

Audio file

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Transcript

INTRODUCTION

Thanks to Josh, that's right, Josh, not Jason from Hanakoa for joining us this Friday night to talk about brewing in Hawaii. We talk about the craft beer fan and their love towards the beer and new beers. How to brew between height beers and what the Brewer wants and what the residents of the island want versus what the rest of the world and travelers to Hawaii want? And we end the show with a request for a new brew. Join us this week on episode three or four of the better on draft podcast. Whether your beer is in a bottle can or glass kick back and relax, it's. Better on draft.

Ken

And again, welcome everybody to episode 304 of the Better Outdraft podcast. My name is Ken. Thank you so much for joining me. I appreciate it. We are back in studio, the Zoom studio I am here with my co-host starting with Dan Dan Hello.

Dan

Hey, what's going on?

Ken

What are you drinking?

Dan

Going hard today I've got a partek red.

Ken

All right, and Speaking of going hard real bear. What do you got over there?

Robear

Oh, I've got myself a little bit of a mixed drink, which basically is the Bundaberg Ginger beer and a bottle of Kentucky 74. It's actually a non alcoholic bourbon spirit.

Ken

Wendy, apparently we did not get the message to do some NA stuff. What are you drinking?

Wendy

Well, I do have a 4.4% beer. It's the banana stand. Today's 13 beers of Halloween from Supernatural.

Ken

Awesome and for me I am drinking from what I've gathered, a 2018 bottle of 4L5 picked up off the shelf. We're going to be talking about this bottle and others during the news segment. If you're listening via the podcast. Of course, the news segment gets released on Monday, which will be the 20. 4th, 2022 at 7:00 AM. So stay tuned for that. You can find us on all of our social medias that's better on draft on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. Tik T.O.K untapped. And now you can find us live. 7:00 PM Eastern on twitch.tv/better on draft or facebook.com/better on trap. That's right, it's better on draft. Everything I also have from the Missouri Brewers Guild. There Missouri loves Company which is an alt beer brewed in collaboration by a bunch of breweries from their Guild, so I am excited to. Have that but. With us in studio. All the way from California and afternoon. Show for him. Well, third go.

Robear

Go West, go West.

Ken

Did I say California, Hawaii?

Robear

Go West. Yes you did.

Josh

Yeah, in Hawaii it's all good though, right?

Ken

Hawaii, that's that's alright, that's OK. I've only been doing this for 300 some odd episodes. I'm still new from Hawaii Hanakoa Brewing Jason. How are you?

Robear

Josh, Josh Oh my God.

Ken

Do I have?

Wendy

Cheesecake and start over.

Dan

Take the night off, take the night off.

Ken

You know, I I, I am definitely not having a good day. I could just start it over and just be like oh nothing happened here. Everything was perfect, but. You know what? I'm human. It's OK, Josh. How are you welcome?

Josh

It's all right.

Ken

What are you drinking?

Josh

I'm drinking a party boy. It's our pilsner. Basically it's just a 4.2% rice pilsner. There's a whole story behind it if you guys want, I'll get into it later.

Ken

Well, let's let's kind of get into the beginning of. The brewery you guys are still fairly. New in the game. You guys opened right before the world went to ****. Why don't you tell us a little bit about why you decided to open up a brewery out in Hawaii?

Josh

So I was born and raised on the island of Oahu. So that's where Waikiki is Honolulu and then I went. To school in. Northern California, like central, like Stockton. It's between Fresno and San Francisco and. And I was. Doing finance marketing ended up figuring out you didn't have to be 21 to make beer, so I started homebrewing. And then after I got out of school, I realized I really liked it. Got into the industry. And so I was working in the Bay Area as a Brewer, and in 2016 I took over his head Brewer, where I was at in Pittsburgh, California. Uhm, people always get it confused, but it's like super remote and. Pretty much the space that we're currently in opened up, and so because of that my my dad and his business partner acquired it. Didn't know what they were going to do and I was like Oh well, you can make a kick out brewery with a space like that as a. Joke and then they came. Back and was like do you want to do this? And I had just started dating our director of operations. Now my wife Chrissy and she was working for Ballast Point as their Rep in the Bay Area at the time for the North Bay in the East Bay and pretty much told me like I'd never worked with a spouse. And now here we are. But it was a fun time. It basically started off just like as. A random idea. And then Chrissy and I moved from the Bay Area to Oahu in November of 2017. And then we were able to break ground on this space. In December of 2018 and then in June of 2019, we actually had our wedding reception here and to kind of put into perspective how like down to. The wire it was. The reception was on a Saturday. On Wednesday we got water Thursday. We got power Friday, the bar top went in and Saturday people danced on top of the bar. So yeah, and then just opened up.

Ken

Really cutting it close.

Josh

Yeah, it was. There's a lot. I don't recommend. People open a business, get married in the same year and get their first place together in the same year. Or at least move into. Their first place together in the same. Year, definitely a lot of changes at once and then COVID happened and it was, yeah. COVID was rough.

Ken

Well, let's talk about that for a quick minute before I pass it off to some of my co-host. So we actually had Kim Brison Lutz on the show about a month and 1/2 ago and she was talking about she was talking about the change that they had to make. Because when you're brewing for tourists you're brewing different styles of beer. You're brewing for a different group. And with you over on Oahu, you've got about a million people in population there. But about 10 million visitors a year. How do you balance brewing for tourists versus brewing for the citizens of your island? How do you go about making those decisions of what works? And what doesn't?

Josh

You know, whenever we're approaching stuff we don't normally think of what is going to be attractive to tourists versus what's going to be attractive to locals. We've kind of just focused on the things that we want to do. We've really tried focusing on businesses and organizations that we want to collaborate with, whether it be. For a beer that's going to benefit an outreach organization, or it's just a business collaboration so that we can share, you know, a visual space in the marketplace. That was a cool run, but yeah, so I. I think the difference is that with Mal. A growing being, having a population of a high amount of visitors like Garrett's, really talked about this where they have a significantly greater amount of staples because they have so many visitors coming and our business model. Really we only have free staples and we rotate a lot and. And part of the reason for the rotation was because I felt like the teams that I was that I was trying to build or the team that was trying to build would have more fun being able to do all these different styles. We explore a lot of different things and when it comes to tourism, we do have a high percentage of tourists that come in. But we do have a high amount of regulars as well then. And being on Oahu, my goal has really been, especially with some of the changes that are happening locally to try to make it so that the purchasing power of people that live here is greater than the people that are visiting here so that you know, I, I just personally feel like you have a stronger business when you have a a greater. Local population because with COVID what it taught us was that you know we can't rely on tourism. Things can go wrong and you know you have to be able to pivot on a dime. Sorry, was that a little convoluted or?

Ken

No, no, no that that that's.

Dan

That was great.

Ken

Perfect I I. I notice 'cause you if you look at your entire templates right now over on your website the the words collaboration and the words benefit kind of pop up nearly every single brew that you guys do. And there was one that caught my eye. I don't think it's. Currently on TAP, but it was the chutes debuts. What kind of beer?

Josh

Oh yeah.

Ken

What kind of beer was the chutes to boots and why was it important for? You guys to brew that beer?

Speaker

So schutze boots.

Josh

Was our pink boots beer or pink boots society, which I mean, I'm sure most listeners know too. It's it's an organization that works towards giving women in the beer industry opportunities, whether it be on the production side, from the house side or other. Office positions and whatnot uhm. And so Yakima chief does their blend every year, and so part of it is that you do this beer, and then you donate the proceeds towards pink boots. And so it's a fun beer because the blend is always different, so we've kind of taken that blend and trying to do it as a hazy, annually. Uhm, just because it kind of tends to lean more towards that. Tropical fruity not as much of a dank profile and what's really great is that our lead Brewer rocks basically like my right hand person. It's funny our icons on the computer we share I'm Doctor Evil and she's #2 at the eye patch. But she's actually the, UM, chapter president of pink boots for the state of. Hawaii and she for that day she organized a huge. Basically it ended up being a party. It was something like 40 women in the brewery. While we're doing this collaboration and it was like oh wow like it, it really was a crazy turn out and considering how small Oahu is. And the fact that we even had people flying from out of town. Some of the people that worked for Kona came out. We actually had. I don't know if you guys have heard of Ghost Town brewing out of Oakland, CA. But they had some people that were out here in Justin, who's there is a good friend of mine too. So it. Was kind of funny. They're like Justin told us he would like this one. It's they're all Nelson. IPA I was. Like oh **** yeah so swearing is OK right? We can swear on this OK cool.

Robear

Oh yeah, definitely no. He built something about it. You could swear.

Wendy

So Speaking of pink boots, I actually had the opportunity to try your guys beer at the beers with beards. Beers without Beards festival in Maine.

Ken

Oh, no way.

Wendy

Yeah, so and and we fell in love. My friend and I did so I just wanted to ask how you guys ended up in Maine of all places in Lake March.

Josh

Uhm, hop culture. It posted about it, and Chrissy just kind of like, you know, on a whim, commented on it being like this looks really great. Like that's awesome, like from the Hanakoa page. And our friends at around the horn out of like basically right outside of Yosemite. Uh, they commented below being like you should invite these guys and so then hop culture reached out and was like hey, do you guys want to participate in it's it's funny because around the horns actually coming out next week for a lab. Uhm, so

yeah, it was a it was like a cool like oh wow we're going to be invited to this festival and then it kind of sat in like. Holy ****, how do I get beer? Domain and uh. Uhm, so I figured out a lot and it surprisingly worked out really well. I basically found a connection to overnight beer to LA and then set up a truck to get beer out to Maine and then working with the distributor and trying to figure out all the TTB rules and the main rules and getting. All that in. After that I was like OK. Well if we could get beer to me and I think we can get beer everywhere else. If we needed to for any reason. But it's been fun in that sense, 'cause it's almost the especially at that time too, because there's challenges of shipping with snowstorms and all this. But just go to that festival for anybody else who might have gone, that's. Listening, that was the best festival as a vendor. All the guests were awesome. Nobody was like a high ABV chaser like nobody was like oh is that the girl beer or anything like that. And you know, even just the organization of the event. I mean, you know the person that put it on. She had cleaning kegs on site if anything needed that. With PBW and whatnot. They had a draft tech on site, so if anybody ran into problems it was funny. 'cause we were supposed to have a jockey box there, but they couldn't source them so they had these weird homebrew taps, which I'm sure Wendy you saw at some of the booths, but. So what we did was. We made a random connection with Oxbow and Oxbow, lent us their jockey box and then the dude. Also was like you guys like weed. I was like Oh yeah, and he's like alright, here you go. Welcome to me and I. Was like sweet. So then what I ended? Up doing during the intermission of between Sessions was rolling joints for like some of. The other breweries. Just and then the festival organizer I gave her one that was like this. Long just being like hey thanks for everything. But uhm, yeah. And then I don't know it. Was just it was a really good vibe. Everybody was really cool and I just loved the aspect of a festival where. It was like, hey, this is a safe space. You know there was a really good reporting system and everybody was just really positive with each other. And it wasn't like a hype beast, showoff sort of thing, and you know, I feel like some parts of your culture have really taken the sneaker head culture. And taking it to a different level, and those are some of the extremes, but I like this and what it's growing into as far as like the hey, you know this is what things could be like and this is hopefully where they're going to end up. So I don't know, sorry it might be. A little long, right?

Wendy

No, that's OK. I totally agree with everything you said about the festival. I as a somebody just going to enjoy the festival. I really enjoyed it a lot of the same aspects that you were talking about. Uhm, I we did fall in love with the party boy pose so I can't wait to hear that story. 'cause I've actually heard it already, but I think Dan had some questions.

Dan

Yeah, so First off Josh, I gotta say I love your brewery. I actually got referred to your brewery a few months ago when I was out there by the brew or a broken boundary. I had no word, no idea where to go, yeah, and he's like yeah go check these guys out. I will see your parking socks so maybe. 'cause I don't know the area but. Basically, I don't.

Speaker

No it doesn't.

Dan

Yeah, walk down an alley after parking it somewhere else. But uhm, gotta say I absolutely love it. You make especially your Baltic Porter is amazing, but that brings me to the question that I have. Yeah, the Thunder Horse was probably my favorite Baltic Porter that I've ever had. Yeah, in all honesty, yeah. But anyways so I was out there during the height of those. Kovid, you know, Hawaii was really, you know, had a lot of restrictions. A lot of rules in place. What did you guys do to stay in business? I know a lot of places struggled out there. There were a lot of issues even when we were there. Can you talk to us about what you did to get through?

Josh

Yeah, I mean so. So the first shutdown started in March and we went to just doing to go only with Growler fills and we quickly learned that that wasn't going to be able to keep us afloat, especially just like immediately opening. And it was a pretty decent investment to open so. We actually picked up a canning line umbre. Micro counter who's actually out of Michigan? Uhm, great manufacturer for any breweries listening if they're looking for good solutions, but we started doing cans in June and we were allowed to reopen with restrictions, and that was going pretty well, and so we started trying to do more frequent releases. And we had another shutdown happen at the end of August 2020, and that one was probably the most crippling. I mean for. The month of September, like I wasn't paying myself like basically everybody was laid off at that point. And then we were allowed to open in October and we basically came to the conclusion that. Whenever we had. A new beer release. We saw an increase in business. So from then on, up until now, we have not. We've only had two weeks since then that we haven't had a new beer. At least. And that basically was the start of the whole business model of having new things always come out. And really, trying to just keep people excited about what's going on because we found I, I personally feel as though that the market has gone to somewhat of a, uh, what have you done for me lately? Or it's like Netflix where it's like you open it up and there's a new show, and so there's incentive to be like this is new. I haven't seen it before. Uhm, so that's kind of where that business model came from for us. And then, as 2021 came up and just keeping up with the rules with all the restrictions that was incredibly stressful where it would be like. You can do this. OK now you can't do this and then going back and forth and back and forth. And I'm just really grateful that now those aren't things that we have to worry about. I mean, we also had at one point was called the vaccine passport, so you had to be able to show your proof of vaccination. So people. Could come in and. I mean, we were having people say you should just not do it and protest it, because that's what a good business does. And I was like you know, what man, I'm really just trying to keep people employed. That was the main goal and trying to make sure that we could keep everything going and and Chrissy being a wizard on social media. Had actually been able to talk to these. People and then. Eventually inviting them to come in for a beer and have conversations about it. And so it was really interesting to kind of see her work. That type of you know, wizardry or witchcraft at that point to make that work. But I mean, I think. I think a lot of people. Who didn't work in industries that were had restrictions during COVID like? Had a harder time understanding why certain things were the way they were, and it was pretty apparent in with some people.

Dan

Yeah, I definitely saw that when I was out there, people having meltdowns in the hotel because they were asked for their COVID vaccination card when we couldn't even get to the island at that point without it.

Josh

OK, yeah.

Dan

That's an interesting point you brought up about the releases that was actually happening over there and like, oh, I guess we came on a good day. I didn't know it was weekly. Do you find yourself releasing the same types of beer every so often now because of that? Or you constantly coming up with new ideas?

Josh

No, we continue to try to come out with new things we've actually, as of recently. We've also tried figuring out what our schedules should look like. As far as releases, so it's not like, yeah, for an entire month all you came out with was. An IPA and the the thing I'm most passionate about are loggers and with party boy being a staple logger now. It's given us opportunities to do special projects around those, UM, and even with IPA's, we really try to focus on using. Never using the same hops in the beers that are coming within, like the next six weeks so that we have variety also for the hazies especially uhm changing out the yeast as well so we do different runs on different yeast to create different profiles based on seasonality and then also trying to make sure that. Our board is pretty diverse that we can fill the malt category. The dark beer category, sour experimental the IPA and then our staples and just some other random ones that we really want to do. And it's stressful. And what I'm really grateful for is that you know now I have a team behind me with very different philosophies and different experiences, and we can all collaborate and give opportunities to each other to do their own beers. Or like create special projects so that we can have better innovation. Whereas during COVID it really was all on me and I essentially worked in a vacuum where asking friend house what they thought not getting a Brewers perspective of like I think you should go in this direction and this is the technique to use kind of thing so I have always been. The type that I want other people perspectives to get a greater picture and I think now with this business model it's considerably less stressful to do.

Dan

That's amazing, I actually love hearing that because I always wear. I hear that you're going to be releasing something every week right now. It's three weeks from now. It's going to be the same beer. Again or say. A month from now, you know what I'm getting to because you do see that with a lot of places now. Do you do any barrel aging there or not as of yet?

Josh

We're actually so we've done some barrel aging. We did it on a budget and the way we did it. Was and a. Lot of people can do this too. So a lot of restaurants or bars will do barrel select programs with distilleries, primarily like in the bourbon industry and. You know when? You get your barrel select. You also get the barrel. That was from so we would make these agreements where hey, give us the barrel, or we'll see if we can fill it. If it's still usable and then do something with that and.

Speaker

That was kind of.

Josh

Cool, we've done a couple things with that this for 2023. The big goal for it is actually building a barrel program. And we're working on it right now too. With thumb, there's a rum distillery in central Oahu called Kohana Rum, and so we're working with them on what we can do there, and so I'm really excited. I'm hoping to really start moving into barleywine and doing our Imperial stout and going with that. And I don't have you guys ever heard of private press out of Santa Cruz, CA?

Dan

I have it now.

Speaker

There, uh.

Josh

Uhm, so there are really they have a. Really cool business. Model with their barrel aged product where it's very much. It's either just the barrel aged beer with lens, or there's one ingredient like a cow coffee or vanilla, and it's very much beer focused as far as the flavors that are driven. So I'm really hoping to build that with what we're doing. The other thing to do for our barleywine. Is we've kind of got, you know, the aspect of rum. We've got one T-shirt that was like a skull island, so the malt that we're going to be using for a barleywine is Chris Chevalier model. And that was the predominant variety of barley during the 19th century into the like early 50s and so.

Speaker

The goal.

Josh

Is well, this is what pirates probably would have had. That if they had gotten anything like this and it's kind of a cool mall from what I've experienced, and so the goal right now is to also kind of look at well, what were the ingredients that were being traded throughout that time? You know what was also coming to Hawaii at that time and trying to recreate or bring back like historical stories or like create storylines throughout. All of that with these ingredients and make something that's got a lot of meat to it, rather than just like, here's some extra syrup oreo with booze. It's but honestly there are a lot of barleywines out there that are doing, but it's it's crazy, it's it's own technique, even with the imperial S, there's a lot to learn a. Lot you can do with it. I've I've done stuff where it's been like the pastry South, and I've seen a lot of other things associated with it. It's not necessarily what I. Would choose to do all the time, but there have been ideas that we've had that have worked like we did. Did Teddy Grahams and a lot. And like Cole Vanilla and some other stuff. And it was really cool. But personally, that's not necessarily what I want to do. But whenever we are looking at doing things, I also look at, well, what? Does the public actually? Want 'cause you know I might be here being like what? Do you mean you never heard of Led Zeppelin? And they're just like no, I only. Listen to tswift. So that's the thing, that kind of keep in mind. I feel like is, you know you. There's we though my philosophy on the Brewers on what we make here are we have beer that pays the bills. We have beers that feed the height and then we have beers that feed the Brewers souls, so those special projects that. We get to do as Brewers as

what we want and to excite people is what we're gonna try to focus on for 2023 and even our marketing team has been like, yeah, we can get people excited about that. If you guys are excited about it.

Dan

That's great now Speaking of barleywine. So I'm going to pass it over to Rob here that happens to. Be one of his favorite styles.

Speaker

Oh man.

Robear

Beyond a shadow of doubt, it is definitely one of my favorite styles. I actually just had a bottle logic, arcane rituals not too long ago and that that still is still my number. One, but basically I want to get into a couple of things here. Recently I just saw that Hannah Cole won a medal for I guess the bronze medal for Best Brew Pub in the 2022 Haliana Awards. I was curious what does it mean to you winning an award while only winning that award? Where it it's? I guess basically it's it's an award that has been given out for for decades and you guys winning that award after you know only being open for just under three years.

Josh

I mean, it's. It's cool, it's really reassuring that you know we don't advertise to vote for us for any of those local things you know, and it it all just comes from people that are subscribing to that magazine and or not magazine, but subscribing to those voting abilities, I guess. And so. It it makes. Us feel really good that it's like, hey, we're doing something right. People value what we're doing and without us trying to advertise it we are getting the recognition. Then and and I mean you know locally. Those are awards that really help as far. As getting people excited about stuff. I mean, I'm sure you guys know it, just finished, but the things that I as a Brewer, the things I want to get org and World Beer Cup.

Speaker 3

Of course.

Josh

But yeah, I mean the. Local awards are really cool, uh? So honestly. Hawaii is interesting because we're so removed and remote that those awards, like yes, they do mean something at the local level, and that's great. But like one of the restaurants that we sell into and they are awesome people. It's a fete. They just won a James Beard Award for their restaurant. It's a French American continental. Cuisine, but it's 85% farm to table and Robin. Who is the chef? She she's the. First Native Hawaiian to win the award in 19 years, and it was basically the Pacific Award, so it was a big deal and I think one thing I appreciate about that is that a lot of people don't realize there are a lot of things going on in the middle of nowhere. 'cause let's be honest, Hawaii's in the middle of nowhere. But it is something where as much as we win these local awards, a lot of us really do want national recognition because we want to prove that you know we're not just, you know, a place to go to to vacation. It's like we're doing a lot out here and we're trying to. Do a lot.

Robear

And I know that you guys submitted a beer to jab what what? What did you guys submit?

Josh

We submitted 5 beers we did on party. Boy, our pilsner rooftop, which is our staple pale ale, an IPA for American IPA, and then we went into hazy IPA category as well, and then we did international dark lager with our taking on a schwarzbier. And and we didn't meddle anything and we haven't gotten the results back as far as feedback. I mean, the one thing that did happen that was kind of cool is we entered Alpha King. You maybe you guys have heard of that or.

Ken

Alpha King isn't that the three Floyds.

Josh

Yeah, puts on a competition during Jabl with Yakima chief hops up where it's basically the beer has to be minimum 60 abuse. Other than that, it just. Can't be a barleywine so I'm sorry Rob. Uhm, but yeah, it's minimum that and so, uh, radiant beer got gold and got the Alpha King crown, but we were. We made the top 20 and I was actually at first I was kind of like oh whatever but now it's. Like, actually, that's not. Too bad 'cause it's 150 entries. And it's single and double competing against each other. And I mean you look at the list and it's like we're next to like Russian river and bear brewing and some other spots that are doing. Cool stuff and. So like a lot of the times with those awards, it's trying to figure out you know, where do we stand in comparison to other people and what can we do to improve our processes so that we're more competitive in that sense. And I mean honestly, awards don't necessarily mean your business is going to be successful, but from a pride standpoint. In a competitive standpoint, it's what a lot of Brewers that I tend to talk to like really strive for because it's it's that recognition and reassurance that it's like, yes you, you won like you did it. You're good.

Robear

Yeah, and there's there's a. There's a lot of breweries that are out there. You know, some debt that we have spoken to that we have asked about and knew that dog was going to do that. Camino lay down. Up that there were going to be that there's breweries out there that have one and we've asked was like, hey, how does it feel to win? You guys want to win again? And I I. Kind of what what I half expect is for people to kind of have that Super Bowl mentality. Is that you know the greatest thing about winning is trying to win again, but it it it feels like sometimes you know I don't really get that. And you know, obviously, just like like you and many other breweries that that want to win it it I, I guess for you, I guess. I guess have that should bring up that imagination. Like if you won, would having that pride with that then like validate everything and then just OK? I got one, I'm good or do you just want to keep on winning?

Josh

Oh I, I get addicted really quick I, I mean we. So just to kind of back up a little bit so Hanakoa brain company, the meaning or hanakoa the way that we translate it for our business because the literal translation doesn't work for Hawaiian, but it's continuously working towards our craft. So the aspect of

hearing like you did everything right, you got it. It's like, OK, we did. Let's keep going. Let's keep winning this. Let's keep winning this. Let's go like what else can we do? I mean, honestly, if there is a beer that we got a medal. For and we won. Yeah, there's a chance I'd be like, yeah, let's do this one again and see if it wins again. But there's also a chance. Be like. Well, let's do something different and see if we can win again. And let's just try to keep doing that and try to just keep being experimental trying to find new innovations, trying to find ways to improve our processes, because I feel like. You know there are a lot of breweries that really boomed in that 2000s, and the business model was just like here's our staples. And that's what we do. And that's all that you're going to get really, and you look at them now. And it's almost like, yeah, some of them are nationally distrib. He did and you know I'm not talking about anybody that's in Hawaii, but you know somebody that's in the mainland and. You know it's just kind of one of those things where it's like I feel like as a Brewer, you get complacent and you just go through the motions and I don't want that for any of my stuff 'cause I feel like that's if you're not growing, you're dying. It doesn't mean you're growing by expanding your production or your like. Your footprint on on stuff. It's growing from like what you're doing on the quality side, and that's always been the focus here. We're not trying to just put tanks in and go as big as we can. It's like we're gonna grow as long as it takes. To get to a certain production without changing the quality at every step.

Ken

You you made mention of of two different things and I feel like they're they're a little bit contradictory because you're you're talking about creating your flagship store beers the the beers that are your mainstays, but also you've mentioned that you're constantly pushing the envelope you're bringing in new beers every city. And go week and and for for someone like me when I go to a brewery. Obviously I want to try new things, but in the same sense there are times where I want some level of consistency. I want to go to you and have you know the the beers that you're you're known for and not hope that they're on draft or I have to wait. Another you know 6 1/2 months before they're coming back and I followed this up because I've always said that the craft beer drinker is so dumb. They they don't disloyal.

Dan

This new wheel

Ken

Yeah, they they don't follow they they. They just looking for the new hot whatever they could check into untapped. Next, how do you balance like again, you you said you have beers for you beers for them, height beers all this stuff, but how do you really balance that? Uhm, as a Brewer and I guess someone who wants to. Probably you know you. Probably want some consistency in your life.

Josh

Yeah, I mean so. The three sample beers that we have, our party boy and then rooftop our pale ale and then our our blonde ale which was called break time. I think we're rebranding it to unbreakable. The whole story was we had a host that a tree actually fell on her head and she's actually OK and. But because of that she lost her athletic scholarship. So we're using that beer to try to fund the rest of her schooling, but. Yeah, so those 3 beers like originally, we weren't intending to always have like have any staples, but the blonde ale and rooftop were really popular when we had opened, so we kept those going in 2022. We basically brought party boy into the mix and what we found with our outside sales.

Program as it expanded to more restaurants rather than craft beer focused places was that they were looking for the same thing they wanted. I can always get it, it's always available. And we felt like with those beers and the price points we could offer, we were competitive with what else is being offered. And with our IPA's and our hazies I just always feel like. I wanted to do those as rotating so we could consistently constantly experiment with new hot varieties, either ones that we haven't used or ones that we like goner gone away. From so, the goal for our in-house stuff is to always have the styles consistently represented, but then have a different beer. And we've thought about like should we do a staple IPA because there might be some regulars that want to just be able to rely on that and know, like maybe I. Don't see any appeal in these new ones that came out and I can. Always fall back on this one, and really, the only reason we haven't done that with IPA's. I mean part of it is because I contracted a **** load of different ones, but the other side of it too is that I feel like. If we go and do a stable IPA, we could lose the appeal for our rotating stuff and we would have to change the production volume significantly and it would make it more expensive. Does that make sense? Kind of as far as like the personal reasons why we don't do that or.

Ken

Yeah, it's it's. Definitely interesting and one of the things that I've had to come to terms with as a craft beer fan. Uh, is that one not every like there are very limited breweries that will not. Now I don't want to say catered to me, but cater to the person who doesn't like IPA's so. So if I walk into something like and and and I've, I've learned I need to accept this somewhere like Maine Beer Co where seven out of their eight apps are going to be some type of IPA. It's perfectly fine. I understand it, that's when people go to Maine Beer Co for it's not what I went there. But that's what people go there for. But for a brewery like I want to see a decent amount of options, which I think you're providing to everyone by making this, but I think it also feeds into the disloyalty of the craft beer customer, because they're going to expect that now. They're not expecting your standards. They're expecting new **** every single week or every other week that they come in. And I was just curious your thoughts on you know having to deal with that kind of customer because I feel like that is a big mainstay in craft beer right now. Is that what can I check into Untappd that? I've never had.

Josh

Yeah, I think you know. That whole thing of what have you done for me lately? I don't think it's going to be going away, and I think it's just kind of penetrated the culture in the United States in general for a lot of things. And so that's why it's so prominent across the board, UM? I mean, at times it does sound nice where it's like. If we did have staples and that's mainly what we focused on, it would be considerably easier for us to focus on those from production standpoint, but. It wouldn't make us as relevant to the population that is coming in here for the aspect of it is always like fresh and new and different sort of deal and. I mean. Really, with rooftop. Like our pale ale. I I don't know. How it got to be so popular, especially with the outside sales. But it is a beer that all of us as Brewers like and we do have regulars of that sometimes, like just what they get. Uh, and you know, I don't think I'm ever going to get rid of that. And if somebody is already like or you gonna do a rotating pill, I'm going to say no, you should. Have rooftop because. That beer is actually probably the most like. Mushy love story beer that we have on. Uh, I don't know if you guys want me to go into the story. I don't know what the time frame is like, but you want the story. I'm happy to share it.

Ken

We got time go for.

Josh

Oh Oh yes.

Robear

Say Wendy Whitney is in approval, so she she wins by majority go.

Josh

OK, so basically rooftop when so this whole idea for the brewery came up in the summer of 2016 and when my now wife and I started dating, we would come climb up to her rooftop in the Bay Area and watch sunsets and kind of sit on the roof, like workaholics. And we were always drinking grunion pale ale from Ballast Point, which is mosaic and kelip. So and you know, we would have a lot of really intimate conversations and really got to know each other a lot up there. And so when we were looking at what we want to do as a pale ale, I was like, well, let's call it rooftop. It means a lot. It's the aspect of when you're. I feel like whenever you're on a rooftop or you're at like the top floor of something, it almost seems like you know the sky is really the limit, and so we kind of put A tag Ling on their tagline on there that says this fears for the dreamers. And you know the idea, the label. Actually right here. So this is actually the can label, so it's basically Chrissy and I sitting on top of the brewery, which a lot of us actually do. You can go on top of the roof that Hannah Cola if you guys came out to visit I would take you up there. Customers don't normally go up there but. Yeah, so it's just. It was kind of my love letter to that time that we had together where it's a, you know, it's heavily hopped with mosaic, a lot of different mosaic products actually. And then it's just Pilsner Vienna caramel. And then there's. A little bit. Of ekuanot T-90, and you put our cryo hop in there. They give it a little. Bit more of a. I think sort of green mango aroma is low and and it's one of my favorite beers and a lot of it just has to do with the fact that it's because anytime we make that, it's like it's a reminder of. You know those rooftop conversations and it's grown to be a lot of different meaning for a lot of people that we've met along the way and part of our beer training program with our. Staff is that. You know, end of the day after going through all the beers. It's having a 10 ounce of rooftop on the roof. Oh yeah, sorry, it was long but.

Robear

That's OK, I actually had it, but. When do you have something?

Wendy

I was just going to say I'm a sucker. For a good story so.

Robear

I think we all are. We all are. I I had a question just in in terms of just overall. Volume in Hawaii. Now I believe I heard that there are right now like 27 breweries that are in the state, but that number had doubled in the last few years. Uh, I'm

Speaker

Right?

Robear

Like I'm curious like how much room do you think there is to expand before Hawaii is over saturated? I mean how many? How many breweries you think the state can handle?

Josh

Well so right now uhm. I think on Oahu there are roughly. Like I think 12. Breweries and there's a couple that are planning to open up and then outer islands. There's a lot that are kind of. Popping up as well. I really don't know what the saturation point is up. Right now, because. A lot of the breweries that are fairly established have our are mainly on with distributors. We're self distributed and they've hit grocery stores there throughout the island chain. There's one brewery that's actually now planning to open up a 30 barrel on production facility. That's Honolulu Beer works and they they did. 5000 barrels on A7 barrel. System in one year. And it's pretty remarkable, uhm, but. I feel like the saturation point comes when so many people have opened up. And it's almost as though. If you're not relevant. To the customer then. That's really when you're going to start to see breweries either scaling back or closing down. I'm not sure what that point is for Hawaii. Personally, I actually want more breweries in the area that I'm in because whenever a new brewery is opened up in the area where again, we've seen an increase in business, and I think the more in Hawaii that we can promote having local businesses and local breweries the better off, we're all going to be because it desensitizes. Mainland companies from distributing out here we have heavy distribution from, you know, like. Modern times is a pretty big distributor out here or a pretty big brand out here or. At least was. So then here in Nevada but Sierra, Nevada can distribute wherever they want out here. I love Ken Grossman, so that ones I'm cool with that one. And then, like new Belgium distributes out here, heavily. So a lot of the bigger regional breweries come out here and then some of the West Coast breweries as well, but. You know, I just. I don't think I boys still fairly young as far as its craft. Customer, I like to think like we're always usually like five years behind and a lot of stuff. The joke is that you'll hear something on the radio here that was playing, you know, eight months ago when you're in California. And it's new out here before the Internet and like Spotify and all that. And you had to limewire **** that was kind of what it was. My sister lived in the Bay for a while and I go. I'm like what song is this? She's like you haven't heard this song and then I go home and then limewire download. It and then six months later it's on the radio. I'm like this look is this. Yeah, so I don't know. It's it's interesting because I actually look and see what's happening in the mainland to try to predict where things are going to go out here. 'cause it kind of just always falls out.

Wendy

Well, it's pretty obvious that Hawaii has a lot to offer. What do you think it is? That is making Hawaii's beer scene kind of thrive right now?

Robear

Right?

Josh

Honestly, I think there's a lot of local support, and I think the aspect of being able to see who's producing it and that connection is really where people are dumb. Gaining a lot of that fulfillment? Uhm, one thing I like kind of think about is you know you see all these Netflix documentaries about

restaurants and how when you go to visit there you want to try that restaurant and you might realize like well, have I done that with my local restaurant or like do I know these people? Is this something? I can connect to and I. Think that's a lot of where. Their breweries have an opportunity because I mean, you know, we we do a lot of outreach. You know we have opportunities to do these different events and be available in the public and be like you can literally come and visit us, and you know whether it's tourism or just the local population. I think people really do want to have a genuine connection to something like you wanna buy into it. It's not like you know the 90s where it's a faceless branch. It's you know now you really have to be a. A stronger representative. Uh, for what you're doing? Huh, that's some dumb play.

Wendy

No, that makes sense, so I am a big traveler. I do at least one beer trip a year out of state. What why should I come and visit your brewery?

Josh

Well, one of you can come hang out on the roof and we'll hang out in the back and. We'll play bocci keg, but. Uhm, if you were coming out to Hawaii?

Speaker

It's a really.

Josh

Unique place in the world. UM Hawaii was its own country and there's so much history behind that there is a uh feeling and a vibe with everything that's happening out here. I mean, you can go to wikiki, which is going to be a mix of Miami and the Vegas Strip. Like as far as that type of atmosphere. Or you can go out to the complete country and really kind of see. Like you know this is that sort of relaxing moment. Sort of deal, and frankly, the food out here is awesome. The people out here are great and and if you were to come down to this brewery like you kind of get to see a lot of different. Aspects of how we build community UM. You know there are Easter eggs that are hidden throughout the brewery. I'm a huge marvel and Star Wars nerd, so I like to try to build Easter eggs and everything up. And then you know, just honestly. The beer is ***** good. I I don't like to boast a lot, but if I have to sell it, that's how I saw it. It's like it's ***** good beer and you you're not going to waste your money trying it and then you know just the people that work here too. Like everybody is really nice. We actually just did a hazy wear on it. It does incentive. It's it basically says like ask your bartender which or. Ask our bartenders which Tiki bar or like ask our staff which Tiki bar you like to go to 'cause we made. Basically a Tiki style hazy just the dry hop and stylized east and also stuff turned out great. But yeah, and trying to make it where it's like it's interactive. And rather than being like this is what trip adviser told me to do. It's like, well, this is what my server told me. I should go check out and it's not really listed anywhere and you check it out. And it's like, oh *****, this was a hidden gem. So yeah.

Ken

As we go to the end of the show, we like to ask one final question. Each of us to end the show on a high happy hoppy note. So we're going to start with Dan Dan, which final. Question here for Josh.

Dan

Yeah, so you've made a lot of beers with all the releases. What's 1 cell of beer you haven't made yet that you're looking forward to trying to make?

Josh

We've done one barleywine. I'm really excited to barleywine. But if there were ever an opportunity, I would love to do like spontaneous Lambda and go through that whole thing. I've actually talked to another brewery where we would call the birko lambic. And try to do something. Like that?

Robear

And is trying to persuade you into making an altbier.

Josh

Oh, I would love to make all bear. I love all beer I have homebrewed all beers I've had, the altbier I made as a homebrewer was called minor alterations. Yeah bazinga, but yeah, no all fears are great. We're actually going to be doing a. Cole Swift Cologne bowl. With some friends here in a little bit and it'll be with Nelson and Sabro hops.

Ken

I I might have to wait. For our little gift from you until that kolsch, 'cause I'm definitely a big fan of Kolsch, Rob. What's your final question?

Robear

Uhm, so my final question. If I have this correctly, I believe Chrissy does not have your last name. So there is something that that we have in common is that both of our spouses do not have our last names now. First we shout out to to my wife, Dina, who we just had her six year anniversary last week.

Wendy

Oh congratulations.

Robear

Thank you, but we had a we had a deal that she did not change it because it's hers and she's not getting her last name. So is there a same deal or is she? Just hasn't done it yet.

Josh

There's a lot of work in changing your last name. And you know it's it's something where like initially. It was like. Yeah, we'll go ahead and do this. And we got married. We came back. We had to start opening the brewery and then eventually it was just like. No, but uhm. I don't know and then also too. I mean, you know there's always going to be things like you know behind the scenes. Of stuff, but ultimately one of the coolest things is so Chrissy grandmother. Uh Charlotte penny. She was a really awesome. Person and a huge role model. Or Chrissy and really took care of. Her, and I think there's a. A lot to be carrying that name as well, and some of the things that she wants to do is things to make her grandmother proud and so it makes me really happy when I see those moments that she feels like she is doing her

grandmother proud or things where her grandma did it. She might not realize she did it, and I'm like, oh OK, Sharla. She's like what I'm like like your grandma and you can just see her. Like kind of blush a little bit, it's like cool. Like I love those moments.

Robear

Nice yeah I. I think with with with my wife it it's kind of the same that I'm glad she kept it.

Dan

When do you?

Ken

What's your final question?

Wendy

So I am coming to visit your brewery this week. I'm not actually we're pretending they would be awesome if. I was what? Beer, should I try while I'm there?

Josh

Uh this week. Like as in like next. Week or like like.

Ken

So yeah, this this. Show this show comes out on Saturday. So pretend like somebody listened to it Monday and they're flying out there.

Josh

OK. If you were coming in, I would highly recommend you try the release we have this week called tiny umbrellas. It's basically a hazy IPA that's somewhat of a Tiki style, but it literally tastes like. You're drinking a tiki cocktail and spoken from experience. It's a fun time. Uhm to go America on a but. Other than that? I would always highly recommend everybody have a party boy. It's also really fun if you get in the can 'cause. You honestly spoil our receiver.

Wendy

That was what got her attention.

Josh

Well, actually if you come to the brewery, we serve it off. Of a looper. Faucet on a cycle and it's awesome. But if you get it in the Cam, you can shotgun it right there and it's a good time. There's a little bang emoji and in Japanese in Jita gonna it says insert key here. Uhm so yeah. It's a fun beer, and then it's basically this is the front. Of the label. Yeah, I'm I'm like covered in. Scaping, alright, I'm so sorry this is a little. Bit more scattered. I'm just going to do that.

Speaker

Well, for those of you.

Ken

That are listening to the show. Obviously you can check us out on our YouTube page [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) for it. Slash better on draft to see all those labels. My final question 1st, I have a statement we made the suggestion. To Kim Brisson Lutz over at Maui Brewing, and I feel like maybe this is a great time for a collaboration. Here in Michigan, we had a beer up in right brain brewing called Magna. Least a pig Porter which. Was made a Porter made with Magna least. A pig heads and bones. Now, Hawaii is known for their pork delicacy, also known as spam. I would love for you guys to make a collaboration Maui Hana Cola Spam Porter. Come on, come on here you're.

Robear

So I still have a bottle megalist.

Ken

I break him, I don't know I I feel like.

Josh

No this time. Just really thinking about me going to Kim and Lori. Be like, hey Kim. You want to go spam into the kettle. Just see this.

Ken

Here's here's The thing is it won't be the first time she's heard it. I made this suggestion to her when she was on the show a month and 1/2 ago. So now that we have two Hawaiian Brewers on here, you guys can collect I.

Josh

Oh my God.

Ken

I feel like this is a winning formula and I mean it did win them a a gold medal at GABF for best experimental beer. So maybe I mean this was eleven years ago and the craft beer industry was a lot different 11 years ago, but I feel like you guys could do something there. #2 and this is something that I I'm canceling my original question to ask you, because the way your video is again [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)/better on draft or if you're listening live [twitch.tv](https://www.twitch.tv)/better on draft you have the rap magnet shirt on.

Josh

Oh yeah.

Ken

Uhm, why don't you tell me from your experience why you purchased that shirt?

Josh

The whole industry right now. I think is a lot better off because this happened. Uhm, you know it. It's it's funny how. Somebody doing something without any. Expectations created an entire reckoning, I mean,

some of the people that were mentioned. I've had experiences with and, one of which like I even tried talking to about this stuff and just realize this is going to go nowhere and I just don't want to support those types of people. And and I love what? All of this stands for. Or and and I think it's hard too, because during that time frame you know you got like altogether was like the first one that really started a lot of just these initiative beers amongst breweries like at a scale that hadn't really had seen before. And you know this is definitely one of those initiative beers. Where you have to provide a code of conduct, you have to stand by what you're going to do. This isn't just you know, like putting a rainbow up for your. But for your icon, because it's Pride month, it's like no. You have to hold yourself to these to these rules and you know we built this place because we wanted. That our staff to feel that they're appreciated and that they are more than just a worker here, like we try to check in with them as much as we can and also if somebody being in hospital they don't get to be in hospital like it's a mutual business exchange. So if people aren't behaving then they don't get to have it. We're making, that's just the bottom line. And I think there's been a perpetuation of. Amongst restaurant industry that it's like the customer gets to do whatever they want, they can cry and complain like a child and get it and. I'm like **** that. That sucked when I was doing it, so we're not going to do that here, and it's kind of been working. It's weird what happens when you actually treat people like adults.

Ken

It's interesting that you. Bring up no. No, no, no no. That's that's the kind of answer that we're looking for. Having been so, I worked in restaurant pointed sales, so I was in restaurants all over the country for a good six years and learning that the customer is not always right. It is something that I think a lot of us had to as as industry people learn and adjust because you never wanted confrontation. But sooner or later you were getting abused to the point where you shouldn't. Have to take. It and the managers were always trying to. Be the the the. The best of good and evil, you know, making everyone happy, you know, appeasing the customer while they're there and then appeasing the employee later. Sooner or later, there's no reason to appease the customer. So hanakoa are you guys? Where where can we find you guys? Are you guys? Hawaii only? Do you guys distro are you through tab or where can we get it? Or do we have to come all the way to Hawaii and. To you guys.

Josh

You guys won't have to come to Hawaii. I'll send out this beer. But yeah, yeah.

Ken

I'm referring to the rest of the.

Josh

The rest of everybody. They're probably going to have to come out to Oahu. We don't distribute beyond this island, but we are in as far as like package to go product. We're also in a bunch of different smaller liquor stores and bottle shops. In, uh, a bunch of different restaurants out here as well. And then if anybody does want to come down and check out the brewery, it's definitely a fun experience. It's a cool atmosphere, so yeah, that's what I'd recommend for people. But there is a chance.

Ken

What about bigger, bigger festivals? Beers without beards? Obviously you guys were in Portland, ME. Should we see you maybe at extreme Beer Fest or CBC?

Josh

If we get invited to go to those things, there are chances that will go. I mean, it's part of we just recently did a tap takeover at some Bay Area accounts in September and we might be trying to do something. Like that in Seattle. Honestly, part of our business model too has been doing like a band on tour, so to speak. So we go to a city do collapse. You tap takeovers and then you know sort of dip out and it's like hey, if you haven't heard of us here, listen opportunities to learn and opportunities to get to meet people too. So yeah.

Ken

Well, that will do it for this episode 304. The better on draft podcast. Of course, we are on all the social medias better on draft Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Tik T.O.K, Twitch and untapped no matter. What you think of your beer? We think it's. Better on draft. Have a good night.

Robear

Ah, we hope.