

Brooklyn has passed 'peak' PBR and is now starting to adopt historic New England lager Narragansett as hipster beverage of choice

- Pabst Blue Ribbon was Brooklyn hipsters' favored beer from 2009-2013
- But now, it has passed its sales peak in the borough, new figures show
- Instead, it has been trumped by historic New England lager Narragansett
- The beer produced 78,034 barrels last year, making \$12million in revenue
- This is massive increase on its \$100,000 revenue just nine years earlier
- Narragansett is cheap and draws on millennials' passion for nostalgia

By SOPHIE JANE EVANS FOR DAILYMAIL.COM

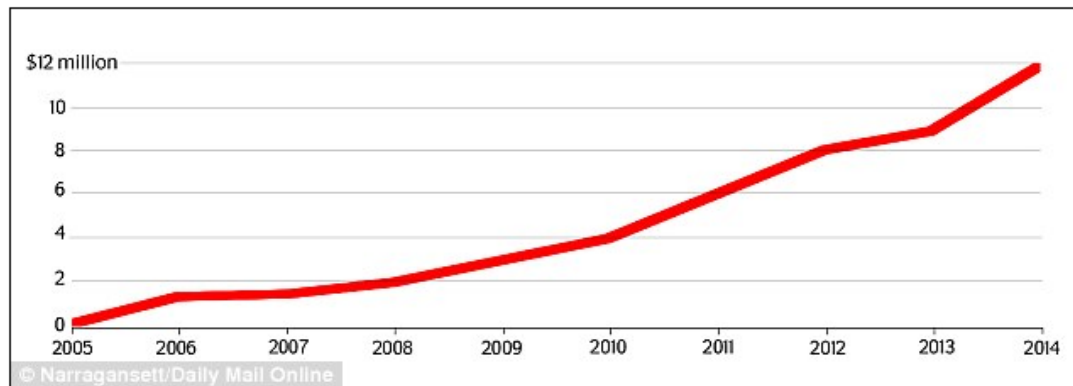
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With its cheap price and minimal advertising, it became Brooklyn hipsters' beverage of choice.

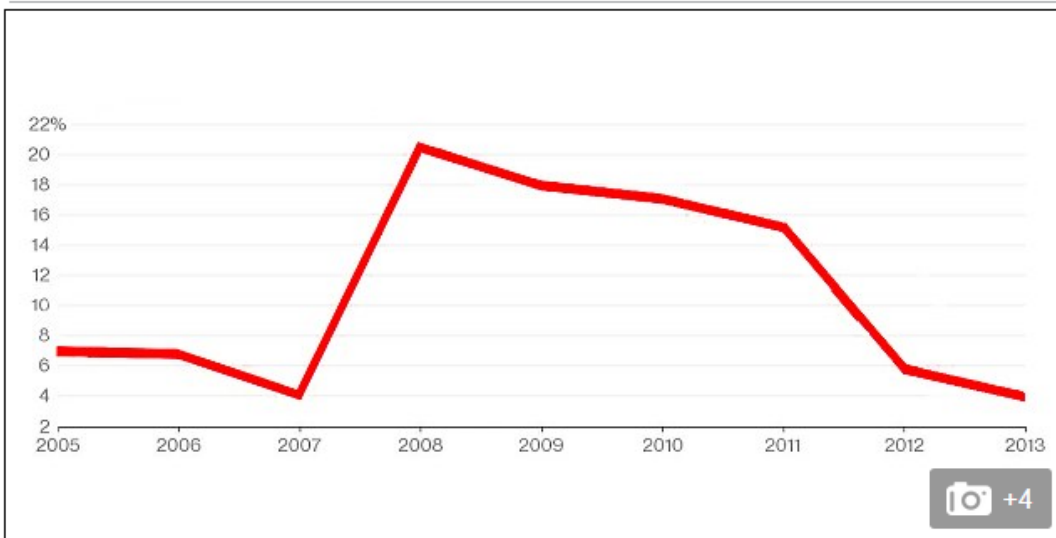
But now, Pabst Blue Ribbon has passed its sales peak in the New York borough, new figures show.

Instead, it has been trumped by a 125-year-old New England lager that is making a comeback.

Narragansett, which was first brewed in 1890 and later became the sponsor of the Boston Red Sox, has recently seen its revenue soar, attracting millennials who like nostalgia and small craft breweries.



Rise in popularity: Selling for around \$4 to \$6 (for a 16-ounce can), Narragansett produced a staggering 78,034 barrels last year and made \$12million in revenue (above) - a far cry from its performance in 2005



Decline: In contrast, Pabst Blue Ribbon has seen its year-on-year growth take a turn for the worse (above)

Selling for around \$4 to \$6 (for a 16-ounce can), the historic beer produced a staggering 78,034 barrels last year and made \$12million in revenue - a far cry from its performance nine years earlier.

Back then, the Narragansett Beer Company, based in Providence, Rhode Island, was achieving a mere \$100,000 in revenue - with few drinkers naming it as their favored alcoholic beverage.

But while Narragansett is on the rise as hipsters' drink of choice, PBR - which was being consumed at bars and barbecues everywhere between 2009 and 2013 - appears to be fading in popularity.

'People want a beer that they can attach a face and a name to, and PBR doesn't really have either right now,' Joshua Bernstein, the author of 'The Complete Beer Course', told **CNN Money**.

Mr Bernstein said that despite its low price (one of the features that made it appealing to hipsters), the brew is facing tough competition from craft and local beer, which are available in the majority of bars.

'Even dive bars now have really great craft beer on tap... I don't foresee PBR overtaking that,' he said.



Switch: Pabst Blue Ribbon (left) used to be Brooklyn hipsters' beverage of choice. But now, Narragansett (right) is seeing its revenue soar, attracting millennials who like nostalgia and small craft breweries

Mark Hellendrung, a former president of Nantucket Nectars who purchased the Narragansett beer company in 2005, has played on the increasing interest in craft beer to take his lager to the top.

'In the early days we chased some of that college business. It's just not the right way to build a brand,' he told **Bloomberg.com**. 'In a lot of ways they're white elephants. They don't care what's on the can.'

Hellendrung had the beer altered by brewmaster Bill Anderson to give it a slightly maltier flavor - a move that also made the beverage's color darker - and drew on young people's love of nostalgia.

'Everything we try to do is bringing Narragansett back to life through a historical lens, in a contemporary context,' said Hellendrung, who is from Rhode Island and CEO of the brewery.

For the past two years, Narragansett has unveiled a special edition can to commemorate its appearance in the film *Jaws*, when shark hunter Quint downed the beer and then crushed the can.



Nostalgic feel: After purchasing Narragansett in 2005, Hellendrung gave the beer a slightly maltier flavor and drew on young people's love of nostalgia. Above, the firm teamed up with Autocrat Coffee for a milk stout.

'Heritage brands of beer are gaining a lot of interest,' said Julia Herz, of the Brewers Association.

Thanks to Narragansett's adaptation, it was ranked number 37 on the **Brewers Association's** list of top 50 U.S. breweries last year. The year before, the American-style lager came in at 49th.

Meanwhile, the sales of PBR - which was immensely popular nationwide during the Great Recession - have dropped by 2.6 per cent this year compared to a year ago, a firm spokesman told **CNN Money**.

Long Island resident Lauren Rusak, who recently visited a popular Brooklyn bar with her friend, told the news site she now opts to drink Lagunitas IPA over PBR, which is 'not as trendy anymore'.

But while PBR's growth is in decline, it still managed to sell a whopping 374million liters across America in 2014, according to Euromonitor. In comparison, Narragansett sold just nine million.

PBR was first brewed in Milwaukee in 1844.