

PUSHPULL · FOUNDER'S FIELD GUIDE

THE ASK MACHINE

*A pull playbook for making drinkers request your brand
by name, and proving it happened*

For the founder tired of likes that never reach the register.

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A LETTER BEFORE THE WORK BEGINS

To the Founder Holding This

The most important sentence in the beverage business is spoken by a stranger in a bar you are not in: 'Do you have [your brand]?' That sentence moves a bartender, who moves a buyer, who moves a distributor, and none of those people did it as a favor to you. They did it because a drinker asked. This book is about manufacturing that sentence on purpose, in the neighborhoods where your bottle is actually sold, and capturing proof of it so it can walk into your next trade meeting and do the talking.

Fair warning: none of this is about going viral. A million views in cities where nobody can buy you is a hobby with good lighting. Forty asks at the rail in two zip codes is a business.

Truthfully,

Sam



THE LAY OF THE LAND

How Pull Becomes Money

Pull is consumer demand you can point at. It matters because of where you sit in the three-tier system: you cannot pay the retailer to push you, so you make the drinker ask. The ask is the one force in this industry that flows upstream, legally, at any budget.

The Road Your Bottle Has to Travel

The three-tier system, and where the founder actually works



Your money and product flow right. Attention and asks have to flow left.

THE FOUNDER'S REAL JOB

Create the ask at tier three so tier two has a reason to carry you

Push wins the account. Pull wins the consumer. The 90 days below build both.

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The trade moves your bottle to the right. Only the drinker's ask moves attention to the left.

One rule governs the entire book: aim beats reach. Every post, feature, giveaway, and collab points at the markets where you are sold. And because we sell alcohol, the second rule rides shotgun: every audience is age-gated, every claim is clean, every collaboration with retail stays on the free-and-legal side of the tied-house line. The compliance kit in your member hub is the guardrail for everything here.

PART I

The Mindset

Principle 1: Sound like a person

Feeds are full of brands announcing things at people. Nobody asks a bartender for an announcement. They ask for the brand whose founder they feel like they know: the delivery run at dawn, the label misprint, the bartender who fixed your serve. Write like you talk. Post like you are telling one regular at one bar what happened today.

People do not ask for brands. They ask for characters in a story they follow.

Principle 2: Aim beats reach

The algorithm will tempt you to chase everyone. Resist. Your content has one job: to be seen by drinkers who can walk into a room and buy your product this week. Geo-tag the accounts. Name the neighborhoods. Post the map. A hundred locals beat ten thousand tourists every single time.

Applause without a register nearby is just noise.

Principle 3: Proof or it did not happen

Pull that lives in your feelings cannot be sold to a buyer. Pull that lives in a folder can. Screenshot the asks, the tags, the 'where can I buy this' comments. Ask your accounts to flag name requests. Date everything. In ninety days you want a folder a skeptical distributor cannot argue with.

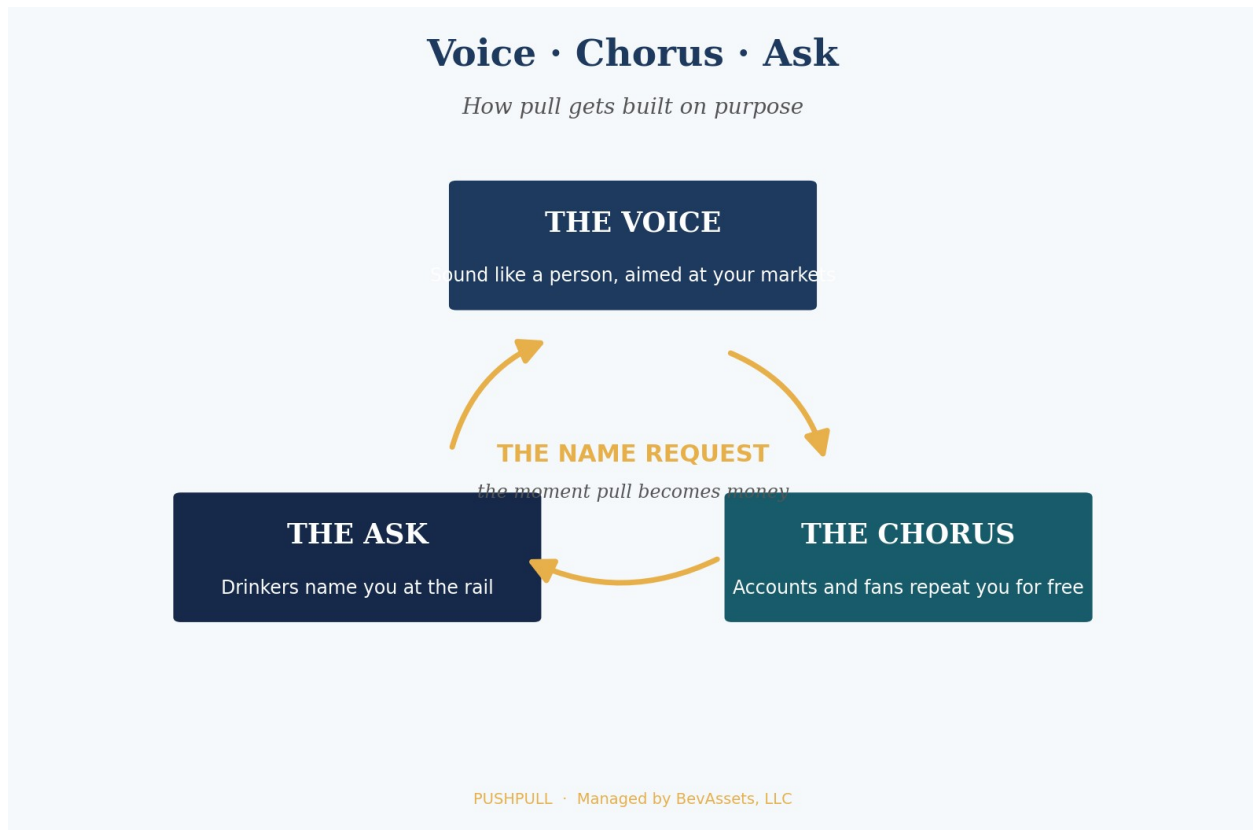
SAM SAYS

"A buyer once told me: 'Everyone says people love their brand. Show me one text from a bartender that proves it.' Be the founder with the text."



PART II

The Operating System: Voice, Chorus, Ask



The loop. The name request in the middle is the moment pull becomes money.

Chapter 1: The Voice

Define your voice in five words and your content in three pillars: the craft, the rooms, the crowd, or whatever trio is honestly yours. Then the discipline that beats talent: one aimed post a day, in that voice, forever. The 30-Day Plan Builder in your hub schedules exactly this, so the blank page is never your excuse.

SCENARIO: THE FOUNDER WHO STOPPED ANNOUNCING

A founder switches from 'We're thrilled to share' posts to a daily photo of one real thing: the bottling line at 6 a.m., the bar that poured her first case, her terrible handwriting on a shelf talker. Engagement triples in a month. Nothing about the product changed. She just became a person.

Chapter 2: The Chorus

You cannot say 'ask for my brand' as often as other people can. Build the chorus: feature one account a week, free and tagged. Repost every real customer photo. Collaborate with bartenders on serves and give them the credit, never money. The chorus works because every voice in it is unpaid, which in this industry is not just cheaper. It is the law, and it reads as truth because it is.

SCENARIO: THE REPOST ENGINE

A founder reposts a regular's shaky patio photo with a genuine caption. The regular shows six friends. Two of them post their own the next weekend, tagging the bar. The bar reposts those. Four unpaid posts, three hundred locals reached, and the bartender starts calling it 'our drink.' Total spend: zero dollars and one thank-you.

Chapter 3: The Ask

Now capture it. Ask your top accounts to tell you when someone names your brand, and make it easy: a text is plenty. Create one signature serve people can order by name. Run one compliant, single-state giveaway that drives feet into your accounts, rules checked first. And keep the proof folder growing weekly: dated screenshots, logged asks, the re-run Push/Pull Score showing the pull number climbing.

SCENARIO: THE FOLDER IN THE MEETING

Day ninety-one, a founder opens a distributor meeting with one slide: eleven logged name requests across six accounts, four bartender texts,

*two sold-out weekends, all dated. The rep stops checking his phone.
Pull, proven, is the only marketing a distributor believes.*



PART III

The Frameworks

Framework 1: The Voice in Five Words

Write five words that sound like your brand talking, and five that never will. Tape both lists above your desk. Every caption gets checked against them. When a post could have been written by any brand in your category, it fails the test and gets rewritten or deleted.

Framework 2: The Three Pillars

Three content lanes, honestly yours, that you can feed forever: the making, the rooms that pour you, the people who drink you. Every post lives in one lane. If a post fits no pillar, it is probably about your ego, and the feed can smell that.

Framework 3: The Proof Folder

One album, one spreadsheet, or one corner of your hub workspace: every ask, tag, repost, and 'where do I buy this,' dated and sourced. Review it every Monday. It is your pull P&L, and in trade meetings it is your closer.

Your PUSHPULL member hub carries the working version, the Proof Logger: log each name request, tag, comment, repost, or walk-in with the account and the date, and one button turns the whole record into a summary paragraph you can read to a distributor. A worked example of what ninety days looks like: 'Pull proof for May 1 to July 29: 23 logged proof points (11 name requests, 6 tags, 4 where-to-buy comments, 2 walk-ins) across 9 accounts, every entry dated and available on request.' That paragraph, read calmly across a table, is worth more than any deck you will ever build.



PART IV

The 90-Day Plan



Ninety days to the ask. Pull you can prove is leverage.

Days 1 to 30: Find the Voice

1. Write the Voice in Five Words, both lists, and post them where you write.
2. Pick your three pillars and sort your last month of content into them.
Delete the orphans' habit, not the posts.
3. Start the daily aimed post, geo-tagged to your sold markets.
4. Run the compliance pass on every profile: age gates, claims, disclosures.
5. Build your 30-day plan in the hub so the calendar, not your mood, decides.
6. Start the Proof Folder with whatever pull already exists, however small.

Days 31 to 60: Build the Chorus

7. Feature one account a week, free, tagged, expecting nothing.
8. Repost every real customer photo within a day, with a human caption.
9. Collaborate with two bartenders on serves, credit loudly, pay never.
10. Answer every comment and DM for sixty days straight. Every one.
11. Show up in person where your content points: the room is the content.
12. Ask your top five accounts to flag name requests by text.

Days 61 to 90: Capture the Ask

13. Name one signature serve and teach it everywhere: menu cards, posts, tastings.
14. Run one single-state, rules-checked giveaway that drives feet into your accounts.
15. Log every name request in the Proof Folder, dated and sourced.
16. Collect three bartender or buyer quotes you have permission to use.
17. Re-run the Push/Pull Score and compare the pull number with day one.
18. Build the one-slide proof summary for your next trade meeting.



TRUTHFULLY

The Sentence You Are Building

Somewhere out there is a stranger who has never met you, standing at a bar you have never worked, about to say your brand's name out loud. Everything in this book, the voice, the chorus, the folder, exists to make that moment happen sooner and prove it happened at all. When it does, and it will, write down the date. That is the day your marketing stopped being an expense and became a machine.

Truthfully,

Sam

Crush it.



THE BACK POCKET

Scripts, Cards, and Take-Withs

The UGC thank-you DM

'You just made my week. I'm a tiny brand and a photo like yours does more than any ad I could buy. Mind if I repost it with credit? And next time you're at [account], the serve you had has a cousin you should try.'

The account feature caption formula

One true detail about the room, one about the people, one about the drink, zero adjectives from a marketing textbook: '[Bar] has been pouring [serve] since March. Ask for [bartender]; tell her the guy who makes it sent you.'

The name-request note to a bartender

'Small favor that costs nothing: if anyone ever asks for [brand] by name, text me a thumbs up. I keep count, it helps me with distributors, and every fifth one I will come in and personally embarrass you with gratitude.'

Print these two

Pin This Where You Write Your Posts

The daily discipline, one card

TODAY I WILL

Post one thing, in my voice, aimed where I am sold.

Feature or thank one account, expecting nothing.

Answer every comment and DM like a human.

Save one piece of proof: a tag, an ask, a repost.

And when the content well runs dry:

JUST PICK UP THE PHONE.

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The daily card for the pull grind.

The Ask Machine Bingo

Mark them as they happen. The free space still works.

First unsolicited tag	'Where can I buy this?'	Geo-tag brings a walk-in	Influencer wants free everything	Post flops, but a DM converts
Bartender reposts your story	'Is this available in [state]?'	First UGC photo you did not ask for	Someone corrects YOUR serve	Local hashtag actually works
Giveaway legal check outlives the giveaway	A regular claims they 'found' you	FREE: JUST PICK UP THE PHONE	Screenshot folder hits fifty	Your mom shares it (bless her)
Competitor copies your caption	First 'saw it on Instagram' at register	One reel outperforms everything 10x	You explain the algorithm to a buyer	Name request logged by an account
Comment section runs itself	First DM from a distributor	Drink made wrong, tastes better	'Do you ship?' (next playbook)	You overhear the ask yourself

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Ask Machine bingo. Your mom sharing it absolutely counts.



APPENDIX

Glossary: How Pull Talks

Pull. Consumer demand you can point at: asks, tags, requests, walk-ins. The upstream force in a downstream industry.

UGC. User-generated content. Real customers posting your product unprompted. Worth more than anything you produce.

Geo-tag. Pinning content to a place. The cheapest aiming device you own.

Name request. A drinker asking for your brand, by name, at an account. The unit of measure for this entire book.

Signature serve. The one drink ordered by name that carries your brand into rooms you have never visited.

Chorus. Everyone repeating your story who is not you: accounts, bartenders, regulars. Unpaid by law and better for it.

Proof Folder. Dated evidence of pull. Your closer in every trade meeting.

Reach vs. aim. Reach is how many saw it. Aim is whether they can buy it this week. Aim wins.



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For beverage industry professionals 21 and older. Education from the field, not legal advice.