



## January 2022 Newsletter

### Alcohol Regulation: Education Basics, A Guide to Resources

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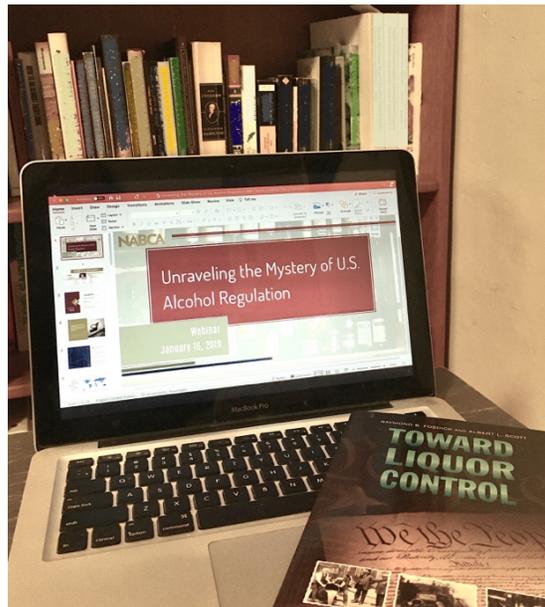
There are

a lot of educational resources available to explain the complexities of alcohol regulation. It hasn't always been like that. When I started back in the 1990's, there was very little. Today, there is a lot, but the resources are a bit scattered and sometimes hard to access. This newsletter will help you identify some basics. It is designed help you create a basic educational program for new employees, industry members and policy-makers. It also works as a refresher.

As an introduction, let me make a general comment about alcohol regulation. It is a complex subject for several reasons. First, there are alcohol regulations at the federal, state and, in some cases, local level. While the 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment ended Prohibition, it also gave the states the primary responsibility for alcohol regulation. Nevertheless, wholesalers, wineries and distilleries must have a license/permit from the federal government. Licensed retailers do not need any kind of federal license as retailing is generally considered a local/state issue. Second, alcohol regulation is focused on controlling business practices that can increase consumption. That is why a lot of our regulations are about how a business can legally operate. Third, laws have changed over the years to accommodate changes in customer preferences, different products, problems associated with intoxication, and local economic factors. So, given this complexity, don't feel bad if you don't understand things right off the bat!

Here are some recommendations for basic education as well as how to access the resources:

**1. History before Prohibition:** Our history with alcohol issues before Prohibition helps explain why we have some of the regulations impacting business and what they are designed to do. An easy-to-understand presentation is entitled, "Unraveling the Mystery of U.S. Alcohol Regulation." It is available as a webinar or as a PowerPoint. The webinar is accessible via the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association website, nabca.org (On the "Policy and Research" page, there are many webinars, including this one, about halfway down the page, which is about one hour long. You will find lots of other resources, but start with history.) You can find the PowerPoint version at the Campaign for a Healthy Alcohol Marketplace website. On that same website, you can access "Issue Briefs, 2020" which will give you simple explanations to basic questions people have about alcohol regulation.



For a deeper dive into our alcohol history, you could read a recent book by the University of Washington's alcohol historian, W.J. Rorabaugh. The book is called, "Prohibition, a Concise History" and is a short, easy read.

**2. History after Prohibition:** Since the 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment gave states responsibility to regulate alcohol, many were influenced by a study called "Toward Liquor Control." The Center for Alcohol Policy secured the rights to republish this book. You can read about the book and its influence

For more information, see [www.healthyalcoholmarket.com](http://www.healthyalcoholmarket.com)

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at the Center For Alcohol Policy website. This book is sometimes hard to read as it was written in language of the 1930's. An alternative would be a newsletter article I wrote in August 2017 that chronicles the influence of this study on today's regulation. It is an easy two-page read. Access it at the Campaign for a Healthy Alcohol Marketplace website, click on "August 2017"

**3. Public Support:** The Center for Alcohol Policy has surveyed a random sample of the general public every other year for over a dozen years. The latest survey shows major public support for most alcohol regulations by large margins. This and other resources are available at the Center for Alcohol Policy website.

**4. State specific resources:** Most states had some kind of process to decide how to regulate alcohol at the end of Prohibition. Some states remained dry for many years. In fact, Mississippi was the last state to stay dry until 1966. Both Oregon and Washington created committees to make recommendations which are contained in a legislative report. You may need to search for historical documents for specifics on the origins of your state laws.

**5. More to come for alcohol educational resources.** In a future newsletter I will make recommendations for greater education on regulations as well as policy issues addressing changes in the alcohol marketplace. Meanwhile, check out these basic resources and make them available to people in your state.

***If you have trouble accessing any of these resources, email me at [pam@pamaction.com](mailto:pam@pamaction.com) and I will send you the documents. Also, if you have any suggestions for future newsletters or research, I would love to hear from you!***

#### **Sources:**

National Alcohol Beverage Control Association website, [NABCA.org](http://NABCA.org) for webinars, white papers and research sources.

Center For Alcohol Policy website, [centerforalcoholpolicy.org](http://centerforalcoholpolicy.org) for national survey information and reports on relevant topics.

Healthy Alcohol Marketplace website, [healthyalcoholmarket.com](http://healthyalcoholmarket.com) for presentation on history and "Issue Briefs, 2020."

"Prohibition, a Concise History," W.J. Rorabaugh, Oxford University Press, 2018.

"Toward Liquor Control", Raymond B. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott, The Center for Alcohol Policy, 2011.