

CASE STUDY: THE RUSTY BUMBLEBEE

The Rusty Bumblebee in Blaine, Minnesota, has 60 offerings on tap, an often-changing selection featuring beer of all types, as well as seltzers, ciders, wine, even milkshakes, smoothies, soft drinks, and kombucha.



SERVICES PROVIDED

- Competitive Analysis
- Name Discovery
- Branding
- Website Design & Development
- Window Graphics
- Sign Design

OPPORTUNITY

The Rusty Bumblebee was founded by four families that share a common love of beer and camaraderie. They had some ideas for the tap house name, but were looking for a design agency to partner with. A Google search turned up SOULO. They liked some of the work we'd done with other beer brands and the Malcolm Yards food hall—as well as SOULO's 'vibe'.

SOLUTION: SOULO

SOULO started with a brand discovery process that included a competitive market analysis of other tap houses and area breweries that served on-premises drinks. That analysis showed that the names they were considering weren't unique enough, and undersold the full breadth of beverages the founders planned to offer.

The SOULO team worked through a naming process, eventually whittling the options down to 20, then five, which were then presented to the client.

In the end, the partner members chose The Rusty Bumblebee for several reasons. For one, it had a local tie: the Rusty Bumblebee is Minnesota's official state bee. The name also offered lots of fun options for branding, taglines, and other content. Finally, it wasn't limited geographically: something like Twin Cities Tap House would play well in the metro, but would have less salience in, say, North Dakota (where, in fact, a second Rusty Bumblebee was planned).



Name Discovery



Working Logo Design



Final Logo and Variation

Working on a deadline

The challenge then became scheduling. The Rusty Bumblebee's hope was to open quickly, not even three months after engaging SOULO. We worked with them to develop a production strategy, breaking out the timing of every aspect of the project, with each party agreeing to be accountable for responsiveness. Collaboration was a must for this project to succeed.



Website

RESULTS

It worked. SOULO was able to leverage our in-house creative and production teams to streamline the branding materials we created. The tap house's vivid name helped focus design choices, and we created a logo and other iconography that was cheerful and fun.

Those branding and design choices then filtered out to the large-format vinyl graphics and signs at the tap house, as well as the exterior sign on their building.

We also designed a website that clearly showed how the self-pour system works and was connected to an app so the partners could change the listed drink options at any given time.

Results have exceeded expectations. The original location in Blaine is buzzing with activity, and the partnership is set to open a second facility in North Dakota, with a third location in the works for the south metro. The project had to fly quickly, but with everyone working together—no queens or drones here—the results are sweet as honey.



Branding Extended to Glassware, Taps, etc.