

January 2004

WineVision: The Conversation Continues at Unified

WineVision: American Wine in the

21st Century has always been about initiating conversations amongst wine industry members and seeding efforts to make the U.S. wine community more

competitive on a global scale. Next week, at the WineVision Forum to be held during the Unified Wine and Grape Symposium in Sacramento, those conversations will continue as the latest task force discussions are presented.

'The Great Awakening'

One of the key ideas this year is to organize WineVision's annual meeting into a two-day workshop to be dubbed "The Great Awakening." The goal is to accelerate the transformation of the U.S. wine community from supply-driven to consumer-driven. This, in turn, is designed to further WineVision's stated goal of getting more people to drink wine.

The Great Awakening Symposium will aim to change the assumptions and behaviors of each industry segment (e.g., vintners, distributors and retailers) by developing an understanding of the principles of becoming consumer driven and tailoring the conversation of this transformation to each industry segment. The assumptions and behavior changes indicating success will be identified by each segment during the symposium.

**WineVision Forum
to be held Jan. 28
from 11:30 AM. —
1:30 P.M. at the
Hyatt Regency in
Sacramento**

Besides presenting successful "Consumer First" strategies and practices of other industries and companies, ideas being considered may include:

- ♦ Relevant consumer research

- ♦ Retailers questioned about marketing wine (possible student project)

- ♦ Consumers video taped talking about wine (Possible student project)

- ♦ Bringing other success stories to the table -- examples of successes inside and outside the wine community

- ♦ Simple tools for companies to use to learn more about the consumer and possibly share with each other

- ♦ Simple strategies to connect to the consumer

- ♦ How might we gain new markets

- ♦ An assessment tool to determine how consumer oriented they are and where changes might be made

- ♦ Break-out sessions on various consumer "touch points" (retail, restaurants, tasting rooms, websites...)

- ♦ A process for putting a mirror to ourselves to see what we are doing and learn where the disconnect is with the majority of the American people.

At the WineVision Forum, further input and participation will be sought from both industry associations and companies and individuals.

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Benchmarking

Input and feedback will be sought at the forum about a conversation going on regarding a new chapter in the Sustainable Winegrowing Practices workbook that could focus on the economics of various cultural practices (and later winemaking practices) to better target practices appropriate for the eventual retail price points of the wines being grown and made. The focus would be on what is planted now with an emphasis on mass market price points where the volume of wine is sold. A proposed name is Winegrowing Cost Alignment.

It is proposed that this project is not about prescribing answers, it is about creating awareness through a self-assessment or check list process to help growers and winemakers focus on where the grapes go and how they are being treated by understanding:

- ♦ the end product price and quality expectations for their grapes and wine-making practices;

- ♦ functional points that are major cost centers - what are fixed and what are variable;
- ♦ criteria that can be used to discuss and agree to trade-offs - large and small - in the field and in the winery
- ♦ to meet quality and price point expectations of the market;
- ♦ resources available to help implement practices to meet the quality/price point;
- ♦ where there are gaps in available information and resources to assist growers and winemakers in achieving their objectives.

The proposed next step is to organize a survey of growers and vintners reflective of all regions (start with California) to develop an understanding of current practices (related to the project objective) and thoughts on where the gaps are and what it will take to make the needed changes.

Globalization

A survey is being developed so that the results can be used to understand why American wine companies that export do so and what works for them. Additionally, the survey will be seeking to discover what these companies wish they had known before they got started, why they don't export more, what would help move them to the next level and what the industry could do as a whole to support increased exports. The intent is to better understand what it takes to be successful and where the gaps are. The survey is to be qualitative in nature to provide guidance/motivation to newcomers and to help understand where the gaps are in getting to the next level of impact on the global market. The globalization group also is continuing to look at ways to identify marketplace data and information and to communicate the availability and cost of this to companies and individuals in the wine business who need it.

Note: Our next newsletter will report on the conversations held at the WineVision Forum.

Annual Membership Dues: WineVision's ongoing conversations need the industry's continuing financial assistance. Please be sure to consider supporting this industrywide effort and return your membership participation as soon as possible.

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WineVision:

AMERICAN WINE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

P.O. Box 6230 Napa, CA. 94581
Phone: 707.255.9222 Fax: 707.255.2044
Email: admin@winevision.org