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Oakland County Distributor Named Nation's Top Craft Beer Distributor

Powers Distributing committed to marketing craft beer, expanding choice

ORION TOWNSHIP -- Powers Distributing Co. a third-generation family owned beer distributor, was honored today as the nation's top distributor of craft beers, receiving the **2011 Craft Beer Distributor of the Year Award** given by the Brewers Association and the National Beer Wholesalers Association. Now in its fifth year, the national award recognizes a beer distributor that does the most to market and distribute craft beer, including expanding and growing new markets to increase consumer choice.

"Powers Distributing is truly honored to win this award for doing what we have done for three generations – and that's making sure we provide the widest choice of beers to adult consumers, support locally made craft beers, partner with local businesses and provide quality service to everyone," **Powers Co-President Rob Powers** said. "Powers remains committed to continuing our promise to provide quality products, wide choice to consumers, creating local jobs and giving back to our community today and into the future. Powers is proud to showcase terrific local craft beers and deliver choice to consumers, especially Michigan beers that have made us the Great Beer State."

Powers Distributing has been innovative in its efforts to promote and educate about craft beer brands. Through its Web site, Powers Distributing has constructed a "Beer Finder" which teaches consumers about craft beers and the many types, flavors and styles available. Powers also has created "mix-6 packs" consisting of different craft beer varieties and has made them available to retailers who educate consumers through sampling.

One Michigan brewery, **North Peak Brewing Co. in Traverse City**, has partnered with Powers for years. **North Peak Managing Partner Jon Carlson** said: "Our brewery is very happy to work with Powers Distributing and their outstanding staff, all of whom work very hard to get our products as well as craft beers from other breweries into local markets. Michigan's craft beer sector is doing well today thanks in large part to the efforts of distributors like Powers, who are terrific partners when it comes to expanding choices for consumers. This partnership is a win-win for both our businesses."

While more than 1,500 craft breweries produce nearly 13,000 labels of beer nationwide, Michigan is home to more than 80 craft breweries and brew pubs, ranking it fifth in the nation. Sales of Michigan craft beer in Michigan supermarkets almost doubled from \$11.2 million in 2007 to \$22 million in 2010, according to *Symphony IRI Group*. Much of that growth has been the result of especially close

partnerships and cooperation between Michigan craft brewers and local distributors. Michigan beer distributors have won the award two years in a row, with Imperial Beverage of Kalamazoo winning in 2010. Powers has also been a finalist for the award for the past three years, winning it this year.

In 2010, Michigan's craft beer industry had its largest growth spike ever, jumping 21 percent in sales over 2009 – outpacing the national average of 5 percent.

Meanwhile, family owned Michigan distributors like Powers Distributing continue to remain stable, protecting good-paying local jobs for more than 5,100 men and women across the state.

Among Michigan craft beers Powers distributes are products by Michigan Brewing Co., Dragonmeade, Kuhnenn Brewing Co. and North Peak Brewing Co. Powers was one of only 16 distributors selected from thousands nationwide for the 2009 honor.

Distributors source labels from brewers of all kinds – large and small, domestic and international – unlocking the market for new beer brands, small breweries and innovative beverages. Beer distributors like Powers help craft brewers grow and compete by helping them reach a wide network of retailers. The U.S. beer distribution system provides a level playing field that allows all brewers equal access to consumers.

The award is a joint project of the National Beer Wholesalers Association and the Brewers Association.

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