



# The Institute of Licensed Trade Stock Auditors

Setting the professional standards of stocktaking

## THE BULLETIN E-ZINE

**Welcome to the PDF copy of The Bulletin, ILTSA's regular news update.**

To keep you regularly informed, quickly and cost effectively, we are now sending the update out via e-mail with links to the relevant articles on our website.

However, as we know many of you like to read the news offline, maybe with a coffee or pint in hand, you can download and/or print off this PDF copy of the Bulletin to read at your leisure.

We hope you enjoy it.

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# DO YOU NEED TO BE ICO REGISTERED?

Written by Chris Swift FILSA



We have been contacted a couple of times in the last week about the need for members to be registered with the ICO (Information Controllers Office) with particular with reference to the new GDPR rules coming into force later this month.

My first thought was that although the Institute has to be registered there would continue to be no need for individual members to be registered.



I thought that I should attempt to verify this and so contacted the ICO for guidance. As so often happens with these Help lines the advice given is often very basic and will differ based on the information you provide about your business.

Nevertheless, in general, 2 points make it less likely that we need to register our businesses individually. First the data that we collect is actually 'owned' by the client and not ourselves.

Secondly, in most cases we do not keep any information that would be classed as personal data. For example, financial data such as that generated in a stock audit is not classed as personal data.

## Self assess in just 30 seconds

However, it is advised that all members should carry out the assessment that can be found on their website. It literally takes thirty seconds - when you have found it!

Go to [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Click on the yellow box on the right hand side of the screen (Register, Renew or Search the Register) and halfway down the subsequent page there is a link to 'Take our quick self assessment to find out'.

It literally took me thirty seconds to complete.

## Websites, mailshots, social media...

If you have a website with a contact form, you have a contact list for sending out mailshots or use social media for business then registration is more likely to be required. You will find more guidance on the ICO website.

Hope that helps, Chris.

## Updates to the ILTSA website

With the above and GDPR in mind we have been updating parts of the ILTSA website including:

- Adding a security certificate, the website now has a HTTPS secure padlock
- The contact form has a statement outlining how the data will be used that requires acceptance
- A cookie acceptance pop-up
- Updated website terms, privacy statement and cookie policy.

# SURVEY PAINTS GLOOMY PICTURE OF PUB CLOSURE RATE



Pub closures are continuing at an alarming rate according to data compiled by CAMRA's What Pub online guide, which covers about 47,500 pubs across the UK.

The data covers the period between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 with data from the previous twelve months.



| UK pub closures | Total | Per week |
|-----------------|-------|----------|
| Jul – Dec 2017  | 460   | 17.7     |
| Jan – Jun 2017  | 525   | 20.2     |
| Jul – Dec 2016  | 455   | 17.5     |

| Regional breakdown     | Closures | %    |
|------------------------|----------|------|
| East Midlands          | 38       | 1.1% |
| East of England        | 47       | 1.1% |
| Greater London         | 52       | 1.2% |
| North East             | 16       | 0.6% |
| North West             | 59       | 0.9% |
| South East             | 62       | 1.0% |
| South West             | 47       | 0.9% |
| West Midlands          | 35       | 0.8% |
| Yorkshire & Humberside | 57       | 1.2% |

## A fair reflection?

Crucially the survey gives no information on pub openings and there have certainly been many licensed premises opening. However, these may well not be more traditional pubs.

**Do these survey results reflect your experience out in the market, are you seeing signs of an increase in new openings?** Tell us more via the website contact form.

# BEST PRACTICE: LOOKING AFTER OUR CLIENTS?

Written by Ron Foster F.I.L.S.A.



We all have come across the situation when ringing or emailing a client to confirm the next visit that they cancel it because they are going to be out, it's not convenient that day or because "the accountant has the paperwork".

So what do you do when a client cancels a routine stocktaking visit? Do you say "okay, let me know when you want it done"?

In an ideal world, a client will get back to us but I bet many of us find that they simply don't and you lose a client. There can be many reasons why they don't call and it isn't necessarily because they want to stop using your services. For example, they may have been intending to call back but, after a few weeks have passed, they haven't as they are too embarrassed to as it has been so long or that simply just forgot.

## Be proactive and show your client you care

We need to look after our clients by being more proactive. Being proactive is a positive thing. There is a tendency to worry that we're hassling our client but this is not the case, we are providing an important service.



So, if the visit has been cancelled why not make sure you put it in your diary to give them another call to arrange a new meeting. If you have space in your diary, why not give them a call to suggest a few dates that you can pop-in and get the stocktake count done. If they are waiting on their accountant, give your client a call to remind them to chase the all important paperwork. If getting hold of your client can be difficult, email them with two or three alternative dates and let them know you will call them in a few days to confirm the rearranged date.

Also, why not use the opportunity to explain that delays in stocktakes can mean issues don't come to light and get remedied as quickly. Additionally, for larger establishments regular stocktakes also avoids the chances of a surcharge for the extra time to do the paperwork over a longer period.

## Some other customer care thoughts

Be nice to them, make them feel special. They are special for that day; they are paying you for your time so give it to them. Make sure when you have finished the report, you go through it with them so they understand what the report means. Clients will usually just look at two things, the surplus or deficit and the gross profit. If you do the rest for them they will appreciate the benefit of your visit and look forward to the next one.

The more information you give them the more they will think of your ability to do a good job. Do you give them reports they do not know you can produce? Clients have no idea what information we can produce for them unless we give it to them. The chances are once they have received a report they will look forward to receiving it again. You become invaluable to your client if you can give them something they did not know they wanted.

### What's your customer care top tip?

Do you have a great customer care top tip that you can share? We would love to hear about it and share it with ILTSA members. Drop us a line via the website contact form.



# HAVE YOU GONE SOCIAL?

*Written by Paul Hunt M.I.L.S.A*

As I'm sure we are all well aware, there are a lot of different social media options for personal and business use. Your options include... Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+ and the business networking site LinkedIn.

Social media can be used to create awareness and generate business leads although, as always, it's a case of finding what works for you (or not as in the case of Wetherspoons!). Below are some tips and thoughts on...

## LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a business networking site and one that makes a lot of sense for stock auditors to be present on. You can have a personal LinkedIn page but can also have a business page for posting articles and stories on.

LinkedIn is a good way of reaching new business contacts, enabling you to network beyond your existing contacts.

There are also lots of groups you can join based on your profession & interests, some of these groups are open & others you have to ask to join. You also can find companies to follow.

These groups & company pages provide you with the opportunity to join in with discussions or start your own to raise awareness of your services

It should also be noted that LinkedIn provides the opportunity to run targeted cost effective ads to promote your business.

## Facebook

A lot of people use Facebook to promote their business alongside their website, although some people use it instead of a website.

A business Facebook page is completely separate from your personal page, but to set up a business page you will need to have a personal account.

To create a business page you need to go to:

Click on the cog like icon at the top right of page & drop down menu appears.

- The click "create a page"
- Next page click on Company, organisation or institution
- This will open in the box some sub menu's, choose business category & fill in Business Name, agree to Facebook terms & conditions then click get started.
- Follow the instructions to fill out your details
- Once you have you page you can update when you like & add information
- Once you have your page you can ask people to like your page

A useful and relatively cost effective, way to get your message out to a wider audience is 'boosting' your Facebook posts. This is simple to do... after your post is live you will see a boost button alongside it where you can then choose your audience (by lots of factors including location), how long it runs and budget.





## Twitter

As you will know, Twitter can be used to post or share short notes, images and videos. Businesses use it to create awareness and promote their products and services.

Twitter now allows more than 140 characters for a message and provides advertising opportunities.

If you have a Twitter account you can link Twitter & Facebook so that whatever you post in one can appear on the other.

On Twitter you can search for people to follow, when you follow them you will see their Tweets; people will also request you to follow them. When other people follow you they will see your tweets.

## Instagram

Image led social media that is popular with younger audiences. Increasingly used by businesses targeting a young professional audience, as a new advertising platform it offers relatively cheap advertising at this time.

Don't forget you can find ILTSA on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, so please take a look / give us a like / join our group.

### Do you use social media?

Which ones are you using, is it working for you? Tell us more via the website contact form.

## DELIVERY MIX-UP CREATED £1500 DEFICIT

### *Stocktaking true stories*

On a recent job I calculated a large unexplained deficit of £1500. In these challenging trading times that could be devastating to many businesses.

With a deficit of this size experience leads me to check the purchases first. Working through the paper invoices that had been made available for the stocktake, I was able to pinpoint a possible explanation.

There had been a delivery on a Monday followed by the same products delivered on the Tuesday. Although there were two different invoices there was only a signed delivery note for the Tuesday delivery.

On checking with the steward it became apparent what had happened. The delivery had been scheduled for the Monday but the steward was not there to see the delivery in. The beer was therefore returned to the brewery but the invoice was still issued. The beer was then sent out





the following day and a further invoice was raised. Obviously, it should not have happened out human error does occur.

Worryingly both invoices had been paid by direct debit and no-one had picked up the error. Had a stocktake not been carried out it is unlikely that it would have been discovered. Happily, once the brewery was informed a credit was raised and the client was £ 450 better off instead of showing a deficit of nearly £1500 at retail.

That one correction went a long way towards justifying the stocktaking fees for the next few months!

## Do you have a stocktaking true story you can share?

Stocktaking is an important business tool but most people are unaware of the benefits and savings it can bring a business. We want to promote the trade by highlighting just how we, as a profession, really add value. So, if you have a great story please tell us about it via the website contact form.

## SUPPLIER PROMOTION OVER-CHARGING COSTS £1000+

### *Stocktaking true stories*

A client who has a hotel of 30 bedrooms, a busy bar & three mobile food units, buys most of his food and all cleaning materials from one supplier. On a regular basis the supplier runs promotions for two monthly periods and to take advantage of this my client buys large amounts of products just before the relevant promotion finishes.

On this particular occasion I was extracting the purchases, two days before the promotion finished, for the mobile food units and noticed that the prices had gone up by quite a large amount. On checking the promotion pamphlets I found that the promotion was still running and the supplier had over charged. On doing the calculations for the client I found that he had been overcharged, just for the food products, over £495. This figure increased when I also checked the other items that were on the invoice to the prices on the promotion.

This was the second time in six months that this error had happened. The client was delighted as he admitted that it was likely as they were so busy that he would not have noticed. So on these two occasions I had saved him in excess of £1000, meaning I had saved him a large part of my year's fees.

One very happy client who is not likely to dispense with my services as he can see the value I bring to his business.





## **ADVERTISEMENT: STOCKTAKER VACANCY**

Stock Auditor required to join company, based in London. Salary negotiable.  
Please send CV to [jr.fuller@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jr.fuller@hotmail.co.uk), start at the end of May.

## **STOCKTAKER TRAINING COURSE**

*16-18 October 2018*

Setting and helping maintaining the professional standards of stocktaking is what ILTSA is all about and so we are pleased to be running another of our popular training courses in October.

The course is perfect for those that are currently a licensee, working for a brewery, wishing to take up the profession or just wanting to develop their own knowledge of the licensed trade.

Our certified courses are the best place to start and so if you, a colleague or friend are interested in finding out more visit our website training page: <https://www.iltsa.co.uk/iltsa-training-courses.html>

**Find out more...**

**October course: 16th-18th October 2018. [See Syllabus/Booking Form](#)»**