

# Jamesport Vineyard

## Sales and Marketing Campaign

### Purpose:

In order to increase sales, we need to follow a regimented, step-by-step plan where everybody from the general manager to the part-time pourers can make a difference. This effort needs to be a concerted, measured progress where we can use small techniques and procedures and where we can use larger more aggressive approaches to achieve higher sales.

## Vineyard Events

In order to drive sales other than the weekend, we should have a night like Thursday where we will have myriad events. We could be known as the vineyard on the north for where people will have something to do on a Thursday night for a few hours. If we can come up with a name such as Thursday Night Live, etc. to help create an image. In order to promote this, we need to have a temporary sign that we can put on near the road which will be illuminated (please see Structure below). We also need to make sure that these events are listed each week in newspapers, on our website/myspace sites as well (see Website/myspace below).

Here are some ideas for these Thursday events.

Astrology Night

Music

[Wine Maker's Walk](#)

A guided tour of the winery and production facility and wine tasting at Castello di Borghese Vineyard & Winery. \$15 per person. Please call to make reservations (631) 734-5111 - or purchase tickets online here with your credit card securely

Art Shows

Cooking Lessons, Italian, Mexican, French, etc.

Chocolate and Wine Pairings

Cheese Parings and Wine, Italian Cheese, French Cheese, etc.

Olive Oil Tasting

Lover's Night

Open Mic Night

Opera Night

Poetry Night

Halloween where we have the group from [Long Island Oddities](#) give a speech.

Holiday Decorating: Haunted Gingerbreads, Jack-o-latern, X-mas Pies, etc.

Anniversary party where we will sell tickets. (see Roanoke vineyard for their anniversary party)

Holiday decorations. Each holiday we should decorate for the holidays. Then we can post it as an event like decorated for the holiday's event. Or like an old-fashioned decorated holiday theme, etc.

Blessing of the animal's events with a priest to honor pets where we pair up with local shelters, etc.

"Christmas With The Vineyards"—people will go to several vineyards and they will receive one Christmas ornament free which will use after they purchase a wreath from a farm stand.

Christmas Party with Santa lighting of our Christmas tree, carolers, horse-drawn carriage rides, pictures with Santa.

Christmas Carol reading  
 Candle Light Tour that ends at our vineyard  
 Thanksgiving we will collect non-perishable all month long for local charities.  
 New Year's Eve Party  
 Black Tie Affair Party  
 Farm Aid  
 Comedy Night with local performers  
 Car shows where local car owners bring their cars to our parking lot.  
 We can have a "Learn Night" series where people will learn painting, drawing, fashion, flower arrangement, etc..  
 Valentine's Day Party  
[Wine Events Calendar](#) we can glean what other wineries are doing  
[Localwineevents.com](#) we can glean what other wineries are doing  
[Liwines.com](#) has a listing for events we need to utilize.  
 Charity events that we advertise in local newspapers and sell tickets to silent or Chinese auctions. For instance each month brings a new charity like breast cancer we can have our "pink" blush wine sold.  
 Singles Night  
 Boater's Night  
 "Wine & Winds"—where we have a boat cruise and food.  
 Grape Stomp where people get to feel the grapes beneath their feet  
 St. Patty's Day Wine Event, can we turn our wines green?  
 History of Long Island with emphasis on the North Fork for Presidents Day.  
 Pick our next wine where customers help pick our next wine  
 History of Wine  
 Blind tasting contest  
 Wine And The Bible  
 Wine and Fitness where we have a nutritionist or a hospital speak about the benefits of wine.  
 We have a local talent troupe do live performances.  
 Pow-Wow with local Indians.  
 Christian music  
 Wood making  
 Ice sculpting  
 Wine and Cheese Night  
 Spring Planting with a local farmer  
 Masquerade ball  
 Learn about Wine Series taught by a local professional  
 Dancers performers  
 Learn how to make wine from picking it in the field, to destemmer/presser, fermentation, to oak aging, testing the brix, etc, to bottling.  
 "Lecture Series" where different people lecture about various topics.  
 Free health screenings  
 "Happy Hour Evenings"  
 Murder Mystery  
 Play Readings

Book Readings

Film Series

Slide Shows

Puppet Shows

Barbershop Quartette

Ground Hog Day lecture along with predictions for the spring

**We need to have a Wine Night where all the other vineyards come and prizes are handed out by weekly. This can be done on a bi-weekly basis so in each year every vineyard can be feted.**

- **We must check out local newspapers to see about other events we can have here\***
- **We must find a B2B and find organizations and have them have a party here\***

## Event Listings

We need to list each and every event we have whether it's a large event where we sell tickets in advance or whether it's just our normal in-season music on the weekends.

1. [Wine Events Calendar](http://www.wineevents-calendar.com/)  
<http://www.wineevents-calendar.com/>

This is a website devoted to wine events and we can post our events on here for free. We would use the address [events@wineevents-calendar.com](mailto:events@wineevents-calendar.com)

2. [Local Wine Events](http://www.localwineevents.com/)  
<http://www.localwineevents.com/>

This is a website where we can post our events for free. We need to simply fill out their form.

3. [LI Wines](http://liwines.com/index.ihtml)  
<http://liwines.com/index.ihtml>

This is a website where we can list our events for free.

All newspapers like Newsday, Dan's, Times Beacon, On Long Island [www.island-metro.com](http://www.island-metro.com) etc.

## Event Planners

We need to make a push by adverting for company's holiday parties here. How and where do we advertise for this? Or do we make calls to larger companies for this? We can also contact event planners like the one's below and make a push to have them use our vineyard for parties. We should be including them in our mail, email/bulletin mailings so they keep us in mind.

Next Jen in Commack

New York Event Planners

1. [http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party\\_Event\\_Coordinators/Long\\_Island.htm](http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party_Event_Coordinators/Long_Island.htm)
2. [http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party\\_Event\\_Coordinators/Manhattan.htm](http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party_Event_Coordinators/Manhattan.htm)
3. [http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party\\_Event\\_Coordinators/New\\_York\\_City.htm](http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party_Event_Coordinators/New_York_City.htm)
4. [http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party\\_Event\\_Coordinators/Queens.htm](http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party_Event_Coordinators/Queens.htm)
5. [http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party\\_Event\\_Coordinators/New\\_York.htm](http://www.partypop.com/Categories/Party_Event_Coordinators/New_York.htm)
6. <http://www.alltimefavorites.com/local/Event-Planning/Corporate-event-corporate-planner/New-York/cities.htm>
7. [http://www.gatheringguide.com/event\\_categories/event\\_planners\\_planning.html](http://www.gatheringguide.com/event_categories/event_planners_planning.html)
8. <http://newyork.citysearch.com/yellowpages/directory/newyork/290/598/page1.html>
9. [http://www.eastendexperience.com/new-york-weddings\\_and\\_events\\_event\\_planners.html](http://www.eastendexperience.com/new-york-weddings_and_events_event_planners.html)

## Long Island Wine Tour Guides

There are several vineyard tour companies out there. We should contact them and see if we can increase them using our vineyard for tours. We also need to email/bulletin them frequently.

<http://www.longislandwinetours.com/>

<http://www.northforkwinetours.com/>

<http://livineyardtours.com/Default.asp>

## Marketing

Marketing of our vineyard is the most important thing we can do where all the other sections of this sales and marketing plan will bleed into. From finishing our brochures to our website to making outside sales to restaurants and bars, to emails and bulletins. We are currently only doing a fraction of the suggestions below. Most of them don't require much money rather just time.

We need to finish making the brochure for our vineyard. Some considerations are: do we list things like our wines and prices or should it be more generic so we don't need to change it as we frequently change our products and services? We need to list our wine club information on our wine club.

Go to bars and restaurants and showcase our wines with media kits and samples. Is there a way to get a list of all places who are allowed to serve alcohol from New York State or other associations.

ProfNet

Have articles about us on our website and put on the walls.

Contact Tours/Events Managers such as Next Jen to get them to use our vineyard for their events. We need a mechanism in place so we are reminded to send them a thank you email/note for having their affair here.

We can join a local chamber of commerce in other districts and go to their meetings.

Are there organizations we can join to help us promote ourselves and so we stay in the community our west?

Find online webzines such as Wine Trail Traveler, etc and get them to do an article about us.

Have our events listed in each newspaper/website for each week.

Our new labels like the Melanie and Pinot Noir don't have our website listed. Our other labels do have our website listed however I think we need to highlight our website and say something like, "to fully enjoy this bottle of wine, visit our website". At the website we should tell him how best to enjoy that bottle of wine.

Can we pair up with local restaurants and offer them 10% coupons for people to come to our winery after their meals?

Do a radio show each week with different vineyards on the net.

Redo the Wine Club (list under sales also)

We need to have a monthly newsletter that we email out and that we post on our website as well.

We are listed on dogfriendly.com so we should try to list ourselves on similar website.

We can use a clipboard where we collect names so people can hold it and move to the side so we can help other customers.

Someone should go around with the clipboard while people are doing tasting and while people are outside to collect email addresses.

Go to larger liquor stores and have a wine tasting there also at restaurants

Have circle line, other planners use our wines.

If we have an event here we should hand out coupons for our retail boutique  
We should hand out coupons at our tasting bar for the retail boutique. I think it would create more of a sense that they're getting something special from us for tasting our wines.

We can contact all the art galleries when they have an opening to have them serve our wines.

We need to call restaurants/bars or email them regarding buying our wines and check to see if they ran out.

Is there a way to hand out our brochures at related events?

<http://www.liwineguide.com/>

## Website & MySpace

In this day and age, nothing is more important to a company than to have a working, complete, up-to-date website and a myspace website where people can depend on the information they are viewing. It should be easy to navigate and provide them with pictures, videos and any other sections that will help tell and convey our story.

Our website's home page shows a picture of our vineyard then you must choose which section you'd like to visit. Our home page should be choked filled of information then it can list other sections as well in the sidebar. The home page basically has information pulled from our other sections but not in depth. Included on the home page should be a listing of the next upcoming event(s) with the word "New" in red letters. Also listed should be a picture with a link to our wine club. A picture with links to our mailing list needs to be listed also. We need a picture with our link that says award and recognitions. It should list our wines in sections like, red, white, etc. It should have pictures of our vineyard that change automatically with a name that describes each picture.

1. Winery (showing exterior of Winery)
2. Wine Library (showing our library)
3. Wine Lab (showing our wine lab with Les working)
4. Tasting Room (showing our tasting room at various angles)
5. Terrace View (showing our tent with the vineyards in the back)
6. Row of Grapes (showing a section of grapes)
7. Vineyard at Sunset (showing our vineyard at Sunset)
8. Our Staff (showing our staff in Jamesport Vineyard T-Shirts)
9. An Aerial View (showing our vineyard from above)
10. Our wines (showing pictures of our wines)

These are the different sections that our website is lacking:

1. Music, we should have background music playing on all pages that don't have a video playing with an option to click it to stop playing
2. Videos of our vineyard including a podcast that people can download
3. Pictures of our vineyard

Our sections:

**1. Home Page-** I like Wolffer's home page. Their home jumps right into their wewebsite while ours goes to a picture. We need our home page to jump right into the website with pictures, wine events, our wines, our wine club info and a link also to join our mailing list.

- 2. About Us:** This should be the second section listed after our home page. There are spelling errors on this page. The picture is not a very

quality. The section about Explore TV needs to be a graphic with a link. Paragraph spaces need to be added. The color of the font is very light and hard to read it should be changed. There are two sections about the family and another section underneath about the vineyard. They should be sectioned off better. The wines listed below should be in their own section they should be removed. Where it lists the time the vineyard is opened should be moved to Times and Directions section. And/or under each section it should list the hours of the tasting room, the address and phone number. In the family article it lists 7000 cases per year while under that it listed 6000 cases per year. In the About Us section we should have our first video about the vineyard and the history. We need a bio of Les Howard. We need a Bio of Ron Jr. and Ron Sn. These bios should have a picture of them holding grapes, in the Lab, holding a glass of wine. It should also list our philosophy about wine making and a section about the terroir.

3. **Our Wines---** this section should include our wine list and a fully functioning process for them to purchase wine. It should speak about the wines and the awards it got. It should include wine makers notes about the wine and how best to enjoy it. It should include a section where to purchase wines from restaurant and retail shops. If a person click on the main tab, lets say about wine lists, then the side bar should show, retail locations, restaurants, awards and accolades, and vice versa. We need to include our wine series, diamond, estate and east end series and explain what they are.
4. **Visiting Jamesport Vineyard-** This section should include tasting (a pdf of our wine list menu and prices?), tours, events, hours and directions, photo gallery.
5. **Our Wine Club**—what should we call our wine club? Wine Makers Circle, Reserve Club, etc. It should include a few sentences about the wine club in general, then it should include specific about the wine club. It should include two forms for people to join the wine club. An online form and a mail/fax printable form. We should have a separate email address for include clubs members and for other people looking to join.

The Online Form—this form should have: It should state first, “Please print this page and fill in all the requested information. We can ship to the following states. (Then we need to list the states we can ship to)

Please mail this form to:  
Jamesport Vineyards  
PO Box 842  
Jamesport, NY 11947

If you prefer you can fax the information to  
631-722-5256

1. Name
2. E-mail address
3. Address:
4. City
5. State (under this section it should say federal law permits shipping to these states only). This section should be a drop-down menu that will only show states that we ship to. Al, az, ca, co, dc, fl, ga, hi, ia, id, il, la, nc, nd, ne, nh, nm, nv, ny, oh, or, ri, sc, tx, va, wa, wi, wv, wy. ( we need a printed list of this also for our manual)
6. Zip code
7. phone
8. referred by: this could a place for us to collect info on how they found our website. It could list things as;
  1. a person who knows about Jamesport
  2. during a visit to Jamesport
  3. buying our wines at a retail/restaurant
  4. a search on the web regarding long island wines

\*If we collect this information we can find out how people are discovering our wines and we can find out what advertising methods work.

Also under this section we need to include the statement, "I certify that I am 21 years of age or older. I give permission to Jamesport Vineyards to charge my credit card for each shipment at the time of shipping.

9. It should have a Clear button for people to clean the entire fields and a Submit button for them to submit the information to us.
10. The information should be emailed to our dedicated wine club email address. We need to come up with an email address similar in name to our wine club name.
11. When they hit submit it should clearly state to them thanking them for joining the wine club and an automatic email should be send to their address as well letting them know about the wine club again and giving thanking them again.

Mail/Fax Printable Form:---this should NOT be a pdf just simply a form that comes up with the following information. **Important**, this form must have a javascript so the form can print. Included on the form is:

1. Name
2. Address
3. City
4. State
5. Zip Code
6. Phone
7. email address
8. Credit Card
9. Exp. Date
10. Name on credit card

It should state clearly once again, "I certify that I am 21 years of age or older. I give permission to Jamesport Vineyards to charge my credit card for each shipment at the time of shipping.

12. Signature:

13. Date of Birth

14. Referred by: Include the information from up above as well as an other section where they can write in.

6. **Contact Us**—this should include three sections, our mailing list, our physical address and phone/fax numbers and directions and a personnel section where each persons name and email address is listed including, the wine maker, the vineyard manager, the tasting room manager, sales and marketing manager, office manager, cellar master, events manager, and webmaster.
7. **Do we have a section for wholesalers?**
8. **Events and News**---We can list our events and news
9. **Our Retail Shop**—we need to upload all pics and prices for our retail shop
10. **Can we have a RRS feed?**
11. **Our Values sections which will include how we cultivate our soil, spat, dog friendly, etc.**

Can we have music in the background playing?

Update with all wines, spelling corrections, have a video, podcast, etc.

We need to keep the website updated each day or week so people can rely on us and it will make them feel comfortable that we know how to advertise.

Should we put a food menu on our website? Would it encourage people to eat and stay here or would competitors see it and copy us?

Have three different people's name up there so it looks like we've bigger

We need a myspace account. We can send out bulletins about our events and put ourselves on a wine events, etc.

Should we do a daily blog on our website and/or on myspace to let people know what we're doing on a daily basis. Or a monthly newsletter.

We should keep all the events for one year, one season listed under past events so people can get a feel of what we are doing. For each event we need to put a red “New” button on it.

We need to list our articles and our accolades on our website.

Our other labels do have our website listed however I think we need to highlight our website and say something like, “to fully enjoy this bottle of wine, visit our website”. At the website we should tell him how best to enjoy that bottle of wine.

One Winery on Wine [Press Magazine](#) got a grant to revamp their website from New York State.

We need to create a search on our page like Duckwalk Vineyard has where you can punch in your area code and it will list liquor stores in your area where you can buy our wines.

Our emails need to be checked on a daily basis.

Our brochure should be in a pdf format so people can download it.

We need our Wine Club and our mailing list to be included on each page also a Buy Wine section.

We should have a press kit up to view also like wolffer.

**See what other vineyards websites look like so we can create those same pages.**

Also, we need page that says our values and include Spats, Gift Basket we donated, as well as that we don’t use pesticides. Include we like dogs and kids here also.

## Wine Club

[Home](#) » Wine Club

### Wine Club

**Experience Our Wine Club.**

#### **Wolffer**

Winemaker Roman Roth invites you to share his philosophy, passion and enthusiasm for winemaking, and to expand your knowledge about one of the oldest and most fascinating art forms in the world. Wine Club members receive shipments of his personal wine selections and a letter that profiles each selection and highlights events at Wölffer Estate.

In addition, you will receive

- Limited edition Estate and Collector's series wines in advance of public release.
- Access to our library wines and special offers.
- 15% discount on all wine purchases.
- Priority notice and discounts for special events.

- Half-price tastings each time you and your guests visit our tasting room.
  - Invitations to private tastings reserved for wine club members only.
  - No membership fee.
- 

## Martha Clara

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Three bottles of pre-selected wine shipped automatically to your door at 10% discount off retail or 12 bottles at 20%(shipping and taxes where applicable not included)
- Wines shipped four times a year
- Winemaker notes and recipes will be included in each shipment
- **You will receive a VIP card, which entitles you to:**
  - 10% discount on 1-5 bottles
  - 15% discount on 6-11 bottles
  - 20% discount on case purchases, including mixed cases
  - Invitations to exclusive tastings, including a reception “for members only”, featuring a sneak preview of new releases
  - Complimentary horse-drawn carriage rides on weekends through the vineyard for you and a guest
  - 10% discount on tickets to winery sponsored special events
  - 10% off site fees for your private parties and weddings at the vineyard
  - Joining the club is a commitment to four shipments (one year), after which you may cancel at any time. Due to each individual state-based legal restriction, we are only able to ship wine to states that have entered into a reciprocal agreement with the state of New York. These states are as follows: CA, NM, MI, IL, MN, WV, NC, MA.

## Macari

### MEMBERSHIP

Includes 4 Shipments of two bottles automatically shipped in December, March, June and September accompanied by winemaker's notes and food pairings by our estate chef.

Be the first to receive pre-released wines and be available for these great discounts:

- 20% discount on tasting room merchandise
- 20% on all wine purchases
- 10% discount on site fee rentals for private events
- 10% off invitation to winery events
- Complimentary tasting

**Join now for \$45 per shipment, plus shipping and handling. One year minimum membership.**

## Other Locations

Nothing will make our business grow more quickly than to have other locations. For instance, Pinar has a retail shop in downtown Port Jefferson. Should we have a second location and what should it be? Duckwalk has a new Northfork tasting room while their vineyard is mostly on the south shore. Should we do something similar the south shore?

Duck walk vineyard has two locations on both forks. Don't we think we could double our business by opening up a tasting room with possibly a small vineyard on the south fork? Or should we have a tasting there on main streets.

Have a retail store in Huntington, etc or in Southampton, East Hampton, and Westhampton

Tanger Outlet center where it's close enough to get people interested in our vineyard and generate huge sales.

## Structure & Furniture

There are several things we can do both small and dramatic to our structure and things in our structure to create more revenue.

Build onto with a room for chairs, tables, and a full kitchen

Register should have word on it and access to email so work can be on slow days up front

Have coat rack to encourage people to stay

We could use a tent with clear sides so people can still see outside and so we can continue to have events, live music at nights and on weekends.

New bar will it be against the wall to create more tasting room space for customers? Will it have sinks behind it?

Can we use a cobblestone as part of our outdoor area.

We can use a sign that has lights on it so we can highlight our events in the evenings.

We can use a fireplace

We can use speakers outside so we can play our music from inside to outside

We need to fix the front door because it won't close fully and it just keeps slamming

## Furniture

We need more chairs and possibly more tables outside

We need tables and chairs inside to encourage people to stay longer.

How about couches

## Food

Having the food has increased sales. We should continue to use food and find more ways to add to the food menu.

We need to have a concerted effort to put a food menu in front of each customer

Should we put a food menu on our website? Would it encourage people to eat and stay here or would competitors see it and copy us?

Create our own food.

Do we have more tables and chairs and we give people a wine list and a food menu as well.

## Climate Control & Atmosphere

We need to help create an atmosphere where people feel compelled to stay around longer, whether it be tables and chairs or couches. If they can feel 'at home' rather than visiting an unfamiliar vineyard.

Can we better control the environment so we can keep it cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. Will people stay if they're too cold or too warm?

## Gleaming

We can visit other vineyard and look at their websites to see what their doing and what their approach is to sales and marketing by how they interact with customers and the general public.

Call California wine place to ask them about how they market themselves and the type of events.

Go to other vineyards and see how they are being marketed and see what services, products they offer.

Go to local websites and California one's to see how their websites are designed.

## Retail Boutique

We can increase sales by suggesting people visit our retail shop and by offering them a discount on retail items when they purchase wines or do a wine tasting.

We need a way to track what we sell so we can replenish what we sell in a better way.

Let's see what other merchandise we are missing that may be good to sell.

We need to list our retail boutique's items online as well.

We need to create a catalogue book of furniture and accessories that we can purchase for people so they can order furniture and wine accessories that we don't carry in the store.

1. Example, pink love seat [www.e-clicquot.com](http://www.e-clicquot.com)
2. Wine racks
- 3.

We need to carry some books on wine like wine for dummies, wines of the worlds, etc.

Wine enthusiast has a wine master pocket wine digital buying guide. [Wineenthusiast.com](http://Wineenthusiast.com)

Wine preserves at [wineenthusiast.com](http://wineenthusiast.com)

## Email and Bulletins Mailings

We need to keep our customers and wholesalers in the know by emailing and bulleting them with weekly reminders of our events, new releases and general news about our vineyard.

Is there a way to use a mass emailing to let our customers know about our events and wines.

What method should we use to collect email accounts and/or addresses. Do we use the form that is by the door or do we need a more aggressive approach to getting email addresses/home addresses? Should we have people at a live event walk around and ask people to sign our forms?

Even if we don't have anything major to report to our customers and wholesalers we can tell them things like what we're picking for the week, etc.

We can use myspace to send out bulletins.

## Organizations/Subscriptions

We need to find wine and business organizations and join them as well as subscribe to magazines that can help our business grow.

Do we want to join wine organizations like liwines.com, etc. (find more wine organizations)

Winebusiness.com

Vineyard and Winery Magazine.com

Wineprofits.com for upcoming seminars on how to increase wine sales they also have a quarterly newsletter.

Liwineguide.com

Longislandwinecountry.com

## Communications

Whether we are communicating with our customers or each other it's important we are all saying the same thing in the same way.

what does our answering machine say to callers. Can it be improved?

walkie-talkie for people who are staying outside to communicate with people inside

we can use a communication book so we can communicate with each other on days off and so others know what new sales, etc is happening by them reviewing the book.

when people purchase wine, does it let them know we're processing the shipment? Can we collect their email address to use for further mailings?

## Party Planning Directory

If we cater our own event and parties this is a great resource that we can use to find products and services.

<http://www.mypartyplanner.com/>

Etc.

Anything else that we can do to tighten our procedures and sales is listed in this section.

#### Suggestion Box

We need a check list so we know what needs to be done on a daily, weekly basis such as ordering food, merchandise and things like opening and closing for the day.

would we like a tick sheet to be used by the outside bar so we know what we're selling?  
Do we need another register for outside all together?

we need a copy of business to business to find event planners in New York area.

[Vineyard & Winery Management Magazine](http://www.vwm-online.com/) <http://www.vwm-online.com/>

## Cost

This is an estimate of what some of the above will cost us.

## Tasting Room Profit Articles/Knowledge

<http://www.winebusiness.com/ReferenceLibrary/webarticle.cfm?dataId=23557>

The tasting room is one of the most important assets a winery can have because it doesn't just facilitate wine sales: it is one of the best public relations tool available to a winery and can generate life-long customers. They're not just about selling wine either-they're about selling memories.

Where would your tasting room rank if it were considered, for the sake or argument, a "distributor?" Would it rank in the top ten? Do you spend more time with distributors across the country than you do with an entity right on your own grounds that actually sells more wine? Tasting rooms and their staff are often under-appreciated in terms of what they can do to boost a winery's bottom line.

Based on presentations made during a session at the 2003 Unified Wine & Grape Symposium, the following ideas should prove helpful in the tasting room. Many are from Craig Root, a consultant that works with wineries to maximize tasting room profits. Wineries can pick and choose from among ideas that may be applicable to their situation.

### **Wine Clubs**

"I do a lot of startups of tasting rooms and I would no sooner do a tasting room without a wine club, than I would build a car without a fuel injector," says Root. "Wine clubs can deliver some of the highest margins in the wine business with a 50 or 60 percent net profit. With wine clubs, people are paying you to be reminded about you."

There are various types of wine clubs. St. Clement, for example has a "case of the month" club in addition to its regular wine club. While they only have about 100 members so far, the case of the month club represents 1,200 cases of wine that are automatically shipped each year. If you're starting a wine club, do not say you are going to do just four shipments a year. Say you are going to do "four to six" so that down the road you won't need to get permission from customers to send out that fifth or sixth shipment. Wine clubs are like an annuity. If you have 24 different wines, why not send them out every month?

### **The Offering Club**

This is for the customer who is not necessarily interested in giving a winery a credit card number so that it can ship whatever it wants. As opposed to the automatic club, the offering clubs includes a mailing that offers a discount. The discount may not be as high as the discount for the automatic club. Some wineries make quite a bit of money through offering clubs, so they shouldn't be overlooked. Use a qualifier. One winery asks customers to join an offering club only when they have spent \$100 or more in the tasting room.

One tasting room manager tried to enroll anyone in the offering club who made a purchase. The size of the offering club grew but the sales per solicitation went down drastically, demonstrating that for an offering club you need some kind of qualifier. Anybody can join, but don't actively try to solicit people into the offering club until they spent \$50, or whatever you deem a good way of qualifying.

Most wine club signups happen at the tasting room: Root believes in doing winery tours and says wineries that do tours sign up more people to wine clubs because "people learn to trust you." Every tour should end with a mention of the wine club, he adds.

### **Special Events**

Weddings, when local zoning regulations allow them, can be extremely profitable, though they can make the staff crazy. "If you are licensed for that, think about it," says Root.

There are many other things a winery can do with educational seminars. Merryvale Winery, just for example, conducts an in-depth tour and tasting every Saturday morning. It includes older vintages, bread and cheese. People have to reserve in advance and pay a fee. The winery makes money on the seminar but attendees tend to buy the special wines they have tasted. Special events help not just in terms of the ticket fee, but with after-event sales. One winery on California's Central Coast offers a highly successful ladies night that includes wine tasting, massages, facials, and make-up tips.

Food and wine can also generate income but this doesn't always have to mean full-on food service. J Wine near Healdsburg, California sells food items for an additional fee that match a particular flight of wines and the side benefit is that they sell more wine.

### **Commissions and Incentives**

Many people resist this but it usually works, says Root. If a winery has a wine club, it should offer tasting room staff generous incentives for each signup, he says. "The incentive is a pittance compared to how much money you make back." Root suggests daily incentives because they reward people for the day's trials and tribulations. He likes to establish a daily goal. For instance, if \$3,000 is a good daily sales goal for a Saturday at a particular tasting room, staff can be given a small credit at the store if they exceed that goal. It helps with moral, can help reduce turnover, and forces staff to interact with the merchandise.

### **Reserve Rooms**

This is not something that every winery can do but many wineries have them. If one has older vintages, such a room can be set aside for tasting older vintages for a fee. The rooms show the viability of wines to age. "If you don't have library wines, create something like that," says Root. "You take a hit in the inventory, but after wines are two or three years old, you can pour them as library wines." One winery calculates that it costs them \$1 per case to hold the wine for a year. So if you hold wine in inventory for six years, make sure you charge \$0.50 per bottle more than you would have. You can likely increase the bottle price much more than that.

### **Staffing**

It is important to be adequately staffed. Otherwise, customers may have a miserable time. Auxiliary counters with lockable wheels can be quite useful when there's overflow. Also, island-style tasting bars are best because more customers can make their way up to the counter.

### **Selling Accessories**

Greg Berti is general manager at The Estate Wine Group, which encompasses Hillebrand and Peller Estates in Ontario, Canada, selling about 2.5 million cases per year. The company operates a high-end restaurant and many stores that sell wine and accessories. Berti has discovered some principles that help make the category more profitable and drive brand awareness:

Accessories have to be "wine-centric," he says, meaning there has to be an overt relationship between them and wine. Berti's company sells Riedel glasses, decanters, and a large selection of corkscrews but avoids cheese spreaders and picture frames. If a tasting room is the image driver of a brand--higher quality goods says something about a wine company, he points out.

### **Value-Based Pricing**

Berti says this concept works better than a straight percentage markup and that using value-based pricing has allowed his company to take its average markup from 60 to 100 percent while increasing volume. "Our fastest moving wine accessories are also our highest margin wine accessories."

Leverage products that sell: Twenty percent of the items in the tasting room may represent 80 percent of the revenue. Berti says the 80-20 rule has helped insure his company doesn't stock products unless they serve a real business need.

The restaurant business is even more risky than the wine business, but Berti's winery operates two successful restaurants. Advice he offers to would-be restaurant operators is to make sure everything revolves around the wines and not to mark up the wine prices too much. He suggests a markup of \$10 over retail and says this strategy spurs people to buy more wine.

One winery that has seen recent success at its tasting room is Willamette Valley Vineyards in Oregon. The winery produces about 80,000 cases a year and sells about 9,000 cases through the tasting room. To create "life long relationships" with customers, the winery has been using "key customer service representatives." These sales representatives are on commission only, representing 14.5 to 19.5 percent of retail sales. They rotate through the tasting room. The strategy has increased enrollment in the Willamette Valley Vineyards wine club, known as the Oregon Wine Guild.

Justin Winery in Paso Robles, California is a 50,000 case winery, with a tasting room, restaurant and an inn that sells 13,000 cases a year through the tasting room. Justin has developed a cross-marketing strategy to market its brand. Justin co-owner Deborah Baldwin says it is important to choose and train the right employees while ensuring that they fully understand the concept of cross marketing. She says the wine club is the engine of her business with about 5,500 members and she hopes to grow it by another 1,000 members this year.

Root says a winery can expect to sign up 1-3 percent of the people who come through its tasting room doors for a wine club and believes that people generally stay in those clubs for between 18 months to two years. **wbm**

<http://www.winebusiness.com/ReferenceLibrary/webarticle.cfm?dataId=43195>

## **2006 Tasting Room Survey Report**

**Today's tasting rooms are bringing in more profit than ever; 50 percent of wineries charge for tastings, and only about half apply the fee to purchases.**

**By Veronica Barclay**

*From Wine Business Monthly, 05/15/2006*

**Wine Business Monthly's** 2006 Tasting Room Survey has shed light on some of the trends shaping today's tasting rooms. This year's survey revealed that roughly half of respondents now charge for tasting, with average fees falling between \$3-6. While it is generally expected that wineries should charge more for reserve tastings or when serving food, West Coast wineries top the chart with many charging \$10 for a "bare bones" tasting. In addition, about 43 percent of tasting rooms reported that they apply tasting fees to a customer's purchase.

Smaller wineries and those located beyond the West Coast are more dependent on non-wine sales than larger wineries: 68 percent of all sales from wineries producing fewer than 5,000 cases annually is earned through the tasting room, whereas only 23 percent for wineries producing over 500,000 cases.

This year's survey also looks at tasting room employment patterns. Part-time employees are staffed 83 percent of the time. As far as training goes, it is no surprise that job shadowing ranked highest as a training method and formal sales training ranked lowest. The lack of formal training at many wineries may point to reasons why tasting rooms are not bigger profit centers.

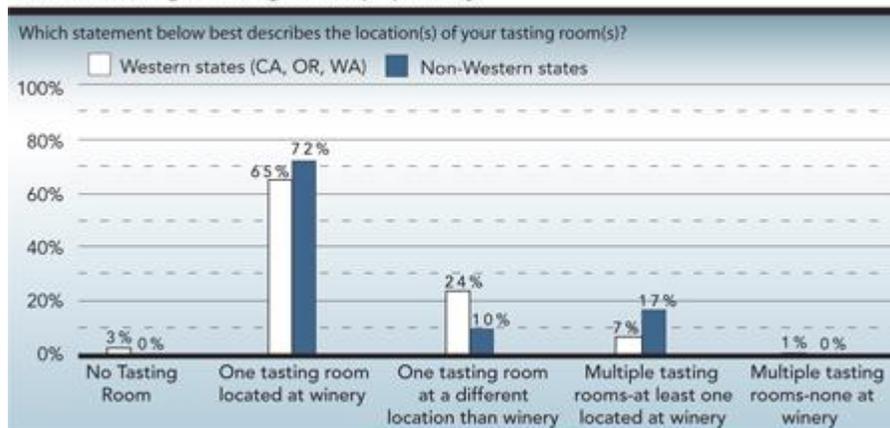
### **Tasting Rooms**

Winery tasting rooms have branched out and are often found in multiples nowadays; and sometimes a winery's single tasting room is not even at the winery. When asked about the location of their tasting room, the majority of respondents indicated they had just one tasting room that is located at their winery (67 percent); this compared to 20 percent who operated just one tasting room at a *different* location than the winery, and 10 percent who had multiple tasting rooms aside from the one at their winery.

This year's survey looked at how the number of tasting rooms varied by number, location and region, which was broken out by California, Oregon and Washington ("West Coast" wineries) and all wineries east of the West Coast. It was revealed that-beyond the "one tasting room at the winery" model-a sizable number of West Coast wineries have just one tasting room that is located at a different location than the winery (24 percent) (**Chart 1**), whereas wineries beyond the West Coast lean more toward having multiple tasting rooms, with at least one located at the winery (17 percent). This may be attributed to different factors, including difficulty obtaining tasting room permits on-site for West Coast wineries, and for non-West Coast wineries that can reach more people by opening additional tasting rooms in a more central location; an important distinction since smaller wineries rely more on tasting rooms for overall sales than large wineries who have more sales routes available.



CHART 1  
Off-site tasting rooms grow in popularity



In addition, many small wineries in remote areas, or ones that cannot afford to staff a satellite location, are opting to join vintner collectives, located on downtown squares or destination locations receiving high tourist traffic. Here, they can share operation expenses while benefiting from increased exposure and retail sales.

One example of a winery with multiple tasting rooms is **Mayo Family Winery**, located in Glen Ellen, California. Mayo has a total of five tasting rooms. Four of their off-site retail facilities are strategically located in Sonoma Valley and another in Healdsburg.

Mayo makes about 10,000 cases of wine a year. Winery president **Jeffrey Mayo** said 90 percent of sales occur through these tasting rooms, two of which focus on wine and food pairing. "We're looking for customers who are curious and want to learn about food and the wine country lifestyle," Mayo said. "People don't want to just have a couple tastes and move on. They want to learn. They want more."

### Tasting Fees

To charge or not to charge is the question for many tasting rooms these days. When asked if they charged for tasting, about half of respondents said they do charge a tasting fee (**Chart 2**). Tasting fees seem to have gone through a growth spurt, from no fee at all, to small fees to cover tasting costs and to curb sport tasters, to today's much higher fees, which can sometimes feel more like an "entrance" fee.

While it might be expected that wineries beyond the West Coast do not charge for tasting—in an attempt to persuade tourists to try regional wines—state laws and other external factors are often responsible for dictating these fees.

"We do not charge visitors for the first three tastes," said **George Faltz** of **Fox Valley Winery** in Illinois, "because Illinois state laws mandate that wineries cannot pour more than three ounces of complimentary wine per individual. But we do charge patrons for additional tastes or if they wish to purchase wine by the glass."

According to **John Bellncula**, tasting room manager at **Tarara Winery** in Leesburg, Virginia, it is up to the winery if they want to offer complimentary tasting in their tasting room, but state law requires them to charge individuals when pouring Tarara wines off-site at state wine festivals.

**St. James Winery**, along Route 66, in St. James, Missouri, allows visitors to pour their own tastes (with guidance) and does not charge a tasting fee. "We want the individual to truly experience our wide variety of wines without undue pressure," said the winery's national sales director, **Dean Chalem**. "Offering complimentary tastings promote more of a relaxed atmosphere and gives people a better experience with all of our 30 wines. Other wineries who charge for tasting may see it as a profit center, but we don't want to go that direction. We've been in business for 36 years, and hospitality is number one. By not charging, we provide a more hospitable, friendly environment."

CHART 3  
**Majority of tasting rooms do not apply tasting fees to wine purchase**



CHART 4  
**West Coast tasting rooms charge highest tasting fees**



**Fees applied to wine purchase:** When asked if tasting

fees could be applied to purchases, half of West Coast respondents stated that tasting fees could be applied to wine purchases: a surprisingly low number (**See Chart 3**). Even more surprising is that 72 percent of wineries located beyond the three West Coast states do not apply tasting fees to purchases.

Tarara Winery does not apply tasting fees to purchases but does offer different tasting schedules. "We offer three different kinds of tastings to our guests," said Bellncula. "For \$5, visitors can taste a combination of about 10 of our featured white, red and sweet wines. Our reserve tasting costs \$10 and is composed of five or six special selections of high-end reds. When large groups come to the winery, we offer them their own tour guide and a private tasting for \$15 per person. None of our tasting fees are reimbursed with purchase, and they do not keep the tasting glass."

**Kunde Estate**, located in Kenwood, California, gives visitors a choice of two tastings. The estate tasting is \$5 per person and \$10 per person for reserve selections. The estate tasting fee, however, can be applied to a purchase of wine, and those who partake in the reserve tasting may keep their glass as a souvenir.

"Part of the reason we went to charging for tasting was because we were finding a lot of people come taste who weren't interested in the wines," Kunde Estate consumer direct manager **Jody Stewart** said. "It was more like a party. Two and a half years ago we were getting lots of traffic, which is a great thing, but the people who wanted to taste different varietals and really experience the winery were being shoved in the back. Charging for tastings helped slow down how many people are in the tasting room at once, and now they are the people who are truly interested in wine. We welcome everyone, but it made for a more comfortable and safe atmosphere when we started charging for tasting."

Using yet a different fee format, Mayo's winery tasting room offers two complimentary tastes, and then charges \$5 for their "premium tasting" and \$10 for the "adventure tasting." Tasting at their two reserve rooms is \$20 per person, and visitors can also enjoy seven different appetizers prepared by the winery's full-time chefs for a \$65 tasting fee.

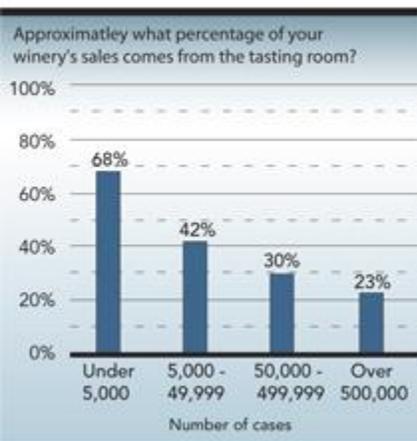
"The interesting thing is that at the Mayo Reserve Rooms, visitors join the wine club at a rate 10 times greater than at the other tasting rooms," said **Tom Wark** of **Wark Communications**, which handles public relations for Mayo Family Winery. "It goes to the intimacy of the experience, the familiarity they gain with the wines and personnel, and to the pre-qualified nature of the customer who is willing to spend \$20 on a tasting."

**What do you charge for a tasting?** When asked how much wineries charge to taste, it is not surprising that the majority of respondents charge between \$3-6 (65 percent overall) (**Chart 4**). Some eastern wineries do charge more-7 percent charge between \$8-\$10 per tasting-but a large 27 percent charge less than \$3 (and no eastern wineries charge more than \$10).

"Two levels of tasting are available," explained tasting room manager, **Chris Lopez**, who works at the winery at **Black Star Farms**, near Roanoke, Virginia. "We charge \$3 per person or \$5 per couple for our regular tasting, and \$5 per person for our reserve tasting, featuring two tastes of our limited-production wines; and tasting is complimentary for wine club members."

In contrast, several Napa Valley tasting rooms now charge \$10-30 for salon style or sit-down tastings. **Paraduxx Winery**, located along the Silverado Trail in Napa, is the newest of the three California **Duckhorn** properties. In 2005, they opened their Vineyard House along Rector Creek, where 14-foot windows frame vineyard views, which complement contemporary tasting tables. For \$10, visitors (who

## Smaller tasting rooms rely more heavily on tasting room sales than larger wineries



are encouraged to book tasting appointments online) can taste one of three Paradux red wines served in stemless **Riedel** glassware.

"People are understanding more that wineries have tried to go up-market with the experiences they provide," **Duckhorn Vineyards** vice president of marketing **Paul Leary** said. On a walk-in basis, consumers can taste three wines for \$10 or can choose the "enhanced tasting" of five wines, two made in smaller quantities. "We've been amazed since we started offering the enhanced tastings that about 75 percent of people choose to upgrade," Leary said. Twice daily, Duckhorn also offers "estate tastings" (by appointment only and limited to groups of up to 12) for \$25, with limited production and library wines paired with food made by an in-house chef. Duckhorn does not waive tasting fees if customers buy wine. "We feel we're providing a service and experience with the setting of the tasting, the quality of the wines, the glassware, the education level of our staff and the quality of print materials," Leary said. "Those costs we need to pass on to our customers.

"Philosophically, we don't push the sale," Leary said. "We market the wines. People understand it costs money for us to provide that experience, and it is becoming more the norm in the industry and not as much the exception. Also, our products are not inexpensive. Charging promotes responsible consumption as well. If people have to pay for something, they treat it more seriously than if it's given away."

**Jarvis Winery**, also located in Napa, offers two salon tastings combined with a one and a half hour tour of their unique underground winery. The morning Bacchus tasting costs \$20 and includes four current release red wines. Their afternoon Vintage tasting is \$30 and includes four reds and two white wines. Both tastings are accompanied by appetizers. Jarvis only offers tasting by scheduled appointments, secured by advance credit card payment, which helps eliminate no-shows and last minute cancellations.

### Tasting Room Sales

Tasting room revenue is generated through various channels and follows an interesting trend when viewed according to winery size. When asked what percentage of all sales comes from their tasting rooms, smaller wineries, producing up to 5,000 cases annually, report that nearly 70 percent of their sales come from their tasting room (**Chart 5**). Reasons for this may be due to state-mandated self-distribution restrictions and reduced wholesaler networks, as well as the steady growth of high-profit wine clubs and e-campaigns geared to boost online sales. Larger wineries, conversely, usually have wider distribution options to sell wine through wholesalers, direct to restaurants and fine wine shops, as well as to export wines overseas.

When asked to break down tasting room sales by wine, wine accessories, food, wine glasses and clothing, West Coast survey respondents indicated that wine sales generated 86 percent of revenue (**Chart 6**); non-wine items represent a smaller yet important contribution to total sales. Accessories make up a slightly larger percentage of overall sales for tasting rooms not located in the western states. This could partially be due to the fact that many tasting rooms are situated as farm wineries, selling private-label gourmet foods also produced on their properties. Additional sales may also be generated by on-site winery restaurants, concert and event sales, weddings and participation in off-site festivals.

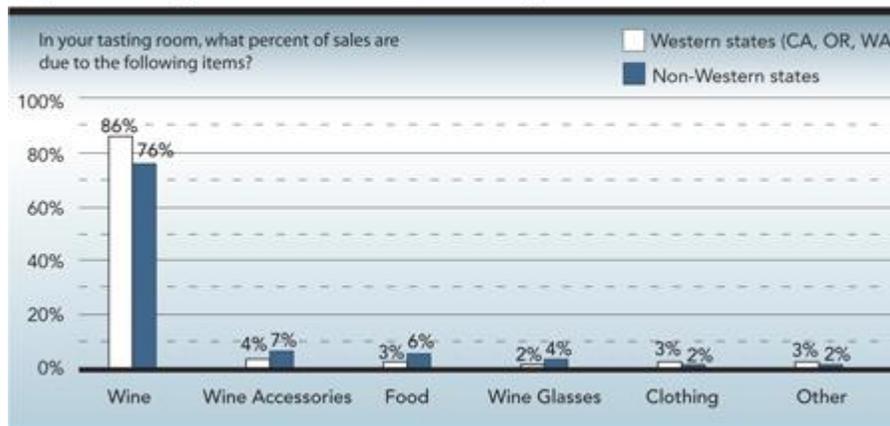
"Wine sales contributed 74.3 percent of our retail sales," said **Robert "Bob" Burgin**, vice president of **Chateau Morrisette**, located in Floyd County, Virginia. "Our non-wine total sales, excluding the tasting fees, were 22.3 percent of our total 2005 retail sales, and included wine accessories and gifts, apparel, glassware, sales of our private label Firedog gourmet food product line, gift cards and wine club membership fees. Tasting fees contributed just over 3 percent of revenue."

**Majority of tasting room employees work part-time**



CHART 6

**Wine is primary revenue source; non-West Coast tasting rooms rely on accessory sales more than other tasting rooms**

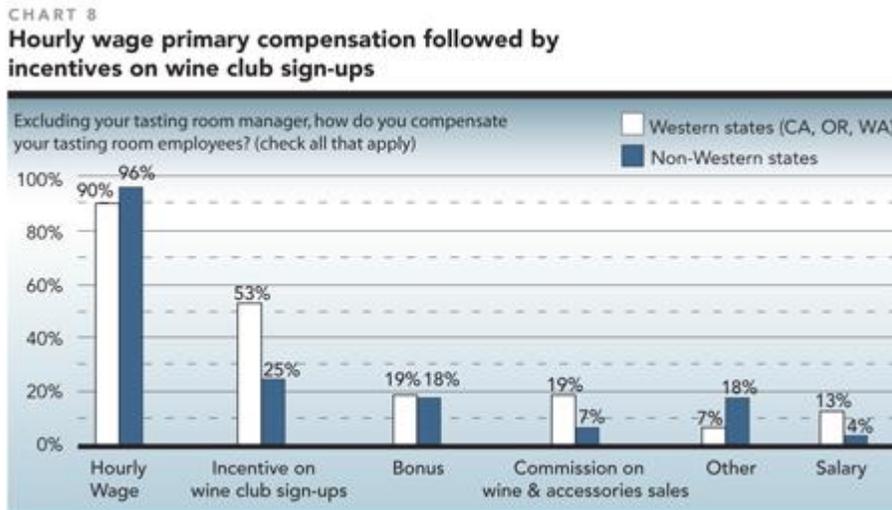


**Employment and Compensation**

Tasting rooms are fairly consistent in their hiring of mostly part-time employees, primarily to avoid burnout. Just over 80 percent of West Coast respondents indicated that they hire mostly part-time employees in their tasting rooms and just slightly higher (86 percent) for non-West Coast wineries (**Chart 7**).

"We hire a mix of full-time and part-time workers, but mostly part time," Kunde's Jody Stewart said. "Working in the tasting room is equivalent to performing arts: You are always expected to be up, happy, informative and representing your company to the best of your abilities. By having mostly part-time employees, you are less likely to burn them out. They come to work ready to share, teach and help your customers toward creating an experience that is personal and unforgettable."

When asked about the ways employees (other than tasting room managers) were compensated, around 90 percent of respondents indicated that they primarily pay their tasting room employees an hourly wage (**Chart 8**). Incentives for wine club sign-ups were offered by 53 percent of West Coast wineries but only 25 percent of all other wineries. Bonuses and commissions and salaries were all used less than 20 percent of the time as compensation for tasting room employees in all regions. An average of 10 percent of respondents indicated that they did not compensate their tasting room employees at all because they were family members, did not have employees or worked as volunteers. Others indicated that their employees "worked for wine" and received monthly wine allotments.



Regarding the value of incentives provided by tasting rooms, surprisingly, nearly half of all respondents stated they do not offer employees an incentive for signing up new wine club members. Of those wineries that do provide this incentive, however, the majority (35 percent) of West Coast respondents pay \$10-14 per sign-up (**Chart 9**), followed by \$5-\$9 (13 percent) and \$1-\$4 (6 percent).



**Tulip Hill Winery** has two tasting rooms: one in Nice, California and another in Palm Springs. Vice president **Kristi Brown** says the three-year-old winery has increased membership in its rapidly growing wine club through employee cash incentives. "We give our employees \$10 each for every complete wine club application they bring us. After they hit 15 new sign-ups in a calendar month, we give them a \$50 bonus. If they get 30 sign-ups in a month, they can make an extra \$400," said Brown. "Signing up one new member a day equates to an extra \$1 an hour."

Incentives identified under "Other" included non-cash incentives in the form of wine discounts, monthly wine allotments and additional bonuses. Tarara Winery offers its employees a bottle of its limited reserve wines (normally not available to staff) to the individual bringing in the most new club members within a specific time frame.

Because the average wine club membership lasts 16-24 months, wineries paying higher incentives may be trying to drive new club membership or replace members who drop out. Depending on the frequency of shipments or club offerings, those wineries paying higher incentives for club sign-ups may be willing

to trade off this small selling "commission" for the maximum profits received from several automatic subscriptions with guaranteed income for one to two years.

### Employee Training

Job shadowing is the most common type of training for new tasting room employees, followed by being provided formal written materials. However, only about 55 percent of wineries stated they offer responsible beverage hospitality training (**Chart 10**), and only one in five employees receive formal training.



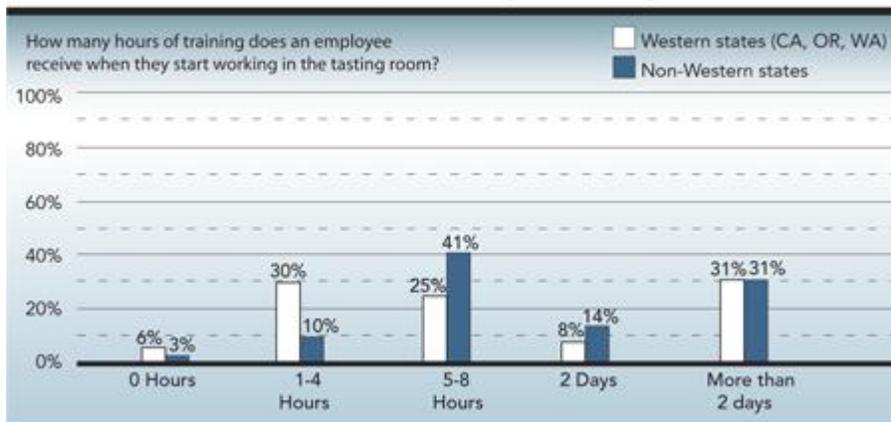
The most surprising training deficiency is in the area of formal training. While formal training, which often includes sales training on "how to ask for the order" and winery customer service policies, is usually considered very important, respondents reported it as the lowest percentage of training offered to new employees.

"New hires at Kunde receive three full days of one-on-one training with a qualified staff trainer," explained Stewart. "We offer training manuals and job shadowing, and then put new employees out front with customers while a trainer shadows them. Training is ongoing.

"We are very serious about responsible beverage service, and we discuss this topic regularly in our morning meetings," continued Stewart. "We also participate in LEAD (Licensee Education on Alcohol and Drugs), a training program through our local Alcohol Beverage Control office and Sonoma County Sheriff's Department. This is an excellent training program to reinforce responsible beverage service to your employees."

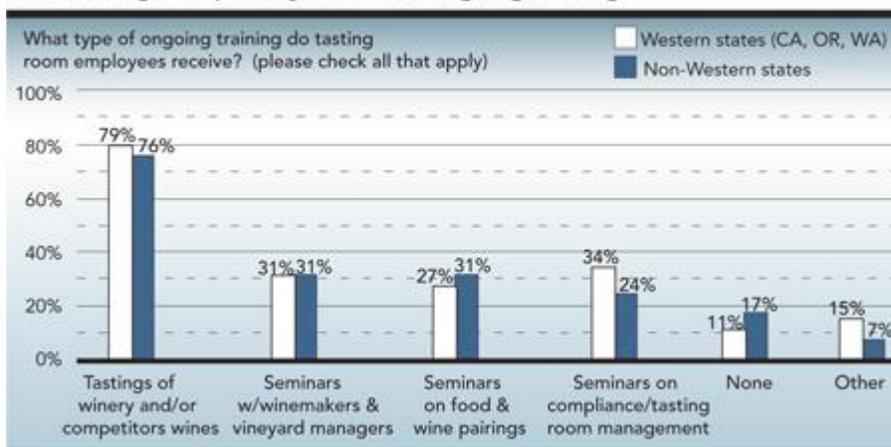
When reviewing sales training figures from reporting wineries, 31 percent report that employees receive at least two days of training (**Chart 11**); on average, 54 percent of new tasting room employees receive less than two days of training, and 5 percent offer no training at all.

CHART 11  
**31% of new hires receive more than two days of training**



When asked about the type of ongoing training offered, the majority of respondents (nearly 80 percent) said that tastings of in-house as well as competitors' wines were the primary means. (Chart 12). On average, 30 percent attend seminars with in-house winemakers and vineyard managers; go to outside seminars on compliance or tasting room management; or attend food and wine pairing seminars. Overall, 13 percent of respondents indicated their winery provides no ongoing training at all.

CHART 12  
**Wine tastings are primary means for ongoing training**



This year's tasting room survey reflects that wineries across the U.S. perform a variety of practices and strategies in tasting room management and sales development. Creating alternative tasting options, with graduating fees in many cases, can lead to potential increases in wine and non-wine sales revenue, regardless of winery size.

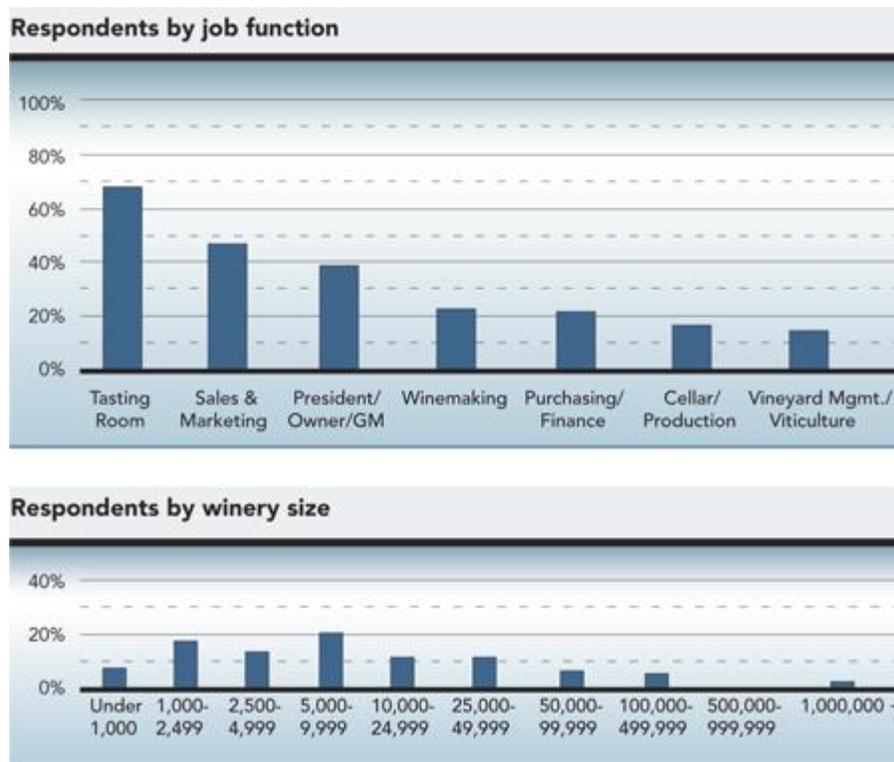
Offering employees meaningful cash or non-cash incentives for team sales or wine club sign-ups can motivate employees to reach projected goals and build high-profit wine clubs. Ongoing customer service and compliance training on the ever-changing direct shipping regulations will become even more important, especially with anticipated increased tourism and the explosion of online ordering.

**RESPONDENTS**

This year's survey received 103 responses, including 59 from California, 8 from Washington, and 7 from Oregon. Respondents to the survey overwhelmingly were smaller wineries. Forty percent of respondents produce fewer than 5,000 cases, another 33 percent produce 5,000 to 24,999 cases, and the remaining 28 percent produce 25,000 or more cases (3 percent producing a million cases or more).

Number of Respondents by State			
State	No.	State	No.
AL	1	NJ	1
CA	59	NY	2
CO	1	OH	1
FL	1	OR	7
GA	1	TN	1
HI	1	TX	1
ID	1	VA	1
KY	1	WA	8
MA	1	WI	3
MI	1	CANADA	6
MN	1	OTHER	1
NC	2	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>103</b>

Sixty-eight percent of the survey respondents reported their job as working in the tasting room, 47 percent work in sales and marketing, 39 percent as president/owner/GM and 23 percent in winemaking (respondents were able to choose more than one function).



The purpose of the survey was to determine trends in tasting room practices and procedures. Please note that the findings of this survey are meant to offer a general picture of tasting room trends and practices. It is not a scientific study, and should be used as a tool and a point of reference for further inquiry.

*Thank you to all respondents who participated in this year's survey.*



Making more money in your tasting room article

<http://www.foodsci.purdue.edu/research/labs/enology/Tasting%20Room%20profits.pdf>