

CASE STUDY



# Capturing the Opportunity in "Fast Growth" Pains

## Dust Bowl Brewery

Dust Bowl Brewing Co.  
Turlock, CA

**Owners:** Brett and Karen Tate, and Brett and Camy Honore

**Brewmaster:** Don Oliver

**Company Established:** 2009

**Building Area:** 30,000 sqft

**Production Capacity:**  
100,000 barrels per year

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dust Bowl Brewing Co., a fast growing craft beer company out of Turlock, California, outgrew their first taproom and production facility. In the face of increasing demand, they engaged DAHLIN to design a new brewery facility that has resulted in significantly increased production capacity, expanding their distribution, and sharing their story and passion for craft beers. It also significantly increased their capacity for patrons to the Brewery Taproom with expanded indoor and outdoor spaces.

**"Last year we brewed approximately 6,000 barrels. With the new brewery, our first year projection is 20,000 barrels, if sales allow, and looking towards longer term growth, we have the capacity for up to 100,000 barrels."**

Don Oliver, Brewmaster, Dust Bowl Brewing Co.

### CHALLENGES

Since their establishment in 2009, Dust Bowl Brewing Co. has experienced tremendous growth, and after expanding their brewery operations three times from 2013 to 2015, they maxed out the production capacity of their first facility, which opened in 2011. They urgently needed to expand their brewery operations to keep pace with demand and protect and expand their distribution. Unable to find a suitable existing facility, they purchased a five-acre parcel of land off of Highway 99 in Turlock, California in 2013.

Dust Bowl now had the land for expansion; however, it was entitled for commercial retail, which obligated them to integrate a retail component to their overarching vision of creating a space for their customers to experience the Dust Bowl story and meet their current and future brewery expansion needs. Furthermore, they needed the expansion project to move quickly; otherwise, they risked jeopardizing their market position by losing distribution to a competitor.



our proposal. It demonstrated our understanding of their vision, brand story, and our creative approach to design and programming. It also gave them a head start in the design process upon selection of our team, with ideas already on the drawing board.

### Multitasking through the production process for time savings and efficiency.

DAHLIN conducted the entitlement work in parallel with the production of construction documents. The aggressive project schedule kept on track with action-oriented timelines.

Through the entitlement process, we also helped them meet the retail obligation by integrating a merchandizing component into the design of their taproom.

### Capturing the essence of the Dust Bowl brand and the mechanics of craft brewing.

Adventure and new frontiers, brought by the hard times of life in the Dust Bowl corridor for previous generations of the Tate family, bred a thirst for success and entrepreneurial spirit. Capturing the essence of that spirit and story was key to the architectural design character of the brewery.



### HOW DAHLIN HELPED

DAHLIN's design-build team approach assembled an aggressive timeline to meet Dust Bowl's challenge to keep pace with current demand and get ahead of future demand, achieved by:

### Delivering ideas early.

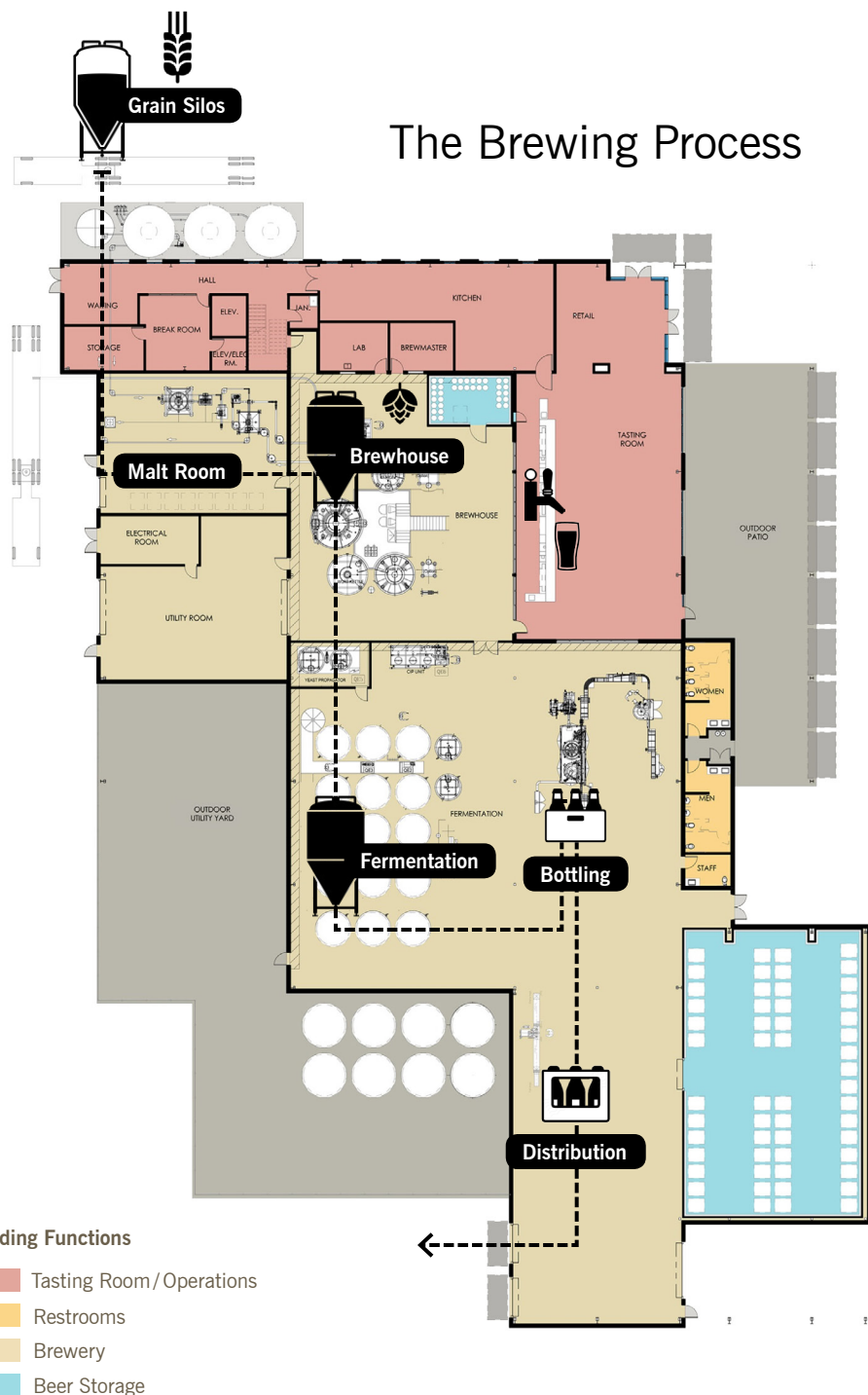
We provided Dust Bowl a tangible asset in advance of selecting our team, by delivering conceptual designs within





Set within the agrarian-rich context of California's Central Valley, a modern interpretation of rustic and raw materials were applied to warehouse-like industrial and farmhouse forms. Interior and exterior spaces were staged for show-and-tell in mind. Brewery tours will educate visitors on the craft brewing process, starting with the outdoor onsite hops gardens and barley and wheat fields created for growing some of the beers' raw ingredients. The design of a floor-to-ceiling glass wall into the taproom also allows customers to view the brewing process while they are enjoying beers in the Brewery Taproom.

Through our intimate knowledge of the craft brewing process from raw ingredients to finished product ready for distribution, we were able to coordinate and collaborate with the specialty trades involved in a brewery. We incorporated into the design the



structural integrity required to support the heavy brewing and manufacturing equipment that Dust Bowl uses, and how materials need to move in, through, and out of the facility while being in compliance with the health and sanitation codes specific to a food manufacturing process, such as brewing beer. Our knowledge prevented design mistakes that would be easy to make without this insight, and would have delayed the timeline and increased the costs to Dust Bowl.

“The differences between the new and old breweries are like night and day. The move to the purpose-built facility that DAHLIN designed with proper flooring makes for a better work environment.”

**Don Oliver**, Brewmaster,  
Dust Bowl Brewing Co.

#### RESULTS AND FUTURE PLANS

DAHLIN met Dust Bowl Brewing Co.'s need to move quickly from groundbreaking in April 2015 to its official public opening in July 2016, welcoming over 900 customers on opening day.

With a 30,000-square-foot facility, they have expanded their production capacity from 4,800 barrels per year to 15,000 to 20,000 barrels projected in the first year. Furthermore, they are well positioned with a production capacity of up to 100,000 barrels a year for future growth in the craft beer market, which has been projected to increase by up to five times. Their distribution is expanding into additional markets, reaching as far as the East Coast. Dust Bowl intends to add brewery tours in the near future and in the longer term, to develop the facility as a full-service venue for business, community, and social occasions.

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Entrepreneurial spirit expands to a purpose-built facility for Dust Bowl Brewing Co.

