



Creative Wine Marketing to your Club Members!

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MARKETING...according to the brand manager for one of the most popular Dr. Pepper Ad campaigns, "I'm a Pepper you're a Pepper wouldn't you like to be a Pepper too," is captured in three principles Awareness, Awareness, Awareness. Marketing wine to your members is no different. They need to learn about your wine programs through your creative marketing and awareness campaigns.

Position of the Current Wine Market

"The wine consumer, I believe, is confused about wine," said Joseph Delissio of the famed River Café in New York City and author of the book *The River Café Wine Primer*. In his book, Delisso goes on to explain that of the misconception that wine has to be expensive to be good. He firmly believes that as consumers overcome this misconception, wine sales will begin to grow again.

In a recent release of their latest marketing program, the US Wine Market Council points out that wine markets are currently loaded with overproduction and have caused prices to decline. "While some may see the campaign as a response to the current cycle of global overproduction grapes and wine," said John Gillespie, the council's president, "the ten year decline in the marginal wine drinker population in the U.S. is a real call-to-action and show us that our market has much room to grow if we work together as an industry to put wine on America's tables." Furthermore, the US Wine Market Council points out in the most recent 2003 study on consumption of wine by core drinkers (i.e. more than twice a

week wine drinkers); the total consumption of wine has increased by 34% since 2000.

Awareness, Awareness, Awareness

Outstanding value in great wines is something that the Members need to be made aware of. This awareness will translate in to added revenue for the Club and this increased revenue will help boost to your bottom line. So, the question is, "How can you increase this awareness with your Members?"

If many of the top restaurants continue to increase their wine sales, why can't Private Clubs do the same?

The high profile Restaurant Group was able to increased their company's wine sales dramatically by the placement of great value wine selections right in the middle of the drink menu. This positioning focuses the consumer immediately on wine. Other drink selections will be made, but the wine seed is planted and watered with some well trained suggestive selling from their servers.

Mark Krug, General Manager of Forest Hills Country Club near Rockford, Illinois, has begun to place wine menus in his lounge and hands out a wine list with every table seated. This is great exposure to wines for the Members as they begin to explore ordering wine with their dinner.

Many Clubs have used wine displays in the middle of the dining room or the lobby to draw attention to outstanding wines they offer. The placement of wine displays in the



lobby entrance or on the menu in unique ways are two great ways to market wine but it is only the beginning to a wine awareness campaign. Other awareness programs that have been used to market wine in Private Clubs include:

Wine Clubs offering special incentives for Members such as wine storage from member's cellars, special discounts for wine purchasing or planned excursions to big wine auctions or seasonal tasting.

Wine Maker Dinners combining the culinary skills of your chef with the knowledge of a real wine maker (if a wine maker is not available, you can often utilize a wine representative). You can often combine a Wine Makers Dinners with the kick off of the Chef's new seasonal menu.

Wines of the Month promoting great value wines that the Club's staff or Members have discovered. Display Posters or menu place cards in the Club with the label of the wine of the month with the description and rating.

Winery Trips to tour a vineyard and cellar and learn about wine making of a specific vintner. Attending wine festivals, such as the Santé Fe Wine Festival or Aspen's great Wine and Food Festival, can also be very enjoyable for Members. Clubs do golf trips to Scotland...why not winery trips!

Wine Seminars for the Members with a local expert or a wine representative. Educating your Members about wine is one of the strongest awareness campaigns you can employ. "The number one reason consumers do not purchase wine is confusion on what to buy," the US Wine Market Council.

Wine Tastings can be held each season to kick off a new wine promotion, such as:

Spring Chenin Blancs, Summer chilled Rieslings, Fall Pinot Noirs, and Winter Zinfandels.

Gourmet Food Clubs with special dinners and cooking classes emphasizing how appropriately pairing wine with food can enhance the dining experience.

Member Special Events featuring wine at Men's Golf Tournaments, Women's Golf Luncheons, Halloween parties, even Easter or Mothers Day. Wine Luncheons combined with fashion shows for charity fundraisers

Newsletter Articles about unique wines from various countries. These articles can be submitted from Members of the wine club or the gourmet club. Cellar updates can be presented in the newsletter and/or web site when the club buys some rare wines from an auction at a great value.

Rare Wine Lists can be offered in addition to your regular wine list. This list can feature those hard to find and highly rated wines. You can even call this list - The Wine Clubs List.

Nouveau Beaujolais Parties for the new release of this wine every November.

The Time is Ripe

It is a perfect time to begin a wine awareness promotion for your Members. The ratio of low price to great quality wine will never be better! Plus...wine is getting some great press as having healthful benefits as well. Consumption by the American public is steadily increasing. It is a great time to "put wine on America's table," the US Wine Market Council declares. And...I will add, "back into America's Private Clubs!"



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