7 Critical Questions to Ask Before Hiring Any Stocktake Company in Galway

Hiring a stocktaking company is a high-trust decision. You are giving this person the keys to your cellar, access to your sales data, and a clear view into the financial heart of your business.

But in Galway's vibrant hospitality scene, not all "stocktakers" are created equal.

There's a vast difference between a "clipboard counter" who just emails you a spreadsheet and a true hospitality partner who helps you grow your profit. To protect your business and ensure you get a real return on your investment, you must ask these seven critical questions *before* you sign a contract.

1. Do You Specialize Only in the Hospitality Industry?

This is the most important question. You wouldn't hire a boat mechanic to fix a Ferrari. Stocktaking a warehouse of widgets is *not* the same as stocktaking a busy Galway pub. Our industry has unique challenges: draught beer yields, ullage, wine-by-the-glass spoilage, recipe-costing for food, and complex EPOS integrations.

If their answer is, "We do retail, pharmacies, and hospitality," be wary. You'll spend all your time *explaining* your business to them instead of them *improving* it. You need a specialist who speaks your language.

2. What Technology Do You Use?

If the answer is "a pen and my custom-built Excel sheet," that's a red flag. Modern stocktaking is a tech-driven service. Professionals use integrated systems:

- **Barcode Scanners:** For speed and 100% accuracy on packaged goods.

- **Calibrated Digital Scales:** For weighing kegs and high-value spirit bottles. This is the only way to get a non-guesswork-based reading.

- **Specialist Software:** That integrates with your supplier invoices and your EPOS/till system (e.g., TouchBistro, Clover, Square).

Technology eliminates human error and provides the deep analysis a spreadsheet can't.

3. Can I See a Sample Report? (And What Happens After I Get It?)

This is a two-part question that reveals everything. Ask for a sample report. Is it a 50-page data-dump you can't read? Or is it a clear, concise Executive Summary that shows your KPIs (Gross Profit, Variance, Stock Holding) on one page?

Then, ask what happens *after* the report is sent. A cheap "counter" will email it and vanish. A professional partner will schedule a *consultation* with you. They will sit down (in person or on a call) and walk you through the data, explaining *what* it means and *why* it's happening. The report is the *start* of the service, not the end.

4. How Do You Investigate Discrepancies?

When (not if) a discrepancy is found, what's their process? A lazy auditor will just mark "€500 deficit - House Vodka" and move on, leaving you to do the detective work.

A professional will immediately start investigating *on-site*. They will re-check their own count. They will ask to see delivery dockets to check for an invoice error. They will check the till data to see if "house vodka" is being rung in as "premium vodka" by mistake. They will try to *solve* the problem, not just *report* it.

5. Will I Have a Dedicated Stocktaker?

This is a key question for quality and efficiency. If the company sends a different random person every month, you will waste the first hour of every stocktake showing them where your storeroom is. A dedicated stocktaker or account manager *learns* your business. They learn your layout, your staff, your delivery schedule, and your specific problem areas. They can spot new trends ("Your wine GP has been stable for 6 months but just dropped 3%—what's changed?").

6. Are You Fully Insured?

This is a non-negotiable. You are giving someone access to high-value areas. They must have, at a minimum, Professional Indemnity insurance (to cover them if their bad advice costs you money) and Public Liability insurance (to cover them if they drop a €1,000 bottle of whiskey). Ask to see the certificate.

7. How Do You Handle Food Stocktaking?

Many "bar specialist" stocktakers won't touch food. It's complicated. It involves recipes, prep items (like a batch of soup), and waste. But for any of Galway's famous gastropubs or restaurants, food is where the GP is tightest. Can they perform a full menu-costing analysis? Can they break down your recipes to find the *exact* cost of your best-selling seafood chowder? If you serve food, you need a company that can audit your *entire* operation.

Conclusion: The answers to these questions will tell you if you're hiring a number-cruncher or a profit-partner. As the leading **stocktake company in Galway**, we have built our business on having expert, confident answers to all seven.