

COMPANY SPOTLIGHT

# Interview with Chris Clausen, Craft Beverage Industry Manager for Trucent



**Q** Tell us a little about you and your role with Trucent.

**A** I have been with Trucent for about 4 years, after 12 years in the Navy. I started at Trucent as an engineering manager, but when an opportunity came up to create and lead a group focused on the brewing industry, I jumped at it. I am currently the Craft Beverage Industry Manager.

**Q** Where is your company headquartered? What is a fun fact about that state?

**A** We are headquartered in Dexter, MI, but have offices all over North America. In 1913, Michigan passed a law that makes it illegal to be drunk on a train. I for one, think drinking and playing board games or cards on a train is great fun.

**Q** What role does Trucent play in the beer industry?

**A** Trucent is a global leader in centrifuge technology. Our team has developed a line of centrifuges specifically designed for the brewing industry. Our world-class centrifuge technicians can service, troubleshoot, train, and operate any centrifuge make or model, and our Centrifuge Parts and Repair (CPR) team can provide OEM and aftermarket parts as well as repair bowls, spindles, or full systems. The Trucent team has in-depth knowledge about every aspect of centrifuge systems.

**Q** What trends are you seeing in the beer industry that may be moving it in a different direction than where it's been?

**A** Efficiencies are and will continue to be more and more critical. Rising costs, ingredient shortages, and the need to have a lower environmental impact are just some of the driving forces. A centrifuge is a great tool to increase efficiencies and yield, and there are also other technologies that, I think, are going to become more widely used. Some examples are steam injection heaters, alternative power generation, and technology to extract the most from raw ingredients.

**Q** How do you see centrifuge technology changing in the next decade? New materials, new sizes, higher efficiency?

**A** Innovative designs for specific applications are going to become more popular. Efficiency and performance benefits are becoming more and more valuable in most industries. Pairing complementary technologies in an integrated system to solve complex problems will also become more prevalent as industries focus on their environmental impact.

**Q** What advantages does centrifuge technology have over other clarification methods in your view?

**A** The other two clarification methods are natural sedimentation, with or without flocculant aids, and filtration. A centrifuge brings more value than natural sedimentation. A centri-

fuge will yield more beer per batch, reduce the time needed in the fermenter (meaning more fermenters over time), and do a superior job removing solid particulate and controlling the turbidity (or haze) of the brand.

A centrifuge brings more value than any filter system because a centrifuge is simpler to operate (no fear of blinding off a filter partially through a run), does not remove desirable characteristics from the beer, does not require consumables (like cartridges or diatomaceous earth), will have better yield and tank turnover, and provides more consistent separation. Filters can remove aromatics and flavor contributors, such as hop oil, whereas with a centrifuge the beer that goes in is the beer that comes out, just without solids. As filters build up with solid material, the pore size gets smaller, meaning the separation changes between the start and end of the run.

**Q** How does brewing centrifuge technology differ from that used in other industries?

**A** This depends on the manufacturer. Many companies have just adapted designs from other industries to use in brewing. These centrifuges only really differ subtly, like needing de-aerated water and CO<sub>2</sub> to prevent dissolved oxygen contamination. When I was in the Navy, we had centrifuges from a leading manufacturer running on engine lube oil. That same design is what they sell to brewers, with the addition of a CO<sub>2</sub> port to fill the bowl housing with gas.

With the Trucent DB series centrifuges, which are designed for beer, there are many differences. The seals used are designed to protect the beer more effectively from contamination. The bowl is designed for soft and low shear flow dynamics, including feed system, disk design, bowl geometry, and the integrated discharge pump. Our centrifuges are manufactured and balanced to a very high tolerance. This means the DB series centrifuges are able to spin at higher RPMs, resulting in better efficiencies and a more versatile turbidity range.

**Q** What are Trucent's top priorities for 2021?

**A** Our team is planning a detailed scientific and sensory study on the effects a centrifuge has on beer flavor, shelf life, and other key factors. We are going to be partnering with several breweries, using different centrifuge manufacture designs and clarification techniques to produce two to three recipes several times over the study timeline. This way we can compare the results from each technology and technique and the effects on shelf life. We are then going to have an independent lab analyze the beers and a group of about five Master Level BJCP Beer Judges complete a blind sensory comparison.

**Q** *What is your favorite aspect of Master Brewers or World Brewing Congress?*

**A** As a relatively new MBAA member, I am very happy with the relationships and advice I've received from other members. The team at Trucent is comprised of some of the most experienced and talented centrifuge operators and engineers. We are excited to share our deep understanding of centrifugation with the brewing industry. We plan to work with brew-

ing industry groups to train brewery teams on everything from separation theory to practical operation techniques to get the most out of a centrifuge system.

**Q** *What is the best way for someone to connect with your team?*

**A** Anyone can contact me directly [cclausen@trucent.com](mailto:cclausen@trucent.com) or 734.253.2904 or through our website <https://www.trucent.com/craft-beer-clarification/>.