# TrueCommerce Nexternal

# TOPPLING GOLIATH BREWING COMPANY
## TRUECOMMERCE BREWERS' EDGE

Toppling Goliath Brewing Company Runs Its World-Class Beer
Release on the Trueommerce Brewers' Edge Platform

## BENEFITS

➤ The easy-to-use Brewers' Edge Platform minimized training requirements

➤ Powerful, on-demand reporting kept pre-event processes flowing smoothly

➤ The positive experiences of thousands of release participants helped to further enhance this customer's top-notch reputation

## OBJECTIVE

➤ With minimal technical expertise, quickly deploy a reliable, cost-effective and easy-to-use beer club lottery platform to help automate and manage the beer club lottery registration, winner selection and subsequent release event for two of the world's most esteemed and in-demand craft beers

## SOLUTION

➤ Engage the beer club components powered by TrueCommerce Brewers' Edge and work alongside the Brewers' Edge Account Management team to build on the positive event experiences of other brewers

## BENEFITS

➤ A rich, flexible built-in feature set, combined with outstanding customer support, made it possible to quickly configure the platform for this specialized purpose

➤ Brewers' Edge robust and proven hosting service seamlessly handled huge numbers of site visitors during peak periods, ensuring that customers had a positive experience

➤ Because Brewer's Edge streamlined the process, the brewery's small staff could easily handle the remaining work associated with the release event

## BACKGROUND

**This small brewery had a big challenge: how to quickly launch and efficiently manage a beer club lottery system to help them determine who could attend their special release event and—more importantly—capture two of the planet's hardest-to-get beers.**

Toppling Goliath Brewing Company has been brewing "big beer in small batches" in the quiet college town of Decorah, Iowa since 2009. Though it currently distributes its brews only in Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and Florida, this small craft brewery has a burgeoning global reputation.

The beer-scoring website RateBeer ranks Toppling Goliath's Kentucky Branch Brand Stout, an imperial coffee stout aged in whiskey barrels, as the number one beer **in the world**. BeerAdvocate rates 7 of its beers in the top 100 beers globally. As a result, the Toppling Goliath taproom has become one of the area's premier tourist destinations.

When Toppling Goliath was ready to release its 2016 Kentucky Branch Brand Stout and Assassin Imperial Stout—already two of the world's most acclaimed and in-demand beers—an online lottery was held in advance to determine the select few who would have the opportunity to purchase them.

The brewery's challenge: How to smoothly manage the massive demand to register for an opportunity to attend the event, then easily select 1,000 lucky winners from the enormous pool of applicants.

## GETTING IT RIGHT THE SECOND TIME

**After rampant interest in its previous beer release events had completely overwhelmed the previous beer club management system, this world-class brewery knew exactly what not to do next time.**

Toppling Goliath's previous beer release lottery was met with major challenges when tens of thousands of "hits" crashed not just the ticketing site, but also their previous software provider's entire datacenter.

According to Megan Koenigs, assistant taproom manager and the brewery's event coordinator, not repeating that experience was a primary goal in choosing a new system for its next release.

Toppling Goliath's head brewmaster was aware that other breweries had successfully used the TrueCommerce Brewers' Edge Platform to manage their large-scale beer releases and overall beer clubs. Additionally, a number of craft breweries also use Brewers' Edge for their mobile point-of-sale, online storefronts, warehouse management, route accounting and much more. Ms. Koenigs and her coworkers discussed with the Brewers' Edge team how the beer club and lottery club system could be adapted to its specific event scenario effectively and with minimal training, and decided to follow suit.

"After doing our research we decided Brewers' Edge would be our best option given what we wanted to do for this particular event, which was to have a true lottery using a system that was easy to access and use throughout the whole event process," recalls Ms. Koenigs.

## HOW BREWERS' EDGE POWERS BEER CLUB LOTTERIES

**Brewers' Edge has all the features breweries need to run their beer clubs —and a whole lot more.**

Toppling Goliath utilized the features provided within the Lottery Club System powered by Brewers' Edge. Customers could easily register online. Winners were automatically selected and then given the opportunity to purchase a ticket to attend the release event and receive a strictly limited amount of the two new beers on-site.

Here's how the Lottery Club System powered by Brewers' Edge works:

➤ Simple Registration—Customers can register online anytime or within a timeframe you designate via the custom designed and branded registration page or online store.

➤ Random Winner Selection—When registration has closed and the brewery is ready to select the winners, the Lottery Club System will automatically and randomly select the winners from the pool of customers who have completed the registration process.

➤ Winner Notification—The Lottery Club System will notify each winner that they have "won the lottery," and this notification will outline the guidelines set forth by the brewery that winners need to follow to become official members.

➤ Purchase When Convenient—Once a customer is notified that they are a winner, you can allot them a window of time to login and complete their purchase, thus avoiding an overload on the technology provider's servers. (Toppling Goliath specified a window of 48 hours.)

➤ You Snooze. You Lose—If a customer does not follow the brewery guidelines within the predetermined window of opportunity, a new winner can be automatically selected by the Lottery Club System and notified via email. (Toppling Goliath chose not to select a new winner if someone didn't respond in time).

➤ Lottery Keeps Running—The lottery expiration and new winner selection process can continue to run until all available spots are sold or until the brewery decides to deactivate. (In the reviewed case, Toppling Goliath chose to deactivate the lottery at the end of its 48-hour window).

Ms. Koenigs states that the primary advantage of using Brewers' Edge for this purpose is that "it saved two or three of us from having to spend several weeks sorting through 13,000 to 14,000 emails."

Another significant advantage is that Brewers' Edge hosts the lottery registration page, which ensures the site and supporting infrastructure can scale up to gracefully handle spikes in site traffic. "Making sure the craft beer community and our clientele are happy with our releases is really important to us," Ms. Koenigs relates.

Brewers' Edge ease of use for Toppling Goliath's staff was also important. "We needed to be able to go into Brewers' Edge to locate specific information, as well as to print reports quickly and efficiently," Ms. Koenigs explains. "Brewers' Edge gives us the ability to sort through the customers in multiple ways, and it was easy for us to learn and work with."

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> Assistant Taproom Manager, Toppling Goliath Brewing

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**– Megan Koenigs**
Assistant Taproom Manager,
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## INCREDIBLY SMOOTH

**TrueCommerce Brewers' Edge is tailor-made for handling special releases and beer club events.**

Ms. Koenigs observes: "When you're popular in the beer community, things can get really crazy really quickly during release events. We learned that the hard way during our previous release. Using the Brewers' Edge Platform made the whole process incredibly smooth and gave us confidence that everything would go well the day of the release itself."

In Toppling Goliath's case, the customer data gathered for beer releases is not used for longer-term relationship management, but only to manage participation in that specific release event. "We build a pool of participants from scratch for each release event," Ms. Koenigs clarifies.

The brewery didn't have to hire anyone to help handle the extra work associated with the big event. But if they'd tried to use their existing staff without Brewers' Edge, "It would've taken us two or three weeks just to go through all the data—whereas with Brewers' Edge it just took one day," figures Ms. Koenigs. "We know we're just scratching the surface of what this program can do."

Toppling Goliath's team estimates that the many person-hours saved more than paid for the cost of using Brewers Edge. "Also everything was more on-time and less stressful for our customers and for us," Ms. Koenigs adds.

Effective and knowledgeable customer support was also a very welcome factor. "We feel Brewers' Edge is a great service to use for beer club lotteries, and we really appreciate all the help the company gave us to make everything happen," concludes Ms. Koenigs. "The team we worked with at Brewers' Edge was excellent."



## ABOUT TRUECOMMERCE

TrueCommerce provides its Nexternal eCommerce platform to brands of all sizes. Unlike template based systems, the Nexternal platform maintains the merchant's branding, navigation, and website design throughout the entire shopping experience.

The platform is used to capture and create omnichannel orders which include: B2C, B2B, Amazon, call center, in-person, subscription, club orders, and even quotes.

Using TrueCommerce Connect, the platform has several turnkey integrations to synchronize order data between popular accounting and ERP systems. The Nexternal eCommerce Platform also includes a robust API, powerful marketing tools, integrated fulfillment capabilities and first-rate customer support.

## THE TRUECOMMERCE TEAM IS HERE TO HELP!
If you have any questions regarding our products or how they can improve your business, our passionate team is here for you.

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