

## **Grolsch makes a bold move into the Belgian market**

In the UK, they talk about 'Carrying coals to Newcastle' – that is, trying to bring something to an area that already has it in abundance. Another variation of this might be 'Introducing a beer to Belgium'. However, this is exactly what Grolsch is trying to do. Some people might call this an act of foolishness. We call it a forward-looking venture, which speaks volumes of the confidence that we have in our beer and our people.

The distinctive and world-famous Swingtop bottle will be a major asset for us in Belgium. Outlets in the country increasingly want to distinguish themselves by offering a premium beer that is clearly different from familiar Belgium brands. The Swingtop fits the bill exactly.

Even if this venture was fuelled only by the excitement of Mike Jansen, general manager Grolsch Belgium, it would be sure to succeed. "I want to prove that Grolsch can gain a share of the Belgian market," he enthuses. "That's what I'm focussing on at the moment. We have recently persuaded a few Belgian pubs that serve domestic beer to switch completely to Grolsch. It's proof that even the most traditional bars are willing to change. We have built a foundation, a platform, to create a strong presence in Belgium."

To give our Belgian venture further impetus, Grolsch recently participated in a large exhibition in Gent. All major beer players were present. We had an attention-grabbing stand, with a unique Swingtop bar.

Belgium is a small country. But it's a country where beer matters, and it prides itself on being the foremost beer-producing country in the world – in quality, if not in quantity (though the country does have more than 110 breweries and 600 brands of beer). Understandably, just entering this market, never mind succeeding in it, requires a prestigious, world-class beer, produced and marketed by a company with proven experience and passion.