap. Guests would first obtain an iButton from the bar staff which the guest could preload with any amount they desired. The iButton credit loading system was also developed, a CashDesk system, enabling loading of funds and refunding unused credit to the guest, monitoring of the beer taps, managing beverage prices and changing screen image/etiquette depending on the beverage assigned to the tap. Furthermore, the CashDesk system prints till receipts and can generate reports such as all daily transactions, amount of volume left in the barrels and daily earnings. When the guest docks their iButton containing credit to the reader the screen display changes to show their credit remaining and displays the amount of beverage they are pouring. If credit runs out during the pour the tap automatically shuts off and the screen displays a message indicating the need to reload more credit if desired. Moreover, to ensure that guests only pay for the beer they pour, all beer-lines have Foam-On-Beer detectors which shuts off the flow and stops the guest paying for gas/foam coming through the system. From the CashDesk the screen image can be changed on this tap to indicate the barrel is being changed and then reset after the barrel change is done. A further feature that was programmed is the ability to set a desired countdown period which is displayed on ther tap screens, so called last orders, once the time is reached all taps automatically shut off and display a Closed sign; individual taps can also be closed as required!

StammBar München

In 2014 a property of 80 m^2 was rented in the Schellingstrasse, Munich. To truly test StammBar's concept the space was designed to offer only beer from StammBar's drink system. At the bar guests would purchase their iButton and also be served wine and spirits. No kitchen was available, thus limiting business income exclusively from drinks. To ensure that guests didn't grow hungry we allowed guest to bring food or have it delivered to the bar. The property was renovated and a 4 meter long BeerWall with 12 taps was placed at the front of the property for easy guest access. The beer barrels were kept in a cold room in the basement below. The total guest area was 50 m^2 with maximum seating for 36 guests. Outdoor space on the street was very limited and offered seating for only 8 guests. Opening hours were restricted to 17:00 - 24:00 and closed on Sunday per the landlord's wishes. StammBar opened on 12 July 2014.

StammBar Experience

- Guests of all ages have embraced the system. There is great surprise and excitement for first-time guest when they realise that they can pour their own beer. Many guests take advantage of the variety of beverages on offer and sample many if not all on offer. Even guests who proclaim to be for example a Helles drinker frequently will try alternative beverages like Dunkel and cider.

- The loading of credit on an iButton may seem at first for guests an odd thing to do, as apposed to simply ordering a beer at the bar, but the ease and quickness of loading money on the iButton appeals to the guests. The majority of guests returning their iButton has zero credit remaining. Groups also take advantage of using a single iButton and sharing it amongst themselves, especially when there is an individual within the group celebrating, for example, a birthday.

- Customer loyalty, in other words a guest that frequently comes back, is built up easily by allowing guests to keep their iButton as their own personal key in StammBar. The credit remains on the iButton and does not expire. Several people have given iButtons to friends as presents, like a gift card, preloading the iButton with credit. Over 15000 iButtons have been retained by guests. Many of our regulars carry the iButton on their keychains (see StammBar Analysis for more information).

- Staffing can be kept to a minimum, requiring no more than 1 or 2 staff to manage the bar. The majority of staff work is loading and refunding credit on the iButton, serving the occasional wine and spirit, washing and replacing clean glasses on the shelf for guests, changing barrels and general cleaning around the bar. The bar staff generally have more time and are less stressed, even when the bar is full, allowing them quality time to interact with the guests, especially when guests require more information or have questions on how the system works or asking for a recommendation on, for example, malt whisky! Occasionally some first-time guests are too abrehensive to pour but they quickly learn the simplicity and appeal of the system by watching others or even having a member of staff pour them a beer with their iButton.

- There is far less beer wastage compared to if staff were to pour a perfect beer for a customer. Since the customer pours their own beer, it doesn't have to be perfect and excess foam was either a choice or a poor pour. And since the customer only pays for what goes in the glass, they are happy to accept the foam and don't pour it away. Unlike bar staff that would either have to pour off the foam to top up the glass to the Eichmark or let the beer sit until the foam settles which also increases the wait for the customer.

- Gastfreundschaft lives on even when guests are not being served. Instead of the usual guest-staff interaction we have observed a stronger guest-guest interaction creating an open and friendly environment. Guest typically meet at the BeerWall and passionately engage with each other, sharing thoughts on how best to pour and which beverage they prefer. The BeerWall has proven to be a social interaction magnet and ensures a vibrant atmosphere in StammBar.

Lessons Learnt So Far

- StammBar attracts beer drinkers but to make StammBar more inclusive for guests that prefer wines and alcohol-free beverages, it would make sense to offer these on tap too instead of having to order those drinks from the bar staff. For wine, depending on the mechanism, i.e. type of gas, used to pump it, be white or red, the flavour may appear odd to guests and it is necessary to aerate them correctly. It is unrealistic to expect guests after pouring a wine from a tap to wait until the wine has equilibrated with the air before drinking it. To solve this potential problem for future wine taps a 3D printed wine aerator that fits to the current taps being used in StammBar has been developed and successfully tested.

- 50m^2 guest area, even with the large amounts of beer that can be poured by guests in a crowded bar from 12 taps, does not make a viable business in Munich due to the high rental prices and restricted opening times. A larger guest area with an acceptable rental price, longer opening hours and more taps offering beers, wine and non-alcoholic drinks would substantially increase revenue while still being able to be easily managed with minimal staffing compared to other bars of equivalent size.

- Offering food would also have a positive affect on business revenue not because of earnings from selling food but because it may entice guest to come to StammBar earlier to eat and drink compared to coming to StammBar after eating.

- Limited outdoor area kills business in summer. Large outdoor areas, such as a Biergarten, could also offer StammBar's drink system for guests. In 2021 a mobile solution was created using a refrigerated trailer offering 5 taps on 2 sides, a total of 10 taps. Initial trials together with a local brewer have proven very successful, bringing the StammBar experience to the outdoors. Moreover the system was programatically extended to successfully synchronise iButton data

between the mobile TapWall and StammBar's BeerWall in Munich enabling guests that retained their iButton to use their credit between two distant locations while maintaining the correct credit balance.

StammBar Analysis
(Date from 13-02-2023)

- Number of sessions, iButtons, opened: **64,231**
- Number of iButtons still open (retained by guest): **16,043**
- Total Litres poured from BeerWall from 12-07-2013 until now: **91,075L** *(Nr. days opened 1,342)*
  - Average Litres per day: **68 L**
- Litres poured from BeerWall from 12-07-2013 until Corona Lockdown on 17-03-2020: **148,908 L** *(Nr. days opened 2,114)*
  - Averge Litres per day: **93 L**

System Gastronomy with StammBar
StammBar's Drink System can easily be scaled up to include more taps and be expanded into more locations. The synchronising of iButton information between locations enhances the appeal for guests to visit multiple locations, especially if each location has its own unique concept, such as Biergarten, Wirtshaus, music bar, billiard bar, brewery tap room, bowling ally, etc.

The system is capable of delivering information on pours per tap per customer, registering barrel levels and financial reports on credit loaded, such as detailed till reports. The complete business data in system gives the ability for more detailed business intelligence reporting helping to identify, for example drinking trends, customer beverage preferences, etc. The system does not enable any manipulation of data, which ensures the integraty of the data. The system also includes a process for refunds to correct any mistakes recording these in the system too, such as mistakes made with loading the wrong credit amount.

StammBar's drink system can easily be integrated into any existing draft system, with only the addition of a flow meter and shut-off valve per beer line. The control boards for the flow measurement and shut-off valve do not need to be placed close to the taps or the barrels allowing for more convenient placement such as in the basement. The placement of the tap screen and iButton reader are of course placed next to the tap, but those elements can be integrated into different setups that best suits the style of the location, such materials as wood or metal facade for a BeerWall or perhaps on the bar facing the guests. There is no limit to the design as long as there is space for the tap, screen and iButton reader.

StammBar's Drink System can be deigned for indoors or outdoors and the convenience of the system for guests, combined with the novelty of pouring a fresh beer and the high volume turnover poured, only limited by the number of taps on offer, improves the businesses's return because of the minimal staffing required. The system can be easily integrated into several gastro concepts and not feel out of place, such as Wirtshaus, Biergarten, Brewery Tap House, sports bars, sports stadiums, hotel bars, night clubs, even concert halls or even festivals.

Ratings & Publications

Rating 4,5 Stars
https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g187309-d8113294-Reviews-Stammbar-Munich_Upper_Bavaria_Bavaria.html

Rating 4.5 Stars
https://restaurantguru.com/Stammbar-Munich

Google Rating 4.5 Stars
https://g.page/r/CeHxjIdIALXZEB0/review

Foursquare Rating 7.7/10
https://foursquare.com/v/stammbar/53c953ad498e404e3f3b1a0e

https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/stammbar-in-der-maxvorstadt-schottische-exklave-1.2316646

TimeOut Magazine 13 Best Places in Munich to drink beer (Nov 2021)
11th Place
https://www.timeout.com/munich/bars-and-pubs/best-places-to-drink-beer-in-munich

Hopfenheld
https://www.hopfenhelden.de/die-besten-craft-beer-bars-muenchen/

YouTube Channel: ShakeDownFolge 4 (StammBar ab 2min 38sec)
https://youtu.be/THdDJSncw30