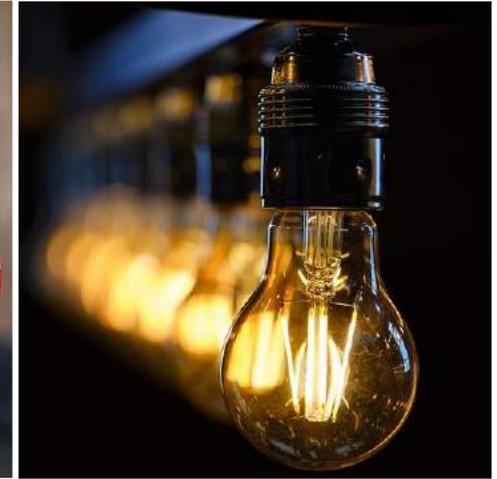




The Matthew Clark guide to

HALLOWEEN



Halloween shouldn't be a horror... sure it's the season of ghouls, ghosts, and bad costumes, but it's also a huge opportunity.

Halloween cuts an increasingly foreboding figure on the industry calendar. Outside of the Christmas season and Bank Holiday weekends, Halloween is the next biggest sales period for the On Trade¹. The occasion has seen growing interest, as a generation that enjoyed the developing ubiquity, Americanisation and commercialisation of the event enters the trade. It's perhaps no surprise then that while a fifth of all adults celebrate Halloween, the proportion jumps up to a third for those aged 18-24². Almost one in four of this coveted age range plan to head out to the pub for Halloween².

Consumer spending on Halloween is thought to have hit £320 million in 2017, a 39% growth from 2013³. Budweiser UK's Sascha Cordes argues that it's millennials and adults that are driving growth in the UK. Kraken, Jägermeister, Strongbow, and Budweiser are just some of the brands that are embracing the occasion as a key date on the marketing calendar, and why not? Halloween is an opportunity to get creative and have some fun. From decorating your venue and creating a special cocktail list, to hosting a horror movie evening or a 'monsters ball', there is plenty outlets could do.



Being Social

With many consumers sharing their On-Trade experiences on social media, and using it to find new places to visit, 'grammable' has become an adjective in it's own right. If you're looking to add a special Halloween inspired drink to your menu this October, consider how you can use garnishes and colours to create a spectacle. A picture of stunning serve travels fast!

Halloween is an occasion for all, Britain has finally fallen for the festivities...

Halloween presents a number of different opportunities, with the potential to engage consumers of all types. It's no surprise that the event is popular with families, and outside of the late-night scene, operators can embrace this with child-friendly day time events and promotions. For example, food-led venues could offer a gruesomely themed food and drink menu for the little ones or a pumpkin carving workshop. For more mature consumers, outlets could look to a menu of seasonal foods paired with some wicked wines such as the Butcher's Cart Shiraz from St. Hallet. We will explore some of these ideas in more detail a little further on, but the point remains. Halloween does not need to be pigeonholed as an event for children or millennials; it can be used to add excitement and variety to the whole On-Trade experience.



Percentage of consumers who spend more than £50 on Halloween.³



Late night consumers aged 18-34 spend 30% more than the average for this consumer group.¹



Percentage of Halloween shoppers that intend to purchase a costume.⁴



Our tips for Halloween success...

Season for Spirits

It's indeed a time for the spirits, Vodka, Tequila, Bourbon, and Rum see a substantial sales uplift over Halloween. In fact, it's vodka that gets the biggest boost. The occasion represents vodka's principal rate of sale increase before the Christmas season arrives⁵. With the Pornstar Martini, Sex on the Beach, Woo Woo, and Cosmopolitan still riding high in the mainstream cocktail arena that's so popular with late night consumers, themed twists on these serves could be winners on the night⁶. You should also consider how you can showcase your super-premium vodkas, Mintel suggests Halloween is prime time for impulse purchases; 30% of those aged 27 to 36 are likely to make Halloween impulse buys³.

As the nights get darker, it's commonly accepted that consumer preference for spirits follows suit. Rum, with it's presence in popular Halloween cocktails such as the Zombie and nautical themed brands, should be brought forward and given prime placings on your menu and back bar. Consider the range of Golden and Dark Rums you stock - an extra 18,000 rum serves are likely to be sold on the day⁵.

Sales of Tequila grow by over 11% during the week of Halloween vs. the average⁵. The Mexican celebration of Día de Muertos, or Day of the Dead, falls on the 2nd of November this year allowing you to extend the spooky festivities into a week long celebration. Premiumisation has truly taken hold of this spirit, so make sure you have a good bottle of premium 100% blue weber agave Tequila close at hand.





Shareable

Groups of friends generate the highest share of £25+ spending in the trade¹⁰. As well as drinks that are sharable in the modern sense, traditionally sharable serves encourage rounds. Consider how you can responsibly offer multi-buy deals or sharing buckets and pitchers and how you can create opportunities for friends to get together.

Embrace Autumn

What is it about this time of year that makes us long for some gentle spice and little bit of indulgence? As the days get shorter we find ourselves longing for drinks that will warm us a little. More challenging flavours with more depth and complexity find themselves on increasingly more food and drink menus.

It's the perfect time of year to refresh your wine list. Adding some warming, hearty reds will comfort us all as we transition into winter. Medium bodied herby or oaked styles such as Cotes du Rhone, Corbieres or Rioja will provide that toasty warmth, and pair nicely with the beetroot, mushrooms and squashes building up in the larder. Use textural or sensory descriptors for red wines such as velvety, smooth, rich, warming, silky, to appeal to consumers at this time of year.

If a full refresh seems too much, add a guest wine to promote on boards and menu hangers. Some of the blood-curdling picks from our range include The Invisible Man by Casa Rojo, Luna Shiraz from Chalk Hill or Tre Fiori's Rocca del Dragone. An interesting name or label can sometimes be all it takes to convince a customer to trade up on their usual wine pick.



October Wine Trends

Argentine Malbec

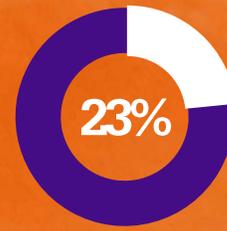
The South American nation's most famous wine is cementing its place as a new classic. It's the second best performing still wine, growing in value by 26% this year to reach £67m in value⁷. 14% list Malbec as a favourite grape and 17% of consumers prefer to purchase it from Argentina⁸.

Italian Reds

As the red wines come back into focus, it's interesting to see how strongly Italian wine sales have been forming. Against the backdrop of a 2% drop in overall still wine sales, Italian Nero D'Avola has seen volumes grow by 59% while Primitivo has jumped 69%; Merlot, a consistently strong performer, has added 4%⁷.

Sparkling Wine

While some research has found the UK is reaching "Peak Prosecco", the sparkling wine craze is going nowhere just yet. A great opportunity is available to move customers up the sparkling wine ladder to English Sparkling wine, having grown 49% in value and 25% in volume⁷, English Wine could be the future of premium sparkling.



of consumers choose a cocktail over another category based on the menu listing.⁶

Venue Ready

Dressing your venue is an important step. There is no need to go all out, and whatever decoration you choose should fit the look and feel of your outlet. A little bit of fake cobwebbing can do wonders in creating the right environment. Get some good POS too and show your outlet is ready. Our Design Studio team have produced a range of templates that can be used for all of your POS needs this Halloween.

High-quality POS can help increase footfall and drive the sales of any promotion. Experienced consumers, purchase 27% of the On-Trade's serves and primarily shop by promotions and offers when selecting a spirit to drink; promotions can be key to them trading up.

Go Bespoke

Consider creating a focused drinks list. This list should contain all of the Halloween focused drinks and cocktails you're offering. Handing a customer this focused menu, complete with your Autumnal wine selection, when at the bar immediately turns their attention to choosing one of these drinks, serves that should be ones that make you more margin. Remember, the vast majority of consumers have not chosen their drink by the time they reach your bar or take their seat, giving you the opportunity to move them away from considering a standard choice. For those late night venues, this should certainly include some playful sharing serves. Offering cocktail pitchers or sharing buckets encourages groups to enter rounds, something useful in increasing dwell-time and sales.



Spook Your Drinks

If there is only a single time all year that bartenders can have some fun with how drinks are presented, then Halloween is it. From putting a twist on a classic serve and giving it a creepy name to adding garish garnishes such as gummy eyeballs and dripping grenadine blood - there is plenty that could be done to add some horror and humour.

Presentation is everything in the On-Trade, and when customers wander back from the bar with a drink that other guests cannot fail to notice - there will soon be a rush on. It doesn't just apply to spirits either, wine magnums or cauldron-style ice buckets would have the same effect, while adding a few drops of all natural red food colouring can instantly turn a beer into something that looks far more sinister.

Winning Warmers

Coffee is reportedly the third most popular drink in pubs, while tea is sixth⁹. 19% of people drink coffee flavour cocktails when out⁶. Hot drinks present a great opportunity to the On-Trade, not least in a nation with an increasing interest in low and no-alcohol drinks. However, with temperatures on the way down, offering a hot toddy alongside a range of boozy coffees will help raise profit margins on the typical cup of joe. For example, offering to add a little drop of whiskey or a measure of Irish Cream will maximise your coffee sales. Similarly, pairing a coffee with a measure of cognac is the perfect after dinner upsell.

“Baristas are becoming mixologists and consumers are blurring the lines”



“Having staff dressed up a little for the occasion, can do wonders in setting the tone”

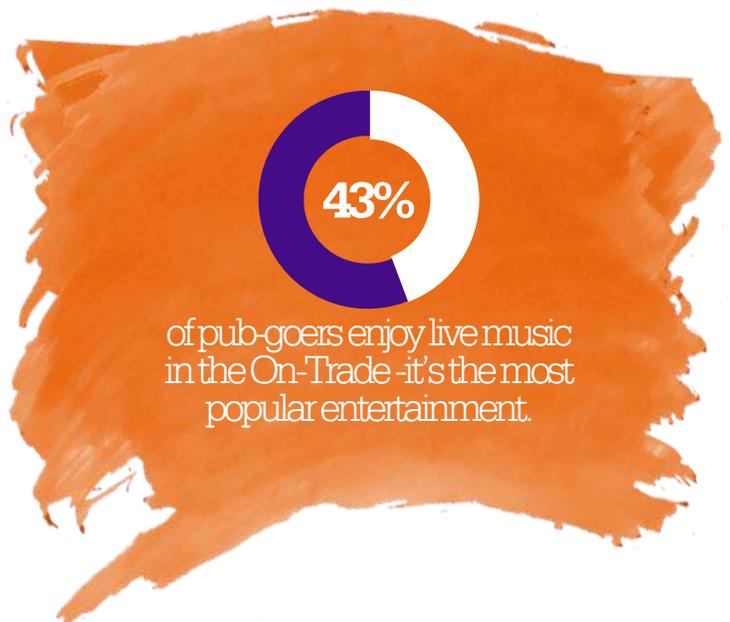
Fancy Dress

Ensure that your staff are fired up and ready to go, your staff play a core role in setting the atmosphere and energy within your venue. Having them dress up a little for the occasion, can do wonders in setting the tone and showing that your venue is embracing the festivities as much as your guests.

While, of course, fancy dress is not suited to every venue, for many late night venues encouraging your guests to come fully-decked out can be a big draw. For example you could run a competition for best dressed, have an offer for those who've made the effort, or free entry to fancily dressed visitors.

Spooky Tunes

Who can resist singing along to the likes of Monster Mash and Thriller? While there is no need for cheesy ghoulish tunes on repeat all night, playing music that sets the atmosphere is a key element in keeping people in your outlet.



of pub-goers enjoy live music in the On-Trade -it's the most popular entertainment.

Making Halloween an event

Horror Movie Night

The movie night is a simple way to drive footfall and create a laid-back atmosphere; perfect for people looking to enjoy a quieter Halloween experience – and a great alternative way for people to enjoy their local. Consider serving gruesome snacks and bundling them with drinks. A great way to attract couples, interest in film events peaks for those aged 25-34¹⁰.

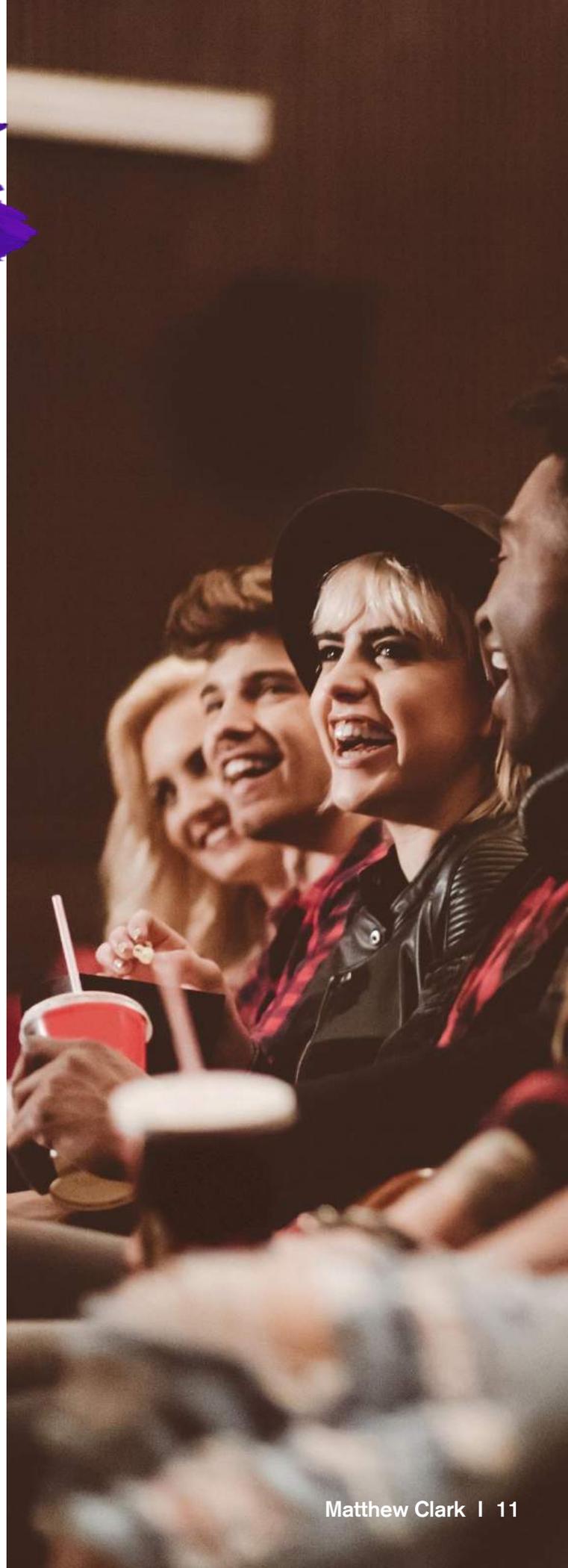
If you want to show a film, you will need to obtain the relevant license, information about this can be found at filmbankmedia.com. Alternatively, there are a couple of renowned classic horrors available in the public domain.

Monsters Ball

For those that haven't been trick or treating for some years, but still want to get dressed to distress, how about arranging an adults only monster party? It may be as simple as decorating your venue and popping on some party tunes, or even a fully-ticketed event that features spooky cocktails, entertainment and an upmarket masquerade dress code.

Ghost Walk

If the stories are to be believed, the UK On-Trade has more than it's fair share of ghostly activity. Almost every pub has a tall tale to tell about an gruesome incident or ghastly affair that has left a eerie figure roaming the corridors, and if you've got it, "haunt" it! If there are tours nearby already, consider seeing if you can be added as a refreshment stop. If not, you could organise your own; we wonder where the last stop should be?





Experiences

Millennials are spending £3,750 a year on going-out¹¹, much of it being spent on what has been dubbed, the experience economy. For these younger consumers, variety is indeed the spice of life and occasions such as Halloween give licensees the opportunity to try something new, keeping the experience of the On-Trade fresh and relevant.

Family Fun

Community pubs can swap the gruesome nights for family-friendly daytime spooks. From creepy crafts and pumpkin carving to costume competitions and face painting. Attracting families may be more valuable than you imagine, with 25% of parents spending £40-£59.99 on their last pub meal compared with just 13% for those without children¹⁰.

We see a number of our customers lay on successful 'family days' and we think they are great way of putting a local pub back at the heart of the community. With most school children enjoying the Autumn half-term from the 22nd of October, think about how you can offer food, refreshments, games or even funfair rides to attract the school holiday crowd.



of Adults visited the pub with children in January 2018¹⁰.

Murder Mystery Dinner

Throw guests into an evening of intrigue and indulgence by having them summon their inner Hercule Poirot during dinner. With 56% having enjoyed a sit-down restaurant meal, and 37% visiting the theatre/cinema, during last October, there is perhaps some potential for a themed blend of the two¹⁰. Many hotels put on regular murder mystery events, usually offering a package to guests that includes a nights stay - handy as the holiday season ends. If you're feeling creative you could write and act in it yourself, although there are providers of specially created murder mystery party kits or even agencies that will look after the whole production on your behalf.

Themed Feast

Adding a terrifying twist to your menu doesn't need to stop at the drinks. What Halloween event would be complete with out cheesy bite-size eyeballs, poisoned toffee apples or a classic pumpkin pie? There are plenty of ideas and recipes to be found online, perfect for creating a Halloween snack menu, daily special, or tantalising treat for the children's menu.



The image features three glasses of a light-colored, creamy cocktail, possibly a mimosa or a similar brunch drink, arranged on a dark, textured surface. The background is dark and out of focus, showing a large, carved Halloween pumpkin with glowing orange light. The overall mood is festive and sophisticated.

Cocktails

Cocktails have proven to be a hugely beneficial addition to your drinks range. They differentiate you from your competition and increase your customers spend per head. 20% of people drink cocktails in the On-Trade and the market isn't slowing down yet. No wonder, cocktail drinkers are a more profitable group than none cocktail drinkers to service.

We can help in more ways than you may expect...

Your account manager is on-hand to help you with selecting a range, arranging a product tasting, organising design and print through our Design Studio team, and discussing with our suppliers the support they can offer.

Here's how else we can help;

Spirits Specialists - Having confident and knowledgeable staff will help when it comes to increasing your spirit sales. Our Spirit Development Specialist team are based throughout the country and can offer expert advice and training. From initiatives to sell more, to offering advice when building a cocktail menu, the team are here to help develop your spirit and cocktail sales. They work with many of our customers creating spooky cocktail serves and are sure to have some ideas to share.

Social Media Training - We work with the pub trade's leading provider of specialist training Inapub to offer social media training. Presented by ex-operators, Inapub's training is designed for the pub trade. The trainer will work with you to build your strategy, looking at planning ahead and getting the timing right - vital when showcasing your venue.

S4 Labour - Labour costs are typically the most significant expenditure for any hospitality business. Through marrying your rotas to sales forecasts and historical trends, S4Labour identifies times when your site is likely to be overstaffed. This allows managers to reduce staffing levels at these times, saving on unnecessary labour spend. Some customers have saved £10,000 per site each year.

Design Studio - Our team design and print over 7000 items every year and each piece of work is created with enthusiasm, originality and a wealth of experience. They're committed to getting the job done professionally and quickly, and we design on a brief by brief basis so you can feel confident that you will get an original and innovative design.

Equipment - Whether you're looking for staff aprons, A-boards, cocktail equipment or ice buckets, Matthew Clark Innstock has a vast range of products to help you sell your drinks. We work with Innkeeper Supplies to provide a comprehensive range of products at exclusive customer only prices. <http://mclark.uk/barware>



Sources

1. CGA Consumer Panel, Sept 2017
2. Greene King Leisure Spend Tracker Halloween, 2016
3. Mintel Research, 2017
4. Statista
5. CGA EPOS/Managed Volume Pool Jan 2018
6. CGA Strategy Mixed Drinks Report, Q1 2017
7. CGA 52 WE 22-05-18
8. MCB Consumer Survey 2018
9. MCA out-of-home data, June 2016
10. Mintel, Pub visiting UK, May 2018
11. Eventbrite, Brighter Futures Challenging Perceptions of Millennials (September 2017)

Credits

Page 2 - Pouring Halloween cocktail from shaker, photo by Michael Wurm Jr for Shari's Berries www.berries.com
Page 3 - Blood rimmed Halloween cocktail glass roses, photo by Michael Wurm Jr for Shari's Berries www.berries.com
Page 9 - Creepy Eyeball Martini, photo by Shanna S www.pineappleandcoconut.com

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