

Who is WILL LOWE?

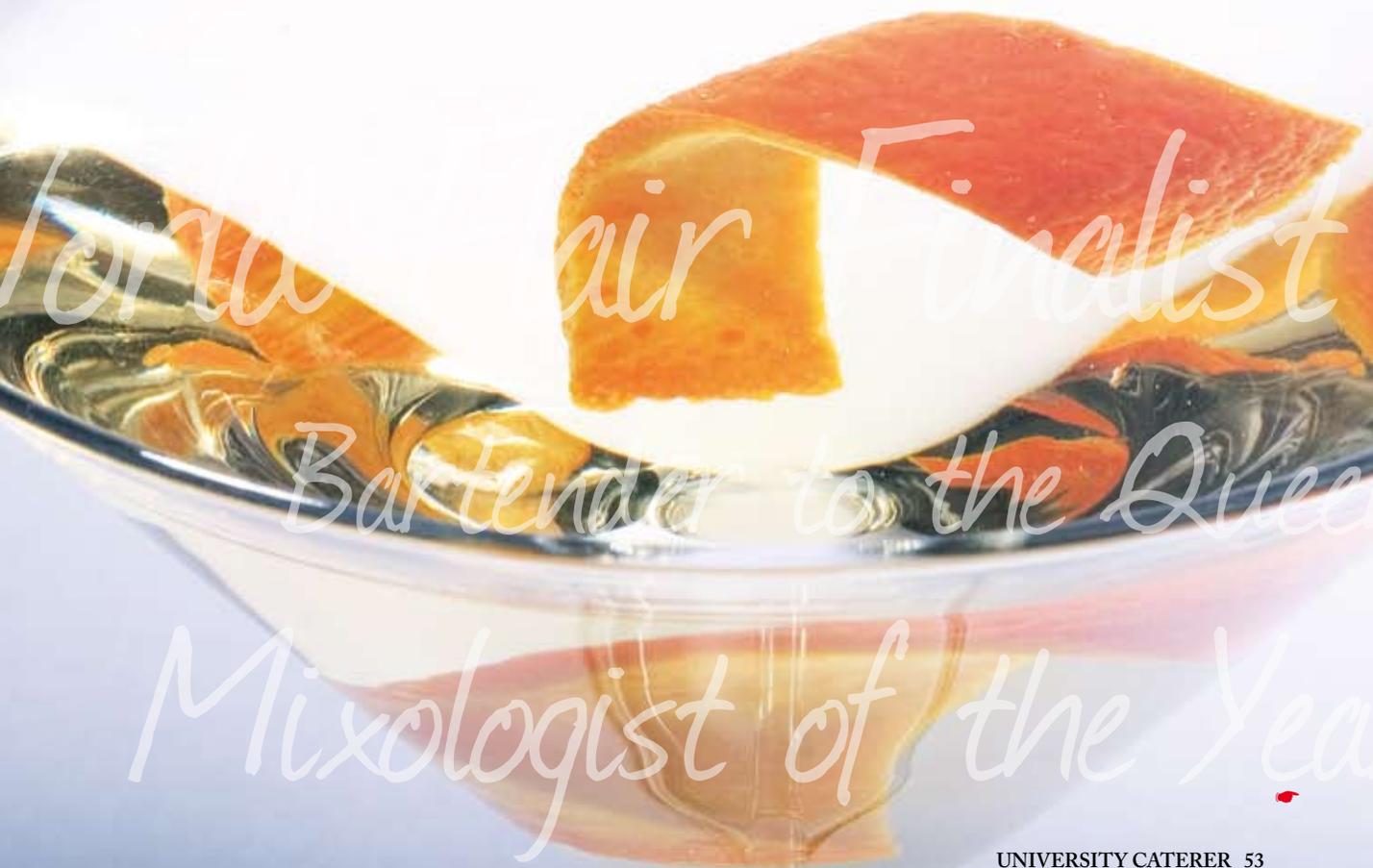


Mixologist of the Year, Bartender to the Queen, and a World Flair Finalist. With vast experience

and knowledge of the bar sector, Will Lowe is a man who has essential advice for anyone looking to build upon their trading success

☛ *As a bartender, Will Lowe has a string of titles behind him. Mixologist of the Year, Bartender to the Queen, and a World Flair Finalist, he has more recently turned his hand to educating others in the history, science and politics of spirits and cocktails.*

To date, he has trained over 1,500 bartenders across the globe, and now heads up the Spirits Agency for favoured TUCO supplier, Bibendum Wine.



World Flair Finalist
Bartender to the Queen
Mixologist of the Year

BAR WARS

Times are tough for the on trade. Smoking bans, relentless duty increases, and a clampdown on promotional activity have all made for a very challenging trading environment.

University bars operate within a very particular niche within the on trade market which fills the void, both psychologically and financially, between going out to the high street bars, and stocking up at the off-licence for a night in. As such, university premises must simultaneously fight two battles, offering the perceived quality of high street venues, whilst all the while offering serious value for money.

Naturally, advice is easier given than implemented, but tick these three boxes and you'll be well on your way.



Product knowledge is essential for providing good customer care

EDUCATION:

Education is a fundamental necessity for selling. Each and every member of your team should possess at least a little knowledge of each and every bottle behind your bar. It is nigh on impossible to actively sell something if you know nothing about it. At the very least, aim to know these basics:

We'll use an example of Citadelle Gin to answer the questions, which should help to give you the framework to apply this to each of your products.

WHO IS THIS PRODUCT AIMED AT?

Anyone drinking G & T's, or even better, Martinis.

WHAT IS THE PRODUCT?

Citadelle is a premium gin made in Charantais stills.

WHERE IS IT FROM?

Cognac, France.

HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM OTHER PRODUCTS IN THE SAME CATEGORY ?

Made in single batches in Cognac stills, using more botanicals than any other gin in the world, it has a uniquely herbaceous flavour.

WHY SHOULD I PAY MORE FOR IT?

It's a handmade product, offering a superior drinking experience.

If a bartender can answer these basic questions about every bottle on your bar, they will be able to really start selling stock, rather than simply pouring what they are asked for.

Advantages of this are:

- ✓ *Directing sales to those which offer better GP*
- ✓ *Increased interaction with the customer*
- ✓ *Selling more evenly through your stock gives improved cash flow*
- ✓ *Broaden your customers drinking horizons*

TRAINING:

Training is such an integral element of bartending, and yet so often overlooked. If you are to compete with the high street, this needs to be emphasised. Here, we would look to demonstrate the application of knowledge gained through the educational section. Handling glassware and equipment properly, moving efficiently around the bar, using knowledge to upsell and acting with confidence are all essential elements.

Once a bar team is properly trained, the whole will become more than the sum of its parts.

Remember:

- ✓ *One efficient bartender is more cost – effective than two sloppy ones*
- ✓ *Proper training brings professionalism, giving an edge over the off licences, and allowing competition with the high street bars*
- ✓ *Investing early in your team's training will make things much easier in the long run*

TRENDS:

The importance of being in touch with your competitor's activities cannot be overstated. If you don't know what they're up to, you can bet your customers will! Are you losing out to a themed night on a particular evening? Is rum enjoying a resurgence (yes!)? Are you catering for the demands of your clientele, or do they have to go elsewhere to satisfy their thirst for cocktails or 'real' wines?

The bar scene evolves and develops at an alarming rate, and as any student will tell you, you snooze, you lose.

- ✓ *Always talk to your customers, and treat constructive criticism as just that*
- ✓ *Consider a 'suggestions' box, or bring the concept into the 21st century with a blog or facebook page where customers can post their comments*
- ✓ *Be a trend-setter yourself – don't be afraid to experiment, but don't put all your eggs in one basket*
- ✓ *Play your strengths. For example, the lower GP demands of university venues allow you to provide premium products at a rate far lower than the high street UC*