

## **Mark Daniels – The Tharp Arms**

***“I use it every day. It gives you complete transparency of your draught sales, it has significantly increased my margins and reduced my operating costs.”***

Mark Daniels quickly went from curious sceptic to confirmed believer of i-draught, after experiencing first hand the benefits of the powerful system.

It's hardly surprising he soon realised its value, given his background as an IT and online analyst.

Now a licensee for six years – after agreeing to take on his own pub over a pint with the incumbent licensee – he saw the benefit of i-draught almost as soon as it was installed. It helped to drive his business in several ways:

- Driving profitability
- Eradicating lost sales
- Highlighting training needs for his staff

When Mark first came across the system, he was wary: the i-draught reports often conflicted with what he thought was happening in his business. Given what appeared to be errors he even asked for the system to be recalibrated, before deciding to put it to the test personally.

“I decided to work the bar on my own for three days,” he says, “and undertook three counts –a manual count, a till count and an i-draught count. What I found was that i-draught was extremely

accurate, it wasn't the system making mistakes but the way staff were using the systems."

He then watched the staff and found a number of issues with the way the till was being used – cross ringing – and how busy waiting staff didn't always remember to add drinks to tabs.

"In a rush on a busy Friday night staff will add the price of the round up in their head and enter the number manually, rather than pushing the different buttons that correspond to the product sold," he says.

"Immediately the till and i-draught showed errors. Locking down the till so that staff had to use the pre-programmed functions annoyed them, but meant that the product sold matched more closely. I was then able to spot over-pouring happening or pints not being registered to tabs on the till in a rush when serving the Sunday lunch."

"It wasn't malicious," he adds, "but rather small mistakes that can soon add up to large amounts of money. I saw one member of staff who over one busy shift waiting on tables missed nine pints of beer. All it needed was some retraining and a look at our existing systems for running tabs."

Mark joined the trade six years ago, whilst in his local bemoaning life in general and a personal bad day at work. The then licensee said he was selling up and would Mark like a change of career...the rest as they say is history. Within six months Mark was in the pub, it was quite literally the biggest impulse buy of his life.

In that time, like many licensees, Mark has seen the impact of the smoking ban and the recession – anything that could help improve sales and margin or control costs had got to be good news. But he initially had to overcome his own scepticism on i-draught.

“Like many tied licensees, I was immediately wary of having a monitoring solution fitted on my lines,” he explained, “and, full of all the information I had gathered from the media, I didn’t want a system that was woefully inaccurate, that meant that I was constantly being spied on and that, as we were being led to believe, would have me convicted of breaking my contract and evicted from my home before it had even been switched on.”

But now he wouldn’t be without i-draught and is completely confident in the information it provides. “If you have a till system and it says you should have £1000 then you would check you had £1000 so if you have a system that says you have sold 1000 pints why not check it?”

i-draught helped Mark identify a key flaw in the way his pub was operating. Consequently sales are higher, stock losses have been eradicated, the pub’s making more money, and his staff have a new understanding of the importance of recording every single sale.

“I use it every day,’ he says. “It only takes two minutes to check and gives you complete transparency of your draught sales, it has significantly increased my margins and reduced my operating costs.”