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BAR MAKEOVER FROM IMC REVERSES SLIPPING SALES AT WINCHESTER SU

Winchester Students' Union bar has halted a steady decline in sales and customer numbers following the redesign of the bar area using the Bartender modular underbar system from IMC. Winchester is one of many student union bars that has installed IMC equipment. The Winchester Union had found that customer numbers at the bar had been steadily slipping in previous years, due mostly to a focused attack on the student market from competing pubs and bars elsewhere in the city. In response to this, Winchester SU decided to make its bar area more appealing to students at the university by completely refitting and refurbishing its bar areas, including new front and back bar systems, in addition to cosmetic changes to the main venue itself.

Andrew Hodgson, General Manager of Winchester Student Union, explains the dilemma. "The 100 person capacity bar is open from 11am every weekday, until either 11pm, midnight or 1am, depending on the time of week or events that we hold. Throughout the day it is primarily a bar to which students and Student Union officers come to relax, whereas in the evenings it provides an overflow bar to the club area. We needed a system that could adapt to meet these varied needs and reverse the falling numbers and bar sales."

Andrew worked closely with other Student Union Officers and bar design specialists to create an exciting and attractive new bar, with the crucial back-bar space being based on IMC's workstation philosophy. This has been developed to enable bar designers to build dedicated work areas for each member of bar staff, so that they can serve customers quicker and more efficiently, while reducing both the distance they have to walk during each shift and the level of cleaning and maintenance required.

IMC's modular stainless steel Bartender system has been designed to create a professional and contemporary look, while enabling system modules to be easily repositioned or extended should needs change in the future. Standard modules including shelf drainers, drawer units, blender stations, ice chests, bottle bins, basket racks and waste units.

The staff at Winchester Students' Union have been delighted with the new bar. "They are absolutely thrilled with it," says Andrew, "Everything they need for serving and mixing drinks is to hand within one area, allowing them to provide customers with drinks more quickly while still remaining facing them."

In addition, the display of bottled beers and alcopops behind the bar in IMC's Mistral back bar bottle coolers has had a good response from customers too. "They like the fact that they can easily see what's on offer," says Andrew, "And they have responded well to our ability to serve them quicker and more efficiently, while maintaining a friendly service. The overall result has been an increase in customers and in sales. In fact, even in the few months since the new bar has been open it has enabled us to reverse the former year on year decline in sales. "

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