

7 Critical Questions to Ask Before Hiring a Stocktaking Company in Limerick

Hiring a stocktaking company is a decision built on trust. You are handing over the keys to your cellar, your storeroom, and your financial data. This isn't like hiring any other supplier; this is a partner who will have a direct impact on your profitability and security.

Unfortunately, not all stocktakers are created equal. The difference between a "clipboard counter" and a true hospitality partner is vast. The former simply counts your stock; the latter helps you *grow your business*.

To protect your Limerick pub, restaurant, or hotel, and to ensure you get a real return on your investment, you must ask these seven critical questions *before* you sign any contract.

1. Do You Specialize Only in the Hospitality Industry?

This is the most important, deal-breaker question. Stocktaking a warehouse of widgets is not the same as stocktaking a busy Limerick pub. The hospitality industry has unique, complex challenges: ullage, spillage, keg yields, food-to-beverage ratios, menu engineering, and specific till systems.

A generic stocktaker won't understand *why* your draught beer yield is down 2% or how to cost a cocktail menu. You will spend all your time explaining your business to them, instead of them explaining your data to you.

You need a specialist who speaks your language and understands that a 1% variance on a fast-moving spirit is a five-alarm fire, not a rounding error.

2. What Technology Do You Use? (And What Does Your Report Look Like?)

Ask this to filter out the dinosaurs. If the answer is "a clipboard, a calculator, and an Excel spreadsheet," you should be cautious. Modern stocktaking relies on technology for speed and, most importantly, for *data analysis*.

Professionals use integrated handheld scanners, calibrated digital scales for kegs, and powerful software that links directly to your supplier invoices and EPOS/till data.

This leads to the follow-up: "Can I see a sample report?"

If they send you a 50-page spreadsheet of line items, that's not a report; it's a data dump. A professional report will have a clear, one-page "Executive Summary" that shows your key performance indicators (KPIs) at a glance: Gross Profit percentage, total variance, top-performing items, and worst-performing items. The detail should be there to back it up, but the insights must be clear.

3. What Happens After You Hand Me the Report?

This question separates the "counters" from the "consultants." A cheap stocktaker will email you the report and vanish, leaving you to figure out what to do with the numbers.

A true partner, like Hospitality Partners, knows the report is the *start* of the conversation, not the end. You should look for a service that includes a post-stocktake consultation. This is when the real value is created. They should sit down with you (in person or on a call) and say, "Here is what we found. Your food cost is high. We think the problem is in your portion control here. Your draught beer yield is low on this line, let's talk about your glass-call procedure."

You are paying for insights, not just numbers.

4. How Do You Investigate Discrepancies?

Let's say the stocktake finds you are "missing" 500 euros worth of spirits. What happens next?

A lazy stocktaker will simply mark it on the report as "deficit" and move on.

A professional will immediately begin an investigation *while on-site*. They will re-check their own count. They will ask to see delivery dockets to ensure invoices were entered correctly. They will check the till reports to see if a "Jameson" was accidentally rung in as a "Jack Daniels." They will try to *find the problem* for you, not just hand it to you.

5. Will I Get a Dedicated Stocktaker?

This is a key question for building a long-term, valuable relationship. If the company sends a different random person every month, you will waste the first hour of every stocktake showing them where things are.

A dedicated stocktaker or account manager learns your business. They learn your cellar layout, they get to know your staff's procedures, and they can spot trends over time. They'll be the one to notice that a small, consistent loss is starting to grow, or that a new staff member's pouring measures are off. Consistency is key.

6. Are You Fully Insured?

This is a non-negotiable. You are giving someone access to high-value areas of your business. They must have, at a minimum, robust Public Liability and Professional Indemnity insurance.

Public Liability covers them if they accidentally break something (like a very expensive bottle of whiskey). Professional Indemnity covers *you* if they make a critical error in their data or advice that ends up costing you money. Don't just take their word for it; ask to see the certificate of insurance.

7. How Do You Handle Food Stocktaking?

Many "bar specialist" stocktakers avoid food. It's complex, with recipes, prep items, and waste. But for most Limerick restaurants and gastropubs, food is 50% or more of the business, and it's where margins are tightest.

Even if you primarily run a "wet-led" pub, your food menu (even if it's just toasties and soup) needs to be profitable. Ask if they can perform a full menu costing analysis. Can they take your recipes, break them down by ingredient cost, and tell you the *exact* Gross Profit on every dish you sell? This is a high-value service that a top-tier company should offer.

Conclusion: Choose a Partner, Not Just a Ticker

The answers to these questions will reveal the company's entire philosophy.

You're not looking for the cheapest person to count your bottles. You're looking for a partner who can help you plug profit leaks, optimize your pricing, and secure your business. When you hire a company like Hospitality Partners, you're getting the confident, expert answers to all these questions *before you even have to ask*.

When you're ready to work with a **stocktaking company in Limerick** that acts as a true partner, we're here to show you the difference.