

Public Relations in the California Wine Industry:
Improving social media use focusing on Facebook and Twitter

A Senior Project
presented to
the Faculty of the Journalism Department
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Science in Journalism

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March 2011

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Abstract

The public relations field advances constantly. The Internet and invention of online social networking has caused public relations practitioners to drastically change their ways. Now practitioners must learn to incorporate these new public relations strategies with traditional strategies to be successful in their field. The prevailing sites in online social networking are Facebook and Twitter. When practitioners integrate social networking to their arsenal of tools in the correct way, especially in the winery industry, the result may be exceptional.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The foundation of this Senior Project is to concentrate on how and why social networking, focusing on Facebook and Twitter, is utilized through public relations in the California wine industry and how it can be better managed by wineries around the United States. “You can’t get far in academic PR circles these days without the conversation turning to technology and social networking. It’s all the buzz: how best to exploit Facebook and MySpace for marketing purposes, what to make of Twitter” (Powell, 2009, para. 1).

The research for this Senior Project demonstrates that in all industries social networking is an important technique for public relations professionals to utilize in order to begin the online conversation with the targeted demographic. The demographic of wineries is beginning to expand and include “millennials,” which are defined as the generation “born between 1980 and 2000, they’re a generation nearly as large as the Baby Boomers” (Raines, 2002, para. 2). These millennials are “civic-minded team players with an affinity for technology. They’re suspicious of commercial messages and tend to rely more on the recommendations of friends and social networking sites” (Lavin, 2009, para. 5). Because this age group has become the new target for the wine industry, social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter are ideal to get the attention of those in their early twenties.

These social networking trends reflect the fact that millennials like to be connected, “more millennials say they can live without the television than the computer. Many prefer chatting on line to talking on the phone” (Raines, 2002, para. 20). These social networking trends lend themselves to “the ever-increasing speed of news, the ability and expectation of audiences to get information directly from sources rather than from the media, the exponential phenomenon

of word of mouth and the high levels of interactivity” (Baron, 2009, para. 3) and when considering social networks as publicity tools targeting the millennials, these points are ideal to be fulfilled and wineries should take advantage of social media to advance themselves in the eyes of the twenty-something crowd.

Also, the society surrounding wine and the premise of social networking go well together because “they share similar values. At its core, wine is a social product - a conduit to the best times of our lives. It's designed to build community, just like social media” (Cochran, 2010, para. 7). Social networks enhance and supplement the communal aspect of the culture surrounding wine, which is why it is important for wineries to keep up their online networking.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Social Networking and Public Relations

Public relations “helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other” (PRSA.com). It is the responsibility of a public relations practitioner to recognize the needs of an organization’s public and build a campaign around those needs. Social networking sites “allow users to set up a personal space on the internet...users invite friends which gives them access to participate in conversation on the site...users can also join groups of people with similar tastes and hobbies, such as wine groups” (Thach, 2009, pp. 145). Social networking fits with public relations because most of the time the “needs” of an organization and their publics can be fulfilled through popular social networking sites.

The social networking website, Twitter,

provides users with a means for ‘microblogging’ through frequent posting of short status updates or “tweets.” Each tweet is limited to 140 characters

or less. Users may select other users to “follow”; tweets posted by these individuals appear in reverse chronological order on the user's profile. Users may also repost (“retweet”) updates from other users (Rybalko & Seltzer, 2010, para. 5)

and the social networking site, Facebook,

is used by over 10 million people worldwide, Facebook (FB) is one of the latest trends in social networking (Facebook.com)... 80% of college students utilize the site. FB has become the number one choice of communication with college students, ranking higher than phone and email (Stern & Taylor, 2007, pp. 1)

are the most common sites for public relations practitioners to utilize.

Some statistics about Facebook:

- More than 350 million active users
- 50% of active users log on to Facebook in any given day
- More than 35 million users update their status each day
- More than 2.5 billion photos uploaded to the site each month
- More than 3.5 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) shared each week
- More than 3.5 million events created each month
- More than 700,000 local businesses have active Pages on Facebook
- Average user has 130 friends
- Average user sends eight friend requests per month
- Average user spends more than 55 minutes per day on Facebook
- Average user writes 25 comments on Facebook content each month
- Average user becomes a fan of two Pages each month
- Average user is invited to three events per month
- Average user is a member of 12 groups (Tosch, 2010, para. 2).

Social networking is used in public relations to start a conversation with consumers and publics because

they are the backbone of your business, so if you can't have an honest conversation with them, what kind of company are you? A scared one. And fear means the absence of trust. And we all know that trust is what creates brand loyalty and delivers the right kind of point-of-purchase decision making” (Slutsky, 2010, para. 2).

Ultimately in social networking you have to be real because “customers can smell a PR tweet before execs walk out of the meeting that approved it” (Slutsky, 2010, para. 3) and “social media these days isn't just a matter of whether you're blogging or tweeting. The question is, are you interacting with your consumers in an authentic way? Are you a trustworthy brand for real, not just for show? Are you less media and more social?” (Slutsky, 2010, para. 9). And “as brands try to foster loyalty with Facebook pages... and address customer concerns on Twitter” social media and public relations are combining forces (Patel, 2010, para. 2).

Public Relations and Social Networking in Wineries

Wineries need public relations in this day and age. Even big name wineries like EJ Gallo jumped on public relations in 1997 after over 60 years of being in business, “the \$1.4 billion (1998 revenues) company hired its first public relations director two years ago” (Marsh, 1999, para. 3).

Social networking and the Internet are very important in public relations and wineries know this because “today research has shown that from 90 to 100% of US wineries have a web presence” (Thach, 2009, pp. 144). It is vital for companies to have an online reputation because “the Internet is quickly becoming the place where first impressions are formed” (Schiller, 2010,

para. 2). If a consumer googles or searches online for a winery and doesn't find them that winery's reputation may suffer or take a backseat to a winery that appears high on the search engine list and is more in the consumer's eye.

The demographic of young people that the wineries try to target believe that everything worth knowing about is able to be found online and

with the steady decline of one of [public relations'] most reliable platforms--print media--and the enormous growth and popularity of the new social-networking tools, public-relations professionals need to adapt and incorporate the latest technology into marketing plans. PR professionals need to be savvy about the information-gathering habits of the next generation of college students, not to mention to communicate effectively (Powell, 2009, para. 2).

In the aspect of the online conversation verses traditional media,

According to the website Paper Cuts, which tracks layoffs and buyouts at U.S. newspapers, nearly 30,000 reporters have left the industry since the beginning of 2008. So instead of pitching their stories to reporters, a growing number of marketers are directly engaging consumers through original content they and their agencies are creating (Bush, 2009, para. 2).

And one of the easiest ways to engage consumers is through the use of social networking. On social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook, everything that is posted is original content created by the winery rather than with traditional journalism where the content usually goes through a reporter and an editor and might possibly not come out as intended.

With social media, wineries will get people who are actually interested in their brand and product paying attention to their content,

And these people are coming from all over, and it's more about their interest in your product, as opposed to the readership and viewership of a particular medium. It's horizontal. If you wanted to reach that many people using traditional media, you would have to pitch and place in dozens of outlets (Bush, 2009, para. 7).

Through social networking in the wine industry, it doesn't just count to have a lot of "friends" or a lot of "likes" or a lot of "followers," the brand must actually know how to use these social networking sites to their advantage, "the number of "friends" a user has says nothing about the level of engagement of those friends with the user" (Ampofo, 2009, para. 4). Each brand in the wine industry with an online presence must keep their fans enthusiastic with constant presence and updates to their pages.

The interesting thing the research showed was that "social media was not made for brands. Lots of other stuff on the Internet was, but not Facebook and not Twitter" and "successful social media is not just a PR stunt--it's using [the social media] to transform your business and communications" (Palmer, 2009, para. 6). Because social media was not originally prepared for businesses, it must be used correctly to make it effective.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The California Wine Industry is holding steady during the recession,

‘Although consumers were cautious in their spending last year, the underlying consumer trends in the U.S. have kept wine on the dinner table during this tough economy. The baby boomer generation has enjoyed wine for decades and now millennial consumers, who grew up in families who served wine, are also showing an affinity for wine,’ said Robert P. (Bobby) Koch, President and CEO of Wine Institute.

As of 2009 there are 2,972 wineries in California and many of these wineries are jumping on the social networking bandwagon to keep their heads afloat during these hard economic times.

Case Study

Laura Holson from *The New York Times* wrote an article titled “Tweeting Your Way to a Job” about someone having a specific position to handle social media and Twitter. The newspaper focused on a girl named Amanda Casgar who applied for a “social media whiz” position at a Sonoma County winery called Murphy-Goode. Murphy-Goode wanted a

wine enthusiast interested in moving to Healdsburg, Calif., for six months to promote the vineyard's malbec and chardonnay on blogs, Facebook and Twitter. The job -- which comes with the official title "lifestyle correspondent" -- pays \$10,000 a month, plus free accommodations at a private home within walking distance of the tasting room (Holson, 2009, para. 2).

To set her apart from other applicants for this job, Casgar made sure to become a frequent “twitter-er,” “[the tweets] are mostly about wine,” she constructed a website, and she “started a fan page on Facebook.” All of these techniques demonstrated her knowledge of social media and her determination to get this job and “to marketers, it seems, personal relations have become the new public relations.”

Casgar was trying to do anything possible to make herself stand out because “companies have been seeking to exploit the marketing possibilities of social media for years... But only recently have companies begun hiring someone specifically for the task, largely because of the explosive popularity of Twitter... and having a social media aficionado on staff is one way to create conversation about a brand.”

There is a difference between someone using Twitter and someone actually knowing how to use Twitter,

‘Twitter has gotten to this place that everyone is interested in it,’ said Josh Bernoff, a Forrester analyst and co-author of a book about social technologies. But interest does not equal ability, he said. The qualities that make someone a good social media maven - which include being available

round-the-clock to anyone who writes - are different than the skills used by mainstream corporate publicists. (Holson, 2009, para. 9)

This case study shows why it is important to hire a person especially for a social media job, they need to know how to converse with the publics as a real person, not as a publicist or an official spokesperson and be “much more personal than the average corporate P.R. guy.”

Going back to this particular case study, David Ready Jr., the winemaker at Murphy-Goode, says “the new social media gig is meant to attract younger customers, it doesn't have to be a sommelier, but someone passionate about wine,” he said. “We want someone who people will want to follow.”

It does not appear that Amanda Casgar received the job at Murphy-Goode but her experience through applying for the “social media whiz” job gave her exceptional experience for her future.

Case Study

Social networking helps brand recognition. According to an article from socialmediatoday.com, titled “Social Grapes? How American’s Wineries are Using Social Media to Extend PR Impact,” Rick Bakas, director of social media marketing for St. Supéry winery from Napa Valley is often quoted supporting vineyards getting involved in social media. He is in charge of the St. Supéry Twitter account and “Rick leads monthly tastings via Twitter focusing on different varietals. The one in March had over 600 people participating on Twitter discussing different Sauvignon Blancs” (Vincenzini, 2010, para. 17). He leads these tastings and updates the Twitter account because “as a consumer in a wine store, wine labels jump out based on things people recognize. If someone is shopping and not sure what they want but recognize St. Supéry from Twitter, chances are they will buy a wine from that vineyard” (Vincenzini, 2010, para. 19).

Case Study

Branding is important with social media and public relations in wineries. Cloverdale, California winery Fritz Underground uses Twitter and Facebook to reach their consumers. “They see social media as a way to have one-on-one conversations with the audience. However because it is a classic brand, the winery keeps a close watch on the message to keep everything within the brand guidelines” (Loceff, 2011, Fritz Winery, para. 2) Fritz Underground winery’s main challenge is in “making sure all of your status updates and tweets are in line with your brand” (Loceff, 2011, Fritz Winery, para. 3).

Case Study

In some winery’s marketing plans, social media has replaced traditional forms of advertising. Carr Winery in Santa Barbara, California “has a huge following in the Santa Barbara area, selling much of their wine directly to customers, sometimes straight from the barrel. Social media plays a key role in their local marketing strategy” (Kelterer, 2010, para. 5). Ryan Carr, the owner, says “We actually stopped doing print marketing because of [social media]” (Kelterer, 2010, para. 6).

This was the right decision for Carr Winery. “We did a simple little experiment over the course of two weeks. One week we did nothing but print [media] about what was going on here over the weekend... And the following week, we did just Internet—Facebook, Twitter—and no paper, nothing at all.’ The results? ‘The internet was far superior,’ Ryan says.” But Carr is actively engaged in social media, hosting “Tweet-ups” and updating Facebook and Twitter regularly (Kelterer, 2010, para. 6). A “tweet-up” is “a group of friends on Twitter that are planning to meet up. A request by a user to meet with friends via Twitter”

(www.urbandictionary.com).

The decision to get rid of print media completely is not the right one for all wineries though, if the winery cannot keep up with the fast pace of social media. John Jordan, CEO of Jordan Vineyard and Winery in Healdsburg, California, says that wineries have to really commit to social media, “‘It’s not something you do and you’re done,’ John said. ‘It is a new modality of engagement...it’s about constantly telling your story. You have to make a commitment as your organization.’ For Jordan this requires more than just a financial commitment, it’s also commitment of time and energy” (Kelterer, 2010, para. 16).

Case Study

Alpha Omega, a winery in Rutherford, California, “has begun using online services Facebook and Twitter to reach out to its customers. The winery three years ago began targeting consumers directly, and the strategy is now paying off; revenue is up 40% so far this year, compared with a year ago, in part because it doesn’t have to share many revenues with a distributor, says co-owner Robin Baggett” (Coleman, 2009, para. 3). Distributors take a lot of profits from wineries but when using social media, smaller wineries can bypass distributors and not have to allocate a portion of the revenues.

Chapter 4: Discussion

As seen in the case studies in the Methodology chapter, social media can be used by wineries in many different ways. Even though many wineries have Facebook fan pages or Twitter streams, they might not know how to properly employ these sites to make a difference in

their sales and reputation. If you are not using the social media outlet correctly, it may not be effective in the long run. Your time is very important so if you are going to spend time on social media, and you should, you should learn how to do implement it correctly.

How to Build a Facebook Fan Page

According to Rachel Tolle from www.inkfoundry.com, to begin this process, you must set your winery up with an “official Facebook fan page” rather than a personal profile page. (See Figures 11, 12, 13, and 14 on page 25)

The reasons for this are:

1. You do not want to violate Facebook’s Terms and Conditions because it is against the rules for a business to set up a personal page.
2. Fan pages will help your company with its Search Engine Optimization (SEO) efforts because fan pages are “indexed by search engines” and personal pages are not.
3. Official company fan pages do not have a limit on “friends” or “fans” whereas personal pages do. You do not want to “limit your label to only a few thousand fans by setting up your winery’s Facebook page as a personal profile.”

The way you set this official fan page up is:

1. Go to www.facebook.com/pages.
2. Click the “Create Page” button.
3. Select “brand, product or organization.”
4. Name your page – “you will not be able to change the name of your page, so make sure you like the name you choose... It’s best to go with the exact name of your winery.”
5. Check the box to clarify that you have permission to create it (if you do have the

permission. – and “if it’s your winery, you’re good.”)

6. Click “Create Official Page.”
7. Then, “a dialogue box will pop up, asking you to proceed only if you’re the official representative (assuming you are) click ‘Create Page.’”

Next you should upload your logo, and “it is also important to choose an image that will be capable of creating an eye-catching thumbnail. Your thumbnail is what will show up in your fans’ newsfeeds. Make sure it stands out!” Then, provide basic information, “not only will it add credibility, but it will also let fans (and potential fans) learn more about your winery. It will ask you for your website, company overview, mission and products.” It will also ask for hours of operation (if your winery has a tasting room) and phone numbers.

To connect all your accounts, add a “Like” box onto your website and put a link to your new Facebook page on your Twitter feed and your LinkedIn page. “If you want, you can even sync your Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn statuses together.”

After you gain 100 Facebook fan, you can set up a vanity URL at <http://www.facebook.com/username/>. Once you do this, your new URL will be <http://facebook.com/yournewusername> (“much shorter and cleaner!”) Then, you must click “Like” on your own page. “Now your winery page posts have the potential to show up in all your friends’ newsfeeds. Hopefully they’ll ‘like’ it too!”

Now thus far, this is the same way you would set up a Fan Page for any company, but a winery is a little different. Since wineries sell alcohol and you have to be over 21 years of age to drink, “Facebook has a few extra rules for you.” You have to manage your permissions and add an “age restriction” for fans. The steps to do that are:

1. Go to the top corner of your homepage – underneath your page name it says “Edit Page.”

Click that. (See **Figure 1**, left)



Figure 1: Edit Page

2. Go to “Age Restrictions” and change it to “Alcohol Related.” (See **Figure 2**, below)

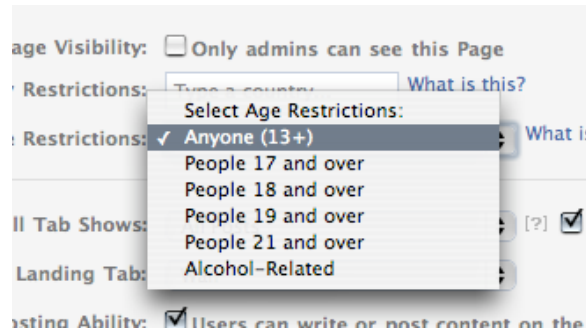


Figure 2: Age Restrictions for Wine Fan Page

3. Click “Save Changes.”
4. Now your page is ready for your fans!

What To Post on Your Social Media Outlets

Now that your winery has created a fan page, what do you put on it? “The biggest challenge in creating messages on Twitter, or other social networks for that matter, is understanding what to say and how to say it” (Guadagni, 2009, para. 1).

According to Dean Guadagni, “try the following ideas when looking for messages or what to say about your winery” to increase number of wine club members and increase traffic to tasting rooms.

- **Wine Club:** update about your wine club and special offers; make it easy for fans to join
- **Events:** list the events your winery hosts, the events your winery participates in, and the

charities and charity events you support

- **Tours:** describe your winery's tours and the benefits, features and costs of these tours
- **History:** list historical facts about the winery, region, land, owners, partners and winemakers
- **Food:** list ideas of food and wine pairings, and recipes for how to make the food; list cooking techniques using wine
- **Wine Reviews:** post reviews about your wines – from consumers, from media outlets
- **Wine Collecting Tips:** demonstrate tips and strategies for storing wines
- **Wine Tasting:** describe methods for tasting wine, including what to look for in each wine varietal and how to understand the wine making influence on the taste
- **Art:** if your winery or tasting room displays arts, tell fans and followers about the artist
- **Concerts:** if your winery hosts musical events, tell fans and followers about the concerts
- **Innovation:** describe development of technologies, whether they be cutting edge processes, green and sustainable techniques, vineyard management, or anything that differentiates your winery's harvest
- **Harvest:** document your harvest, do interviews of winemakers, help people understand the science and standards you uphold in your harvest
- **Community:** if your winery is involved in the community, list your activities and the different issues surrounding your community
- **Library Wines:** list and describe the wines available for purchase
- **Gift Shop:** list items sold in the gift shop, including specials, discounts and new inventory
- **Release Days:** list days new wines are released, describe the events of the day

- **Newsletter:** describe your newsletter and the benefits of getting the newsletter regularly
- **Story:** tell the winery's story – not the history but the mission of the winery
- **Wine Competition:** list the wine competition and their victories (be a good sport)

What You Should Not Post on Your Social Media Outlets

There are some things that should not be posted on your social media outlets when you own a winery,

- Don't post anything to purposely appeal to anyone under the legal drinking age.
- Don't post anything that would suggest you condone overconsumption.
- Don't post anything that would suggest you condone alcoholism.
- Don't post photos of people who are obviously severely inebriated.

Hints for Social Media

From Yahoo.com, here are five hints for your social media site

1. Use your Twitter account and send out three tweets each day. "Share information about the grapevines, tasting room, upcoming events, and life at the winery."
2. Use your Facebook account and upload pictures regularly. Also, link your Twitter and your Facebook so your Facebook status is updated with your Twitter feed.
3. Place a blog on your website. Update the blog at least twice a week, and make it fun, playful and welcoming. "Visitors will feel like they know you before they even get to your winery."
4. Include social media links on your website. It lets visitors know they can find you on popular social media sites and drives traffic. "Use familiar icons that guests will

recognize.”

5. If you do not have time for social media or you need more help, “find a social media specialist.” But remember, “everyone will tell you they are a specialist, so ask to see their work.”

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Ultimately, with the advancement of the public relations field following the advancement of technology, public relations practitioners must drastically change their ways. Now practitioners must learn to incorporate the Internet and online social networking with conventional strategies to be lucrative in the field of public relations.

The most popular sites, Facebook and Twitter, work well when public relations specialists in the wine industry use them correctly. After reading this report, hopefully public relations specialists working with wine and wineries will know how to better utilize these new strategies.

The project on the next pages details how to drive a larger number of viewers to a Facebook fan page and how to really use the Facebook fan page correctly. Doing so will increase traffic to the Facebook page and in turn, if used correctly, drive traffic to Twitter pages and the winery’s website.

Project

One Way to Increase Facebook Fans

When you want to take your Fan Page to the next level, you should follow this tip.

To begin, search Facebook for the Static FBML application. (See **Figure 3**, below)

This application “allows you to show whatever you want on your default fan page instead of the usual status updates” (Glen, 2011) and the reason you want this FBML application is so before potential fans can see anything, they have to “Like” your page.

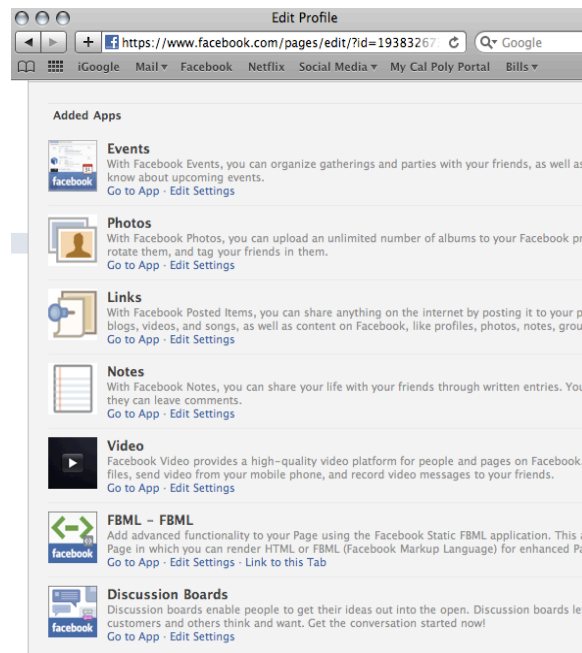


Figure 3: Static FBML Application

Add this application to your page and click on “Go to App” which will allow you to modify the text box. The first field, “Box Title” is the name for your page tab, so use something like “Welcome!” (See **Figure 4**, below)

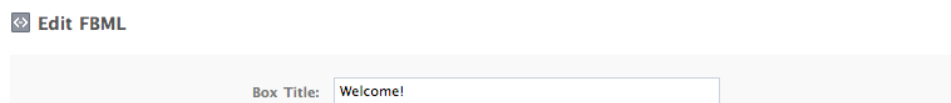


Figure 4: Static FBML Box Title

“Common practices these days are to fill your ‘Welcome’ page with enticing graphics which encourages people to ‘Like’ your fan page” (Glen, 2011). To make these appealing graphics, you can search the Internet for HTML templates that you can customize. Paste the template into the text box (See **Figure 5**, below) and change the “Your Text Here” parts. Remember to “Save Changes” and you will get the FBML Static home page. (See **Figure 6**, on page 20)

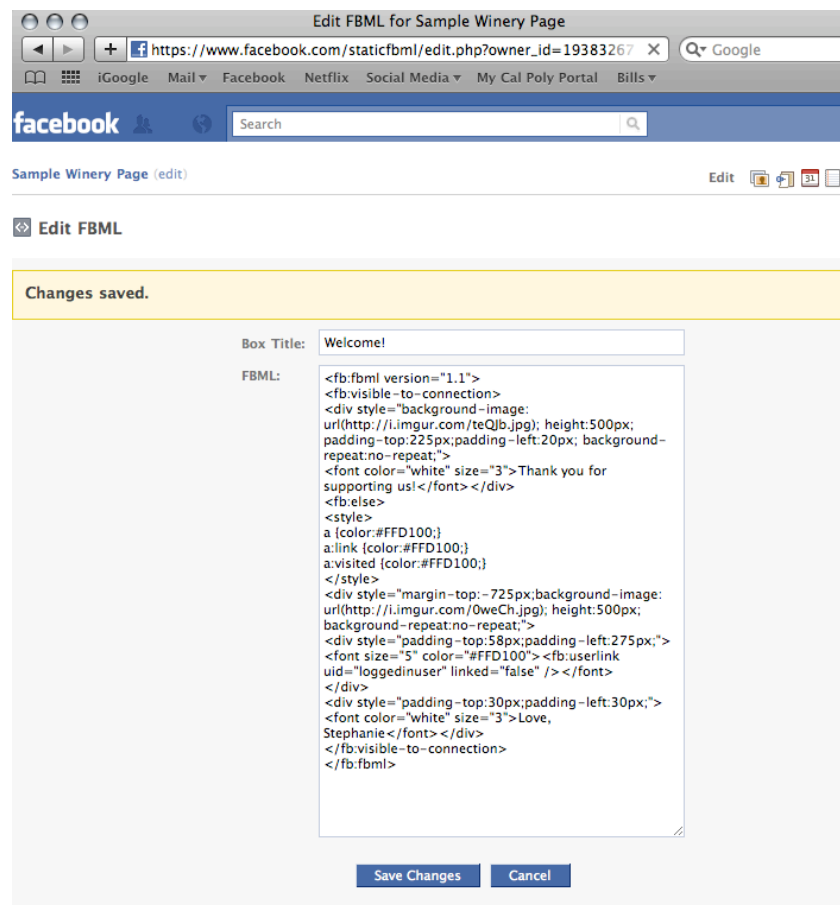


Figure 5: Static FBML HTML Box with code

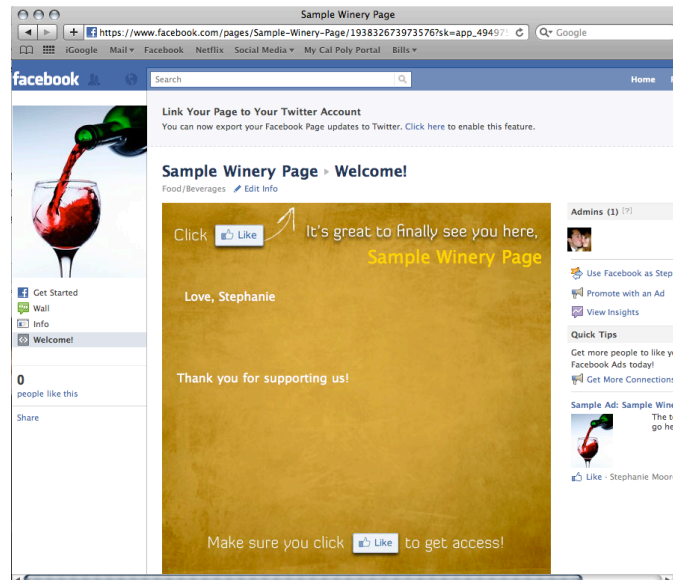


Figure 6: Static FBML HTML home page with enticing graphic

The final step to Static FBML is to go to the “Edit Page” option in the top left corner of the home page (see **Figure 7**, below) and select “Manage Permissions.” Then change the “Default Landing Tab” to the page you have created. (See **Figure 8**, below and see **Figure 9** and **10** on page 25)



Figure 7: Edit Page

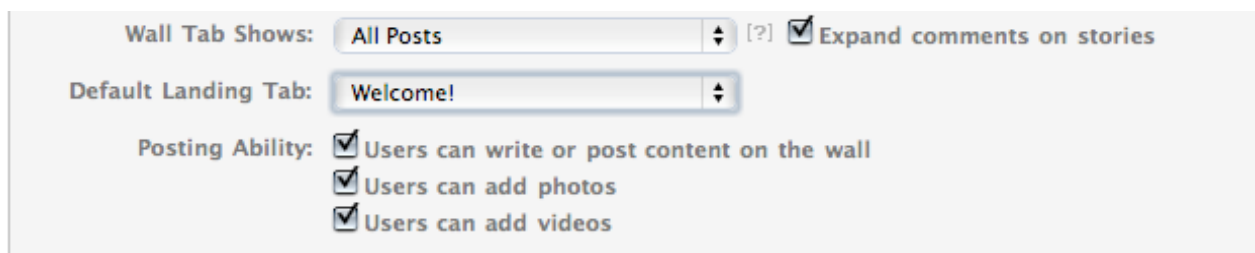


Figure 8: Change default landing tab

Appendix A: Personal Interview

I interviewed Christopher Taranto, the communications manager of the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance to get an insider's point of view about a certain area of wine country in California.

Interview Transcription:

Stephanie Moore:

"I'm doing my senior project on social networking in wineries and how it sets them apart and how they use it and what's most effective for them."

Chris Taranto:

"Alright, so this is kind of the bible of Paso Wine Country. We produce this piece; we produce a lot of them. And it is the pocket guide to Paso. Alright so, let's go over Paso Robles Wine Country really quick, first and foremost. Lots of people like to split us up east side, west side. We don't really particularly like that; nonetheless I am going to use it as a basis of looking at this map. Here is the 101 – east, west.

What you have over here is a large amount, critical mass of wineries and a lack of cell service. Over here you have some of the larger brands with more staff - they have a wine maker, an owner, director of sales and marketing, etc. Over here you have a lot of the smaller brands where the wine maker is the marketer and the janitor.

Smaller wineries without marketing departments are probably the ones who need more help with online presence. They probably do have a Facebook page and they are probably on Twitter, maybe even doing Myspace, I doubt it though. They probably have a Youtube account, but usually the more advanced ones with a little larger staff will be doing Youtube and Flickr. What you will also find is a lot of the wineries are using Facebook to a good capacity. They have their friends out there. They are growing to see they should be a category instead of an actual entity so they're "like" instead. That's cool, a good amount of them have figured that part out, so that's great that they're doing that, but what I think that where a lot of these small guys fall down is

that they will be active, they will be doing it, and updating during the harvest and stuff and now nothing is happening. They've slacked and nobody cares anymore and they've probably lost a little bit of placement even. I doubt anyone has "unliked" or dropped friends. That's sometimes too bad especially for some brands that were so active out there, you know? They always go in bursts, too. I've "liked" everyone in Paso Wine County and you'll see a week or two of activity, probably because they're all like "yeah, I really got to get on that Facebook and update" and then they'll fall off again and take a couple days off or whatever, and it happens, but a majority of wineries in our area are on Facebook at the minimum and are small wineries."

SM:

"Do you just work for the Wine Alliance or are you associated with any winery in particular?"

CT:

"No, I just work for the Wine Alliance."

SM:

"Well, what does the Wine Alliance do exactly?"

CT:

"We are a 501-C6 Non-Profit trade organization that represents the entire Paso Robles Wine Region. So, we have a membership, it is an "opt-in" thing, it's not a government run organization. All the wineries in this book and then some are members and they choose to buy into the marketing power of the alliance.

As a trade organization we're much like a visitors conference bureau or any other trade organization you may join, whether its help you market your brand or product as well as education in Paso. We try to leverage the dollars of our members to make a bigger buy when it comes to things, whether it is getting speakers or discounts on a product.

Our mission is two pronged. One to enhance the wine country experience for our consumer so the way we do that is through Zinfandel festival or wine festival. Those events help expand brand awareness for wineries as well as expand the minds of consumers in understanding what Paso Robles wine country is about.

Our other goal is to expand the outreach of the brand awareness of Paso Robles Wine Country in the marketplaces. We do that by going on the road and we have a grand tasting tour in state and also out of state. We do trade relations so we bring trade people here, get tours for them and tastings and we bring press here. So, just about every tiny piece of press you see out there about Paso Robles, it's likely our office had something to do with it. It's likely I did the fact check, I positioned it, I pitched it, I did something myself or one of us in this office likely did something to get that piece of press.

Right now, there is something in *Travel Squire*, actually that I worked on with the writer that is all over the place right now. We're waiting on a story coming from luxury travel locations; I actually just did a fact check on that. We are always working, press-wise, on a story of some sort. 99.9% of the time a publication used us as a source."

SM:

"How many people work here?"

CT:

"There are seven of us here. Communications-wise, being what I do, there are two of us in that department. So, we have an executive director, two managers, then our department, and support staff and a board of directors who decide policy."

SM:

"What is this brochure?"

CT:

"That is ZinFest. ZinFest is one of the four events we do in-market to basically create a reason for people to come to Paso Robles Wine Country. It becomes a weekend series of events. So, you come for this marquee ticketed event but you stay for the weekend because individual wineries do their individual events.

So that way it gives people more of a reason to stick around and check out Paso Robles Wine Country and then usually what that means is that you can go to any of the wineries and engage in some sort of activity. Many wineries use this as a jumping off point to be able to capture, you

know, more wine club members, sales, to turn more people onto their brands and then by doing so maybe those people will come back again at a different time, a different weekend. It is that platform to get people to return to Paso Robles Wine Country.”

SM:

What do you have to say about social networking?

CT:

So, there's a lot of talk about social networking and how exactly to use it. In 2010, I think most businesses have jumped on the bandwagon of using social networking and realized its not meant to sell, but to brand, to raise brand awareness. I think it's a given that they're using it to brand their business so ask, how has social networking helped extend the brand and whether social networking compliments other strategies or replaces past strategies? Facebook is relationship building. Does it replace newsletters? How do they use it to help the wine club? Things like that. Now your wine club and newsletter subscribers get constant updates, instead of just an occasional update and that helps people to not cut the particular winery's wine club. Facebook and Twitter saves time and money.

Anything else I can do for you?

SM:

I think that is it for now, thank you so much.

CT:

You are welcome, good luck!

SM:

If I have any more questions, are you open to me emailing you again?

CT:

Of course.

Appendix B: Market Observation



Figure 10: St. Supéry Vineyards Static FBML Page

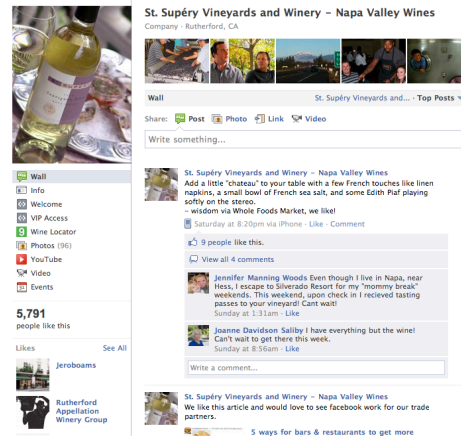


Figure 9: St. Supéry Vineyards Fan Page



Figure 11: V. Sattui Winery Fan Page



Figure 12: Tobin James Cellars Fan Page



Figure 14: J. Lohr Vineyards & Wines Fan Page



Figure 13: Opolo Vineyards Fan Page

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