Social Media, California Wineries, and the Millennial Generation:

The Best Practices of Social Media to Connect With the Youngest Wine Drinking Demographic

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Table of Contents

Abstract 1

I. Introduction 2

II. Review of Literature 4
- Millennials' Contribution to Increase in United States Wine Consumption 4
- Social Media and Millennials 4
- Social Media and Wineries 5

III. Methodology 6

IV. Discussion 7
- The California Wine Industry 7
  - Development of the Industry 7
  - Landmark Events in California Wine History 8
  - United States Market Trends 8
  - The California Wine Market 10
  - Looking to the Future 11
- The Millennial Generation 12
  - Who They Are 12
  - Where They Live 16
  - How They Make Money and What They Buy 17
  - Millennials and Social Media 21
- Social Media 23
  - What It Is 23
  - Facebook 25
  - Twitter 27
  - Wineries and Social Media 29
- Wineries and Millennials 32
  - What Wine Millennials Like 32
  - Why Millennials Like Wine 34
  - How Wineries Can Connect With Millennials 37

V. Conclusion 40

Works Cited 41

Abstract

This senior project was done to determine the best practices of social media for California wineries to use in order to connect with the Millennial generation.

The California wine industry has been growing steadily for years. Much of this growth can be attributed to a generation of people in the United States called Millennials. This generation is currently between the ages of 10 and 30, and those of age are drinking wine with a passion that mirrors that of their Baby Boomer parents. Wineries are searching for the best ways in which to connect with and market to this demographic, as Millennials tend to be wary of traditional or blatant advertising, choosing instead to listen to the advise of their peers or social networking sites. Facebook and Twitter are ideal social media for wineries to use to connect with the Millennial generation, as they are viewed as genuine sources where users can actively participate in two-way conversations with other users and the winery about its brand. When used effectively, Facebook and Twitter can increase a winery's profits and establish a loyal Millennial customer base for years to come.

I. Introduction

The California wine industry is the largest of that of any state in the United States, with more than 3,000 wineries that produce approximately 90 percent of all wine in the U.S.[1] Since the first winery was established in the 1850's, California's wine industry has been, for the most part, growing steadily. Though the premium wine segment, which is comprised of wines sold at $20 or more per bottle, did see a decline due to the 2008 recession in the United States, lower priced wine segments continued to see growth. The recession slowed the four to six percent growth in volume in the premium wine segment seen by the previous six years. However, "early signs point to a recovery (on a volume basis) of the premium wine segment in 2010."[2]

Much of the growth in the California wine industry can be attributed to a generation of people called "Millennials." Defined as those born between 1980 and 2000 (though these years vary by source), this generation is demonstrating a strong affinity for wine similar to that shown by their parents, the Baby Boomers. With approximately 85 million members, this generation is the largest since the Baby Boomers, who boasted approximately 78 million members.[3] Additionally, as approximately 16 million Millennials are not yet of drinking age, this generation could potentially spur the most growth in the wine industry in 30 years.[4]

Wineries around the United States, especially those in California, have started to take notice of the potential of the Millennial generation to contribute to the wine industry by purchasing and consuming wine. With an annual income totaling $211 billion, this generation

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[1] Wine Institute, "2010 California/U.S. Wine Sales," 2010, 7 May 2011, <http://www.wineinstitute.org/resources/statistics/article584>.

[2] Passport GMID, "Wine – USA," Euromonitor International, 3 Dec. 2010: 1, 21 Apr. 2011.

[3] U.S. Census Bureau, "Population Estimates, National Sex and Age, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex and Five-Year Age Groups for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009," 2010, 6 June 2011, <http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/NC-EST2009-sa.html>.

[4] Wine Market Council, "Consumer Tracking Study final report," 2010: 2-3, 21 Apr. 2011, <http://winemarketcouncil.com/research_summary.asp>.

has especially high buying power that could benefit the wine industry.[5] However, as most Millennials use the Internet as their primary source of information for conducting product research and making purchases, California wineries are searching for the best way in which to reach this generation. To target this especially technologically savvy group that is "suspicious of commercial messages and tends to rely more on the recommendations of friends and social networking sites,"[6] many wineries have launched social media campaigns to better connect with Millennial consumers.

Though Millennials have been showing interest in wine and have a high disposable income, wineries have only recently started to acknowledge this generation as one that should be connected with, previously assuming that wine appealed more to an "older, more discerning palate."[ibid. 3.] However, as more Millennials come of age, their ability to boost the wine industry is becoming more apparent, and many wineries are exploring the best ways to establish a relationship with these consumers. The best practices for California wineries to use in order to build strong relationships with the Millennial generation are the social networking sites Facebook and Twitter.

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[5] Nowak, Linda, et al., "Wowing the Millennials: creating brand equity in the wine industry," Journal of Product & Brand Management, Vol. 15, No. 5, 2006: 317, 21 Apr. 2011, ScienceDirect.

[6] Lavin, Kate, "Marketing matters: how to engage Millennials," Wines and Vines, 1 Apr. 2009: 2, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://www.allbusiness.com/population-demographics/demographic-groups-baby-boomers/12313697-1.html>.

[ibid. 3.] Lavin, 3.

II. Review of Literature

Millennials' Contribution to Increase in United States Wine Consumption

The literature points to a trend of increased wine consumption by Millennials since the early 2000's. The Millennial generation started gaining notoriety as a wine drinking population in 2003, and was immediately categorized as different than any previous generation of wine drinkers in terms of their wine consuming and purchasing habits. According to the 2010 Wine Market Council's Consumer Tracking Study, since 2005, the percentage of Millennials who have become "core" wine drinkers, or those who drink wine at least once per week, has increased from 37 percent to 51 percent of all Millennials. Consequently, the percentage of those Millennials considered to be "marginal" wine drinkers, who consume wine less than once per week, but more often than every three months, has decreased.[7]

Social Media and Millennials

The literature also suggests that the Millennial generation avidly uses social media. As the first generation to grow up surrounded by computers, the Internet, and digital media, Millennials today thrive on the use of cell phones that connect them to social networks that in turn connect them with friends and millions of other users around the world. According to a study done by Packaged Facts, Millennials are "so hard-wired to electronic multi-tasking it's a wonder they weren't all blogging *in vitro*."[8] Though older generations recognize that technology, especially social media, helps them stay connected with friends and peers, and accomplish many tasks more efficiently, Millennials cannot imagine life without these devices.

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[7] Wine Market Council, "Consumer Research Data," 2010: 3, 21 Apr. 2010, <www.winemarketcouncil.com/research_slideview.asp?position=3>.

[8] Packaged Facts, "The Adults of Generation Y in the U.S.: Hitting the Demographic, Lifestyle and Marketing Mark," December 2008: 48, 30 Apr. 2011. Google Scholar.

Social Media and California Wineries

Finally, the literature suggests that there has been an increase in the use of social media by wineries across the United States, but specifically those in California. The wine industry, along with many other major U.S. industries, supposedly began to integrate the Internet into its business plan in the 1990s.[9] By 2003, 90 to 100 percent of U.S. wineries had some sort of online presence. Now, most wineries have incorporated some sort of social media into their marketing strategy. Though the wine industry has traditionally been viewed as behind the times, and social media is often received as the most popular communication method of the present (and perhaps the future), these two entities share similar values. According to Courtney Cochran, a writer for sfgate.com, "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."[10] Social media is ideal for wineries to use, as both allow for the establishment of social atmospheres.

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[9] Thach, Liz, "Wine 2.0 – The Next Phase of Wine Marketing? Exploring US Winery Adoption of Wine 2.0 Components," 28 Apr. 2009: 143, 21 Apr. 2011, EBSCOhost.

[10] Cochran, Courtney, "Wineries embracing social networking," San Francisco Chronicle, 7 July 2010: 1, 20 Apr. 2011, <sfgate.com>.

III. Methodology

The methodology used for this senior project was traditional reviews of existing research. The literature was compiled and examined to determine the themes that exist between social media, wineries in California, and the Millennial generation. Additionally, the literature was analyzed to determine the best practices of social media for California wineries to use in order to best connect and build relationships with Millennials.

IV. Discussion

The California Wine Industry

Development of the Industry

The first vineyards in California were planted in 1769 by Father Junipero Serra, a Franciscan monk, as part of the Spanish mission system. The first vines were planted at Mission San Diego, and as the subsequent 21 missions were founded, vines were planted at each of these as well. In September 1772, the grapes at Mission San Diego were harvested and pressed. This year signified the first vintage of wine in California.

Originally, wine was only produced by the Spanish missions for use in churches and for trade. However, as other immigrants found their way to California, they learned of the great potential of the state to grow grapes and produce wine, and began producing wine themselves. The first non-Mission grapes were planted on the Sonoma Coast at Fort Ross by Russian immigrants in 1812. Winegrapes were next planted in Los Angeles, and then in the Napa Valley.

The Gold Rush in 1849 brought many more immigrants, and subsequently winemakers, to California. In the 1860's, the arrival of many Italian and German immigrants to California spurred exponential growth in the wine industry. These immigrants were highly knowledgeable about wine and the winemaking process and were instrumental in developing the California wine industry into what it has become today.

Prohibition was a major setback for the California wine industry, as alcohol production and distribution became illegal in 1920. The only wineries allowed to remain open were those that produced sacramental wine for Catholic mass. Additionally, a few home winemakers and winegrapes growers survived prohibition; the growers were allowed to ship grapes to the winemakers, who were legally permitted to produce 200 gallons of wine per year.

When prohibition was repealed in 1933, only 160 of the 700 California wineries that existed before prohibition remained. In 1934, the California Wine Institute was created as a vehicle to support the wine industry. To further develop the industry, the University of California at Davis started the first enology (winemaking) program in the United States. This program soon began producing "future winemaking stars."[11]

Landmark Events in California Wine History

The California wine industry took a giant leap forward in 1976 in the Judgment of Paris competition, in which during a blind taste testing, both a Chardonnay and a Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley were voted better than their counterparts from France.[ibid. 1.]

To signify the 30th anniversary of the original Judgment of Paris, another blind tasting competition was held in 2006. In this competition, once again, a Chardonnay and a Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley reigned supreme over those from France. When combined, these events established California wine as a major player on the international wine scene. They have helped in bolstering not only the California wine industry, but the United States wine industry as a whole.[ibid. 2.]

United States Market Trends

In the United States, total consumption of table wine has been climbing steadily since 1994. In 1996, table wine consumption reached 176 million cases. In 2000, consumption

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[11] Wine Institute, "California Wine Timeline," Discover California Wine, 2011: 1, 7 May 2011, <http://www.discovercaliforniawine.com/learn/california-wine-timeline>.

[ibid. 1.] Wine Institute, "California Wine Timeline," 1.

[ibid. 2.] Wine Institute, "California Wine Timeline," 1.

reached 205 million cases, and in 2010, it reached 276 million cases. The Wine Market Council estimated that by the end of 2010, U.S. per capita consumption would reach 3.04 gallons.[12]

A high demand for table wine allowed the U.S. wine industry to survive the recent economic downturn. Though wines sold at higher price points and imported wines were negatively impacted during the recession, overall consumption continued to increase.[ibid. 1.] In 2008, total volume sales of wine grew by almost two percent, and continued to rise by two percent in both 2009 and 2010. However, while volume sales of wine grew, value sales for wine declined in 2009 by almost 4 percent, and by almost 2 percent more in 2010.[13]

The recent recession changed not only the value of the wine people were buying, but also where they chose to drink their wine. Rather than going to a restaurant to have a glass of wine, people opted instead to buy a bottle of wine to consume at home. Consumers also chose to purchase and consume less expensive bottles of wine during this period. Wines priced at $4.00 to $13.50 maintained their market share of wine sales; however, sales of those priced at $13.50 or higher declined. Many fear that the wine industry may not easily bounce back from the decline in purchases of wines at higher price points, as many consumers have now discovered wines they enjoy at lower price points and may be wary of exploring those available for a higher price.[ibid. 1.]

Still, the growth of the U.S. wine industry seen in the past 17 years is not expected to slow any time soon. According to John Gillespie, president of the Wine Market Council, "we are

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[12] Wine Market Council, "Consumer Research Data," 2010: 1, 21 Apr. 2010, <www.winemarketcouncil.com/research_slideview.asp?position=3>.
ibid. 1. Wine Market Council, "Consumer Research Data," 1.
[13] Passport GMID, "Wine – USA," Euromonitor International, 3 Dec. 2010: 1, 21 Apr. 2011.
ibid. 1. Passport GMID, 1.

now entering what I fully expect to be our 18th consecutive year of growth."[14] As 46 million U.S. adults are now core wine drinkers, and 31 million are marginal wine drinkers, 77 million American are considered wine consumers. This means that approximately 25 percent of all Americans drink wine.[ibid. 1.] Gillespie believes that as wine consumption continued through two recessions, it will continue to grow in years to come.[ibid. 1.]

The California Wine Market

Though California is only home to approximately 50 percent of all wineries in the United States, it produces approximately 90 percent of the volume of all U.S. wine. It has more than 3,000 wineries, 4,600 winegrape growers, and 2,700 winemakers who annually produce 2.7 billion bottles of wine.[15]

Winegrapes are grown in 48 of California's 58 counties. For the purposes of winegrape growing, the state is divided into 111 American Viticultural Areas (AVAs), which are federally recognized growing regions. The largest of these is the North Coast AVA, with 3,008,000 acres. This AVA occupies Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Solano, and Sonoma Counties.[16]

In 2010, the retail value of California wine was $18.5 billion. Part of this value is attributed to wine shipments to markets in other U.S. states and abroad, which totaled

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[14] Nichols, Rachel, "U.S. Wine Consumer Trends: Boomers' Tastes Evolve, Millennials Continue to Drive Market Growth," winebusiness.com, 24 Jan. 2011: 1, 18 May 2011, <http://www.winebusiness.com/news/?go=getArticle&dataid=83196>.

[ibid. 1.] Nichols, 1.

[ibid. 1.] Nichols, 1.

[15] Wine Institute, "California Wine Timeline," Discover California Wine, 2011: 2, 7 May 2011, <http://www.discovercaliforniawine.com/learn/california-wine-timeline>.

[16] Wine Institute, "American Viticultural Areas Located in California by County," 2010, 7 May 2011, <http://www.iwineinstitute.com/CALAVABYCOUNTY.ASP>.

approximately 241 million cases of wine. This value increased two percent from the value of 2009 wine shipments.[17]

The California wine industry has an annual state economic impact of $61.5 billion, and a national economic impact of $121.8 billion. It provides 330,000 jobs in California and $12.3 billion in state wages. In 2010, 20.7 million tourists traveled to California to visit wine regions and spent $2.1 billion in the state.[18]

Chardonnay was the number one varietal bottled in 2010, with 53 million cases. Cabernet Sauvignon was the next most bottled varietal in 2010, with 33 million cases. New "creative" wine varietals, such as Moscato and Riesling, were introduced to the California wine market in 2009 to keep consumers excited about the future of the industry.[ibid.]

Looking to the Future

Though annual United States per capita consumption is still fairly low when compared with that of countries such as France and Italy, at 2.6 gallons in 2010,[19] and did not reach Wine Market Council's per capita consumption prediction of 3.04 gallons, the growing adult population is a promising prospect for the wine industry. Those of the Millennial generation are coming of age every year and adopting wine just as their parents, the Baby Boomers, did. Wine marketers are searching for new and interesting ways to connect with this demographic in order to draw them in and convert them to core wine drinkers – those who consume wine at least once per week.

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[17] Wine Institute, "2010 California/U.S. Wine Sales," 2010: 2, 7 May 2011, <http://www.wineinstitute.org/resources/statistics/article584>.

[18] Wine Institute, "California Wine Profile 2010," 15 Apr. 2011, 7 May 2011, <http://www.wineinstitute.org/resources/statistics/article80>.

[ibid.] Wine Institute, "California Wine Profile 2010."

[19] Wine Institute, "Wine Consumption in the U.S.," 2010: 1, 5 June 2011, <http://www.wineinstitute.org/resources/statistics/article86>.

The California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG) has started a public relations campaign that informs U.S. consumers and wine media of vineyard practices, such as being organic or sustainable, that adds value to California wines specifically. According to Karen Ross, president of CAWG, "Every major wine-producing country has an aggressive program in the United States, and California needs to make sure there is a California message out there." Though California has not been aggressive in the past about marketing its wine, as the wine industry as a whole has not yet been faced with a surplus, the day may come when there is more supply than demand. California needs to ensure that it establishes loyal customers who will stay interested in California wine.[20]

The Millennial Generation

Who They Are

The Millennial generation represents those in the United States who are currently between the ages of 10 and 31. Also referred to as Generation Y, Nexters, and Echo Boomers, they are the largest generation since the Baby Boomers, their parents, with more than 85 million members. They are the first generation to grow up surrounded by digital media and the Internet, and rely heavily on the Internet as a trustworthy source of information. Millennials are also busy multitaskers, who "have come of age in a society of technological change and one that is consumer oriented." They enjoy watching television, networking on Facebook, and text messaging simultaneously.[21]

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[20] Raine, George, "'Millennials' love imported wine/Research shows 21-to-30 crowd and Gen Xers are trying new labels and often buy online," 20 Feb. 2007: 2, 21 Apr. 2011, <http://articles.sfgate.com/2007-02-20/business/17233069_1_wine-consumer-study-millennial-generation-wine-consumption>.

[21] Belleau, Bonnie D., et al, "Theory of Reasoned Action: Purchase Intention of Young Consumers," Clothing and Textiles Research Journal, 2007: 246, 5 June 2011, Sage Journals Online.

According to a study of Millennial adults age 18 to 29 done by Simmons Market Research Bureau in 2008, Millennials age 18 to 24 comprise 59 percent of this generation, while those age 25 to 29 make up 41 percent of the group. Millennial women represent a slightly higher segment of this population, at 51 percent, while Millennial men account for 49 percent of the population.[22] In the U.S., adult women age 18 to 49 are 10 percent more likely than the average American to drink domestic table wine, while U.S. adult men age 18 to 49 are 22 percent less likely to drink domestic table wine than the average American.[23] As women are more likely to consume table wine than men, and there are more Millennial women than Millennial men, wine consumption for this generation as a whole may be higher than if there were an equal number of males and females in the group.

The Millennial generation is the most ethnically diverse of any generation in the history of the United States. In 2008, among adult Millennials age 18 to 29, approximately 62 percent identified themselves as White and non-Hispanic. Hispanics comprised approximately 22 percent of this group, black Millennials accounted for 9 percent, and 7 percent fell outside these three categories. According to the Simmons study, these statistics suggest that Millennial adults are 21 percent more likely than the average adult to select an ethnicity other than White, Hispanic, or Black.[24] However, though the Millennial population is highly diverse, this population, along with the wine drinking population as a whole, still predominantly identifies itself as White. Indeed, Americans who identify themselves as White are 10 percent more likely than the average adult to consume domestic table wine.[25]

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[22] Packaged Facts, "The Adults of Generation Y in the U.S.: Hitting the Demographic, Lifestyle and Marketing Mark," December 2008: 4, 30 Apr. 2011. Google Scholar.
[23] MRI Reporter, "Beverages, Domestic Dinner/Table Wines, Adults," Fall 2009, 18 May 2011, MRI Plus.
[24] Packaged Facts, "The Adults of Generation Y in the U.S.: Hitting the Demographic, Lifestyle and Marketing Mark," December 2008: 54, 30 Apr. 2011. Google Scholar.
[25] MRI Reporter, "Beverages, Domestic Dinner/Table Wines, Adults," Fall 2009, 18 May 2011, MRI Plus.

Due in part to an exceedingly ethnically and culturally diverse population and a notion that "we should strive for equality for all,"[26] many Millennials are more liberal in their political viewpoints. Though only 62 percent of this population is registered to vote, most are registered as Democrat. According to the Simmons study, Millennials are "the least Republican generation in U.S. history."[ibid. 56.] Millennial involvement in the 2008 presidential election, from assistance with social networking to consumption and creation of blogs and videos, suggests there may be "a resurgence of youth culture interest in the political process."[ibid. 59.] Though there is not extensive research on the correlation between wine consumption and political affiliation, the liberal leanings of many Democrats and the large number of Millennial Democrats might suggest that this generation as a whole is more liberal in their acceptance of and willingness to try new things, such as wine.

As many Millennials grew up with parents who pushed them to get exceptional grades and micromanaged their schedules, Millennials in general are well educated and thrive in busy environments. The Millennial parents, described as active and involved parents who often intervened on behalf of their children, shuttled their children from school to soccer practice to piano lessons, leaving their children little free time. However, according to a survey done on behalf of Northwest Mutual Life Insurance by Lou Harris, president of the polling organization Louis Harris and Associates, "Mom and Dad were most often named when young people were asked whom they admired."[27] This shows that despite exceeding pressure from their parents, Millennials do look up to them. The admiration Millennials have of their parents may suggest

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[26] Packaged Facts, "The Adults of Generation Y in the U.S.: Hitting the Demographic, Lifestyle and Marketing Mark," December 2008: 55, 30 Apr. 2011. Google Scholar.

[ibid. 56.] Packaged Facts, 56.

[ibid. 59.] Packaged Facts, 59.

[27] Raines, Claire, "Managing Millennials," Connecting Generations: The Sourcebook, 2002: 3, 20 Apr. 2011, <www.generationsatwork.com>.

why their wine consumption is increasing – many Millennials idolize their parents and follow their trends. Their Baby Boomer parents are currently the largest wine consuming demographic in the U.S. However, with an ever-increasing affinity for wine, Millennials' wine consumption may soon surpass that of their parents.

Despite pressure from their parents to exceed in school and become as well-educated as possible, many Millennials opt to take one or more years off of school following high school graduation, choosing travel or leisure time as an alternative to college. In 2008, 43 percent of adult Millennials were currently enrolled in college classes or already had a bachelor's degree. Some of the Millennials who opt out of college or a bachelor's degree instead choose vocational school or a specialized technical school where they can receive necessary training for a trade.[28] In general, people who have graduated from college are 61 percent more likely than the average American adult to consume domestic table wine, while those who only attended college are only two percent more likely than the average American adult to consume domestic table wine. Additionally, those who have only graduated from high school are 29 percent less likely to consume wine than the average American adult.[29] This suggests that while attending college may increase wine drinking potential, actually graduating from college greatly increases the wine consuming potential of the Millennial generation. Thus, those Millennials who do choose to pursue a college degree may be more likely to consume wine.

Millennials are also financially dependent on their parents longer than previous generations. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 85 percent of 17 to 19 year old Millennials who choose to attend a four-year college after high school financially depend on

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[28] Packaged Facts, "The Adults of Generation Y in the U.S.: Hitting the Demographic, Lifestyle and Marketing Mark," December 2008: 72-3, 30 Apr. 2011. Google Scholar.
[29] MRI Reporter, "Beverages, Domestic Dinner/Table Wines, Adults," Fall 2009, 18 May 2011, MRI Plus.

their parents.[30] In addition, some Millennials delay marriage and child rearing well into their twenties to instead maintain a close relationship with their parents. This is due partly to a notion instilled in them by their parents of being the center of the family unit, and partly to a lack of necessary income. Though many Millennials say they do manage their own income, they "may not mind accepting the occasional wad of $100's…or a year-long stint in the parents' wood-paneled basements to help make ends meet."[ibid. 104.] Once again, this sense of belonging to and closeness with their parents may fuel Millennials' wine consumption, as they may start to identify with and imitate their parents' habits.

Where They Live

Millennials tend to live at home longer than any previous generation, in part to remain close to their parents, and also to save money. In 2008, approximately 54 percent of Millennials ages 18 and older that were attending college commuted to campus from their parents' houses.[ibid. 106.] Even those Millennials who lived on the college campus still felt as though they were a part of their parents' households, due to allegiance to and financial dependence on their parents.[ibid. 105.] Just as Millennials' admiration for their parents may have a positive correlation with their increased wine consumption, that they are living at home and depending financially on their parents longer may suggest that they are being more exposed to wine or able to purchase more wine due to their Baby Boomer parents.

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[30] Packaged Facts, "The Adults of Generation Y in the U.S.: Hitting the Demographic, Lifestyle and Marketing Mark," December 2008: 105, 30 Apr. 2011. Google Scholar.

[ibid. 104.] Packaged Facts, 104.

[ibid. 106.] Packaged Facts, 106.

[ibid. 105.] Packaged Facts, 105.

In the U.S. as a whole, the Millennial population is fairly geographically spread out. 54 percent of Millennials live in non-metro, suburban, or rural environments.[ibid. 52.] The greatest percentage of adult Millennials, 28 percent, is centrally located in states such as Indiana, Kentucky, and Michigan. 19 percent of adult Millennials can be found in the Northeast, 19 percent reside in the Southeast, 22 percent live in the Pacific region, and 11 percent reside in the Southwest. When compared with the average American adult, Millennials are 12 percent more likely to live in the Pacific region. It is important to note that Millennials are more likely than the average adult to live in this region, and that California, Oregon and Washington are three of the top four wine producing states in the U.S. Millennials, especially those who live in this region, may be more familiar than the average adult with wine and may have more access to wineries and tasting rooms.

How They Make Money and What They Buy

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, in the first quarter of 2011, January through March, the value for the median usual weekly earnings value for all full-time wage and salary workers age 16 to 24 was $448. All other values held constant, this number can be used to find a median usual monthly earnings value of approximately $1,920 (based on a 30-day month), and a median usual yearly earnings value of approximately $23,300. For those age 25 to 34, the median usual weekly earnings value was $683. This number can be extrapolated to give a median usual monthly earnings value of approximately $2,930 (based on a 30-day month), and a median usual yearly earnings value of approximately $35,500, all else held constant.[31]

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ibid. 52. Packaged Facts, 52.

[31] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table 3. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by age, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 1st quarter 2011 averages, not seasonally adjusted," United States Department of Labor, 19 Apr. 2011, 22 May 2011, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/wkyeng.t03.htm>.

The median usual weekly earnings of all full-time wage and salary male workers age 16 to 24 were $470. All else held constant, the median usual monthly earnings for male workers age 16 to 24 was approximately $2,010, based on a 30-day month. The median usual yearly earnings for male workers would be approximately $24,440. The median usual weekly earnings for male workers age 25 to 34 were $703. This number can be used to find a median usual monthly earnings value of approximately $3,010, based on a 30-day month, and a median usual yearly earnings value of approximately $36,550, all other values held constant.[ibid.]

For all full-time wage and salary female workers age 16 to 24, the median usual weekly earnings was $426. All other values held constant, this number can be used to give a median usual monthly earnings value of approximately $1,825, based on a 30-day month, and a median usual yearly earnings value of approximately $22,150 for female workers age 16 to 24. The median usual weekly earnings for female workers age 25 to 34 were $658 for the first quarter of 2011. This number can be extrapolated to give a median usual monthly earnings value of $2,820, based on a 30-day month, and a median usual yearly earnings value of $35,620, all else held constant.[ibid.]

In the workplace, Millennials like to be challenged, but also look to managers for leadership. They also like to feel as though they are part of a community, and want to work with people they get along with. A very busy generation, Millennials like their work schedules to be flexible, and according to Raines, "a rigid schedule is a sure-fire way to lose your Millennial employees."[32] Millennials also believe there should be a balance between work and life outside of work. They tend to believe that life should be "fun and enjoyable," but they also want to work

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[ibid.] Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[ibid.] Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[32] Raines, Claire, "Managing Millennials," Connecting Generations: The Sourcebook, 2002: 5, 20 Apr. 2011, <www.generationsatwork.com>.

hard and feel a sense of responsibility for their job.[33] They are highly confident in their own work ethic, but also are "civic-minded team players" who have been organized in teams to complete tasks since childhood.[34]

Millennials also have a different attitude toward money than previous generations. They are generally optimistic about their ability to make money. 73 percent of college seniors polled in a Northwestern Mutual survey saying they "thought it very likely they would be able to afford the lifestyle they grew up in."[35] This generation expects and wants to have money, but also understands they have to work for it. In the same poll, when Millennials were asked to identify the one thing that would better their lives forever, 26 percent stated "having more money."[ibid. 49.] Though Millennials value having money, much of this value seems to be attributed to a desire to maintain the lifestyle they grew up in. This lifestyle is not necessarily viewed by Millennials as luxurious, but rather normal, and something they must strive to maintain.

Currently considered to be the largest consumer group in the United States, with an annual income of approximately $211 billion, many advertisers see potential in the Millennial generation to boost sales of their companies. Millennials are one of the most sought after consumer groups, as they have high spending power, may be trendsetters for their peers or even other generations, enjoy trying new products, and have high potential to become a "lifetime

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[33] Nowak, Linda, et al., "Wowing the Millennials: creating brand equity in the wine industry," Journal of Product & Brand Management, Vol. 15, No. 5, 2006: 317, 21 Apr. 2011, ScienceDirect. .

[34] Lavin, Kate, "Marketing matters: how to engage Millennials," Wines and Vines, 1 Apr. 2009: 2, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://www.allbusiness.com/population-demographics/demographic-groups-baby-boomers/12313697-1.html>.

[35] Paul, Pamela, "Getting Inside Gen Y," American Demographics, Sept. 2001: 49, 5 June 2011, Google Scholar.

[ibid. 49.] Paul, 49.

customer."[36] However, as traditional marketing does not work with this generation, companies are searching for alternative methods to connect with Millennial consumers.[ibid. 246.]

When it comes to making purchases, Millennials are very market and brand savvy, looking for high quality products sold for a fair price. This generation has "grown up in a media-saturated, brand-conscious world, and is keeping advertisers on their toes."[37] They don't like advertising to be forced upon them and want advertising that is authentic. Though this group does spend approximately $172 billion per year, as a group, they save $39 billion per year and "don't like owing money," suggesting that they are financially savvy as well.[ibid. 2.]

According to the 2010 figures from the U.S. Census Bureau, only 23 percent of Americans under age 25 are homeowners, and 37 percent of Americans age 25 to 29 are homeowners, while the total U.S. homeownership is nearly 67 percent.[38] A lower rate of homeownership suggests that Millennials may have a higher disposable income than their home-owning counterparts, as they are likely paying rent that is less expensive than a mortgage. While those who own a home are 10 percent more likely than the average American to consume domestic table wine[39], Millennials' may have a higher disposable income, some of which they may choose to use to purchase wine.

Despite a potentially higher disposable income, Millennials are smart about the purchases they do make. Though they may make impulse buys on occasion, they also search for the benefit of a product before spending money on it. As a family-oriented generation that values the

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[36] Belleau, Bonnie D., et al, "Theory of Reasoned Action: Purchase Intention of Young Consumers," Clothing and Textiles Research Journal, 2007: 246, 5 June 2011, Sage Journals Online.
ibid. 246. Belleau, 246.
[37] Nowak, Linda, et al., "Wowing the Millennials: creating brand equity in the wine industry," Journal of Product & Brand Management, Vol. 15, No. 5, 2006: 317, 21 Apr. 2011, ScienceDirect. .
ibid. 2. Nowak, et al, 2.
[38] U.S. Census Bureau, "Housing Vacancies and Homeownership, Annual Statistics: 2010, Table 17," 2010, 31 May 2011, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/hvs/annual10/ann10ind.html>.
[39] MRI Reporter, "Beverages, Domestic Dinner/Table Wines, Adults," Fall 2009, 18 May 2011, MRI Plus.

opinion of parents, many Millennials will consult with their parents before making an expensive purchase.[40]

When making purchases, Millennials also tend to search for the "next 'best' thing – whether it is a new gadget, a new job or Canadian ice wine they've never tried."[41] They appreciate marketing campaigns that are smart and unusual.[42] They are never fully content with a product they purchase, so the task of establishing brand loyalty in these consumers is especially challenging for companies. Advertising a product as a "luxury" will also not work with this demographic – though many Millennials have high incomes, they do not view themselves as wealthy. They view technology like an iPhone "as being necessary, not a luxury."[43] Therefore, advertisers are searching for unique ways to connect with Millennials that will be viewed as authentic and will establish a lasting relationship with this generation.

Millennials and Social Media

As the first generation to grow up with computers and the Internet, Millennials turn to the Internet as a trustworthy source to get information regarding almost everything. The Internet has also become a forum for Millennials to use to satisfy their ever-present desire to be connected with their friends via a variety of social media and social networks. With websites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, Millennials are finding it easier than ever to connect not only with their friends, but also with millions of other people around the world.

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[40] Simoes, Luis, and Luis Borges Gouveia, "Consumer Behaviour of the Millennial Generation," 2008: 9, 15, 7 May 2011, homepage.ufp.pt.
[41] Lavin, Kate, "Marketing matters: how to engage Millennials," Wines and Vines, 1 Apr. 2009: 2, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://www.allbusiness.com/population-demographics/demographic-groups-baby-boomers/12313697-1.html>.
[42] Simoes, Luis, and Luis Borges Gouveia, "Consumer Behaviour of the Millennial Generation," 2008: 15, 15, 7 May 2011, homepage.ufp.pt.
[43] Lavin, Kate, "Marketing matters: how to engage Millennials," Wines and Vines, 1 Apr. 2009: 4, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://www.allbusiness.com/population-demographics/demographic-groups-baby-boomers/12313697-1.html>.

According to Christian Taske, a Millennial himself, "we [Millennials] write blogs, upload videos, create profiles...Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are just as much part of our lives as the phone, radio and television are for Baby Boomers."[44] As the first generation to grow up surrounded by digital media, Millennials prefer open, informal media that allows them to connect and build relationships with companies or other users.[ibid. 38.] Email, which used to be considered the latest and greatest technology, is now "too slow and formal"[ibid. 38.] to meet the communication needs of the Millennial generation.

Social media is also a forum where Millennials can create an individual brand that allows them to express themselves, and establish a social connection with their friends and other users. A generation that values authenticity and individuality, Millennials thrive off the use of social media, as it lets them create their own personal identity in an environment they perceive to be open and genuine. Millennials also enjoy the use of this type of media because they are a very sociable generation. Social media and networks allow them to socialize with their friends, other users, and companies they are interested in.

A study done by the American Society for Training & Development showed that Millennials are more likely than both Generation X (the generation between Baby Boomers and Millennials) and Baby Boomers to use social media in their workplaces to accomplish tasks. 21.5 percent of Millennials surveyed said they got more work done with the help of social media tools, while 29.6 percent said they got better work done with social media help. Additionally, 38.1 percent said they learned more in less time when using social media tools.[45]

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[44] Taske, Christian and Frances Forde Plude, "Experiencing social media across generations," Media Development, 2011: 38, 20 Apr. 2011, EBSCOhost.

[ibid. 38.] Taske, 38.

[ibid. 38.] Taske, 38.

[45] T+D, "The Value of Social Media," 20 Apr. 2011, EBSCOhost.

Social media has become an integral part of all aspects of Millennials' lives. It is incorporated into their personal lives, their work lives and everything in between. According to Packaged Facts:

> Gen Y is the first generation for whom media, technology, socialization, advertising, community and personal consciousness are almost seamlessly integrated; they are the first generation for whom the concepts of marketplace and interior life are no longer separate.[46]

Social media is not merely a part of a Millennial's life, but more of a way of life for this entire generation. Additionally, as approximately 75 percent of those in the U.S. age 18 to 24 who use the Internet on a regular basis use a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter, the potential for a winery to connect with a Millennial consumer through those media is great.[47]

Social Media

What It Is

According to Antony Mayfield, social media is a combination of five major characteristics: participation, openness, conversation, community, and connectedness. Social media encourages its users to participate in open forums, as "it blurs the line between media and audience."[48] Many of its services allow users to vote, comment and share information without barriers. In addition, social media, unlike traditional media such as newspapers or television, is seen as a type of two-way conversation, where users can interact with the content they view,

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[46] Packaged Facts, "The Adults of Generation Y in the U.S.: Hitting the Demographic, Lifestyle and Marketing Mark," December 2008: 32, 30 Apr. 2011. Google Scholar.

[47] Granitz, Neil and Stephen K. Koernig, " Web 2.0 and Marketing Education: Explanations and Experiential Applications," Journal of Marketing Education, 28 Feb. 2011: 2, 5 June 2011, Sage Journals Online.

[48] Mayfield, Antony, "What Is Social Media," iCrossing, 8 Jan. 2008: 5, 20 May 2011, <www.icrossing.co.uk/.../What_is_Social_Media_iCrossing_ebook.pdf>.

rather than just view it. It also allows communities with shared interests to develop and communicate. Finally, social media thrives on its connectedness; it allows users to link to other sites or content.[ibid. 5.]

There are a variety of different types of social media. These include, but are not limited to, social networks, blogs, wikis, podcasts, and content communities. A definition of each is listed below:

- **Social Networks**: These sites allow users to build personal profiles and connect with friends or other users. Users can share content and post updates. Examples include Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter.

- **Blogs**: The oldest form of social media, blogs are journals posted online by their users. The most recent entries generally appear first. Examples of blog sites include Wordpress, Blogger, and Blogspot.

- **Wikis**: Wikis act as a communal database where the users can add new content or edit current content. The most well known wiki is Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia.

- **Podcasts**: Podcasts are audio and video files available to users by subscription. Apple iTunes is one service that offers podcasts.

- **Content Communities**: Users of these communities compile and share different kinds of content, such as photographs or videos. Flickr and YouTube are popular content communities.[49]

Though all of these types of social media could potentially be used by wineries, social networks, like Facebook and Twitter, have potentially the widest reach. A recent Nielsen study found that through social networks, 66 percent of the worldwide population that uses the Internet

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ibid. 5. Mayfield, 5.

[49] Mayfield, Antony, "What Is Social Media," iCrossing, 8 Jan. 2008: 6, 20 May 2011, <www.icrossing.co.uk/.../What_is_Social_Media_iCrossing_ebook.pdf>.

could be reached.[50] Facebook and Twitter are very beneficial social networks for wineries, especially those that are just starting to implement a social media campaign, as they are fairly easy to create and maintain. They allow a winery to post updates about what is occurring at the winery or tasting room, and pictures or videos of the vineyard, all in one space. They allow users to learn about a winery quickly through a status update or a post. Additionally, as Millennials are some of the most avid users of social networks, wineries have the opportunity to connect with millions of potential customers through these sites.

Facebook

Facebook is a social networking site that allows users to create a profile page and connect with friends, family, coworkers, and potentially millions of other users worldwide. It was started in 2004 as a platform for Harvard University students to connect with one another, but was soon opened to all university students. Eventually, it was opened to high school students, and finally to anyone age 13 or older.[51]

According to facebook.com, there are currently more than 500 million active Facebook users. 50 percent of these users log on to Facebook in any given day. Facebook's users spend more than 700 billion minutes on the website per month. The average user has 130 friends; is connected to 80 community pages, groups and events; and creates 90 pieces of content each month. Additionally, the global reach of Facebook is extreme, as approximately 70 percent of its users live outside the U.S.[52]

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[50] Granitz, Neil and Stephen K. Koernig, " Web 2.0 and Marketing Education: Explanations and Experiential Applications," Journal of Marketing Education, 28 Feb. 2011: 2, 5 June 2011, Sage Journals Online.
[51] Facebook, "Press Room: Factsheet," 2011, 16 May 2011, <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics#!/press/info.php?factsheet>.
[52] Facebook, "Press Room: Statistics," 2011, 16 May 2011, <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics#!/press/info.php?statistics>.

Facebook is an ideal platform for wineries, as it offers access to potentially millions of customers worldwide. Wineries can create a Facebook "Group" or a "Page," where Groups have "members" and Pages have "fans." Many believe that creating a Facebook Page is the best option for a winery, or any business for that matter, as a Page allows more users to become associated with the winery or organization. According to facebook.com:

> Pages allow real organizations, businesses, celebrities and brands to communicate broadly with people who like them. Pages may only be created and managed by official representatives.[53]

Groups can be created by anyone and are meant for smaller groups of people to communicate with one another about common interests. When a Group gains too many members, certain features become limited. However, there are no limits on how many people can "like" a Page. Additionally, the information and posts on a Page are public to everyone on Facebook, while in general, Group members must be approved or added by other Group members before they can view the content.[ibid.]

On a Facebook Page, a winery can post status updates about what may be occurring at the winery that week, pictures of the vineyard, videos of the winemaking process, directions to visit the tasting room, or even instructions about how to purchase wine online. Additionally, wineries can post a link to their Facebook Page on their main website, directing customers to a more social and interactive way to become involved with and learn about the winery.

Creating a Facebook Page offers a winery the opportunity to reach millions of Facebook users, and to communicate and interact with them as well. Wine is often considered a social

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[53] Facebook, " Help Center: How are Pages different from groups?" 2011, 16 May 2011, <http://www.facebook.com/help/?faq=13622&ref_query=groups+vs.+>.

[ibid.] Facebook, " Help Center: How are Pages different from groups?" 2011, 16 May 2011, <http://www.facebook.com/help/?faq=13622&ref_query=groups+vs.+>.

product, especially to the many Facebook users who are Millennials. Facebook allows these Millennial users to learn about new wineries, and to learn about them in a way that connects them to and allows them to interact with other fans on a winery's Facebook Page.

Twitter

Twitter was started in 2006 and was estimated to have approximately 175 million users in March 2011.[54] It is a social networking site that allows its users to compose "Tweets," or short posts composed of 140 characters or less. These Tweets are displayed on the user's profile page. Users can subscribe to or "follow" other users' pages. Subscribers on Twitter are known as "followers." Users can also "Retweet" the post of another user they follow, which allows them to repost the message from that user to their own profile page.

The number of Twitter accounts has increased by approximately 460,000 every day since February 2011. One year ago, Twitter users were sending approximately 50 million Tweets every day.[55] Currently, approximately 95 million Tweets are made every day.[56] 40 percent of Twitter users follow at least 10 other user accounts and 19 percent of Twitter users have at least 10 followers.[57]

Twitter is an ideal social media device for wineries to use, as it allows them to quickly post a short update about what may be occurring at the winery that day, upcoming events, or information about the tasting room. Additionally, the Retweet option offers other users the opportunity to repost the winery's update directly to their own profile page. Thus, the winery's

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54 Roth Social Media Strategies, "Twitter," 2011, 5 June 2011, <http://rothsocialmedia.com/stastics.htm>.
55 twitter blog, "#numbers," 14 Mar. 2011, 20 May 2011, <http://blog.twitter.com/2011/03/numbers.html>.
56 Roth Social Media Strategies, "Twitter," 2011, 5 June 2011, <http://rothsocialmedia.com/stastics.htm>.
57 twitter blog, "#numbers," 14 Mar. 2011, 20 May 2011, <http://blog.twitter.com/2011/03/numbers.html>.

original post could have a huge snowball effect, connecting them with perhaps hundreds, thousands, or even millions of other Twitter users.

Twitter also offers businesses the opportunity to quickly share information with people who show an interest in their products or services, provide people with information about the business, and build a relationship with potential customers.[58] Wineries can use Twitter to gain insight into what people are saying about their wines or their tasting rooms. If a user makes a negative post about a winery, that winery can use Twitter as a platform to respond to the negative comment in a timely manner. When there is positive feedback, wineries can Retweet those posts and respond in a public forum. Retweets establish a stronger sense of community between the winery and customer and can build or strengthen relationships with new customers.

As with Facebook, a link to a winery's Twitter page can be posted on the winery's main website to direct customers to a more interactive and social forum to learn about and discuss the winery. Additionally, Twitter can be linked to a winery's main website or Facebook Page, so when a winery posts a Tweet, that Tweet would appear on the winery's website, as well as on their Facebook status. Under the "Resources" tab on the Twitter homepage, there are a variety of "widgets" that can be selected and added to a winery's website. One widget option is to display all Tweets made by the winery on its website. Another widget option for a winery's website is to display only the Tweets the winery selects as its favorites. Under the same Resources tab, a winery can select the widget for the Twitter Facebook Application, which allows a winery to share its most recent Twitter updates with all its Facebook fans as its Facebook status.[59]

When using Twitter, MaryEllen Gibson suggests that a winery send out at least three Tweets every day and link its Twitter with its Facebook Page. Following through with these two

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[58] Twitter, "Twitter 101 for Businesses: Best Practices," 2011, 16 May 2011, <http://business.twitter.com/basics/best-practices>.
[59] Twitter, "Select Your Widget," 2011, 22 May 2011, <http://twitter.com/about/resources/widgets>.

tasks will ensure that customers are regularly updated about what is occurring at the winery and that they have access to the winery through more than one social medium.[60]

Wineries and Social Media

Many California wineries have recently started incorporating social media into their marketing strategies. Social media is an important device for wineries, as it creates a two-way, interactive conversation between the winery and the social media user. Additionally, at the core of both social media and the wine industry lie similar values, which "include innovation, ingenuity, collaboration and creativity – all values that, historically, have also served the wine industry well."[61]

Though wineries first established their online presence in the form of 'Wine 1.0,' which Liz Thach describes as:

> wine being featured on the Internet in a passive fashion, such as a basic brochure-style website that includes information on the winery, its products, contact data and perhaps a simple e-commerce engine so that visitors can place an order for wine,[62]

the presence that wineries have online today has morphed into something much more. Now in the time of 'Wine 2.0,' which engages wine consumers and allows them to interact with not only the winery itself, but with other users as well, wineries have started to incorporate all types of social media and networking into their marketing plans. These devices allow wineries to connect

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[60] Gibson, MaryEllen, "5 Hints: Social Media for Wineries," Shine from Yahoo, 17 Mar. 2009: 1, 22 May 2011, <http://shine.yahoo.com/channel/life/5-hints-social-media-for-wineries-by-maryellen-gibson-431634>.
[61] Cochran, Courtney, "Wineries embracing social networking," San Francisco Chronicle, 7 July 2010: 1, 20 Apr. 2011, <sfgate.com>.
[62] Thach, Liz, "Wine 2.0 – The Next Phase of Wine Marketing? Exploring US Winery Adoption of Wine 2.0 Components," 28 Apr. 2009: 144, 21 Apr. 2011, EBSCOhost.

more directly and establish stronger relationships with more potential customers, especially those of the Millennial generation, who avidly use social media to learn about new products.

Many wineries that have implemented social media strategies have done so to connect more directly with customers, promote winery events and increase wine club membership. Still, a majority of wineries have turned to social media for much the same reason that they would turn to any other type of marketing: to increase brand awareness and sales.[63] However, unlike other forms of marketing or traditional media, social media allows a winery to build a different, more personal relationship with a customer. According to John Jordan, CEO of Jordan Vineyard and Winery in Healdsburg, California, social media "is a new modality of engagement…it's about constantly telling your story."[64] Social media engages customers and encourages them to not only participate in that forum, but to also become a part of the experience and the story of the winery.

Many of the wineries that have started using social media are reaping the rewards. Alpha Omega winery in Rutherford, California began using Facebook and Twitter in 2008 to directly connect with its consumers. A boutique winery that sells higher-priced wines, and therefore suffered losses during the recent U.S. economic recession, Alpha Omega began using social media in an attempt to reverse its losses. In 2009, Alpha Omega winery's revenue was up 40 percent, when compared with 2008. The winery credits this revenue increase to the use of social media and their ability to connect directly with consumers who were interested in its brand.[65]

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[63] Linville, Suzie, "Social Grapes? How America's Wineries Are Using Social Media To Extend PR Impact," 25 Mar. 2010, 20 Apr. 2011, <www.socialmediatoday.com>.

[64] Kelterer, Wayne, "Social Media More Than a Buzzword at Wineries Like Carr and Jordan," 16 June 2010: 4, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://palatepress.com/2010/06/wine/social-media-more-than-a-buzzword-at-wineries-like-carr-and-jordan/>.

[65] Carlton, Jim and David Kesmodel, "Luxury Wine Market Reels from Downturn," Wall Street Journal, 8 July 2009: B1, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124700844235408441.html>.

In August 2009, St. Supéry Vineyards and Winery in Rutherford increased its use of Twitter and Facebook, along with several other social media devices, in order to combat the decrease in the winery's wine club membership. St. Supéry reported that "wine club attrition [had] dropped to half its pre-August [2009] rate" in July 2010.[66] This drop is especially significant when compared with the industry average, which was only five to 15 percent per month at that time.

In Napa Valley in 2010, following the first year when new wine releases did not sell out, many Napa wineries turned to social media as a way to "save" the harvest for that year. In 2010, it was estimated that only 20 percent of Napa wineries had a presence on Facebook, suggesting that many were reluctant to venture into an as-yet-unknown realm of social networking. However, to prevent another potential surplus of wine, many Napa wineries began using social media as a way to sell wine directly to the consumer, without the extra cost of a distributor.[67] By signing up new wine club members through social media, wineries can connect directly with customers who may live too far away to visit the winery's tasting room, where a majority of direct-to consumer sales are made. Additionally, they can establish a loyal customer base and ensure that wine is being sold, as club members are charged whenever there is a wine club shipment.

Despite a hesitance by many California wineries to incorporate social media into their marketing strategies, some have started creating a new position on their staff: social media specialist. Jordan Vineyard and Winery currently has two full-time staffers who are devoted solely to social media efforts. In the Napa wine community, St. Supéry Winery hired Rick

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[66] Cochran, Courtney, "Wineries embracing social networking," San Francisco Chronicle, 7 July 2010: 2, 20 Apr. 2011, <sfgate.com>.

[67] Heron, Katrina, "Vintners turn to the Web to fortify sales; Napa Valley winemakers embrace social media to save 2010 harvest," The International Herald Tribune, 18 Feb. 2010: 16, 20 Apr. 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

Bakas as its director of social media in 2009. The winery now has an established Facebook Page and offers "virtual tastings" through Twitter.[ibid. 16.]

Though many wineries say they do not have the budget to hire a social media specialist or to even learn about social media, Bakas says "they can't afford not to, and the economy is pushing the reluctant ones whether they want to or not."[ibid. 16.] Additionally, just having created social media profiles, but not using them, is not enough for a winery. Wineries should involve everyone, from the tasting room manager to the winemaker, in the social media process. By doing so, social media users can become involved in and build a connection with every aspect of the winery in a virtual setting.

Wineries and Millennials

What Wine Millennials Like

Millennials' tendency to search for the "next best thing" extends to their wine purchasing and consuming habits. While 37 percent of Millennials consume domestic wine most often, 32 percent drink imported wine most often. According to John Gillespie, president of the Wine Market Council, "The Millennials grew up with the assumption they could access just about anything at any price from anywhere…They believe all of the cool stuff from around the world was made for them, and that includes wine."[68] They enjoy exploring and discovering new products from all over the world.

Many Millennials looking for imported wines may even venture further than their local grocery store to purchase international wine. Some turn to the Internet to purchase unique wines

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ibid. 16. Heron, 16.

ibid. 16. Heron, 16.

[68] Raine, George, "'Millennials' love imported wine/Research shows 21-to-30 crowd and Gen Xers are trying new labels and often buy online," 20 Feb. 2007: 1, 21 Apr. 2011, <http://articles.sfgate.com/2007-02-20/business/17233069_1_wine-consumer-study-millennial-generation-wine-consumption>.

from around the world. 13 percent of those who consume both domestic and imported wine were most likely to buy their wine online, while only six percent of those who solely drank domestic wine are most likely to purchase it online.[ibid. 1.]

In addition to searching for wine that is unique, Millennials like to consume wine that is seen as "fun" or that has an interesting label. Wines with animals on the label, often called "critter wines," are especially appealing to this demographic. Smoking Loon, a domestic wine produced by Don Sebastini & Sons that depicts a loon on its label, and Yellowtail, a wine imported from Australia with a kangaroo on its label, are some of the most popular Millennial choices.[69] Adults age 25 to 34 are 32 percent more likely than the average American to consume Smoking Loon,[70] and 14 percent more likely than the average American to consume Yellowtail.[71] Millennials are also drawn to wines with funny names, such as Oops, Red Truck, and Fat Bastard.[72] The website of Fat Bastard, a French winery, is especially appealing to Millennials, as it offers links to contests and promotions, and includes a place where consumers can share their own "Fat Bastard story."[73]

Millennials have also been very receptive to new types of wine packaging, such as boxed wine, and the use of screw caps instead of corks, due to their desire for and willingness to try new things. Though many U.S. consumers still associate boxed wine and screw caps with lower

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ibid. 1. Raine, 1.

69 Passport GMID, "Wine – USA," Euromonitor International, 3 Dec. 2010: 1, 21 Apr. 2011.

70 MRI Reporter, "Beverages, Domestic Dinner/Table Wines, Drank in Last 6 Months Smoking Loon, Adults," Fall 2009, 22 May 2011, MRI Plus.

71 MRI Reporter, "Beverages, Domestic Dinner/Table Wines, Drank in Last 6 Months Yellow Tail, Adults," Fall 2009, 22 May 2011, MRI Plus.

72 Brown, Corie, "Young Winos: The Millennial generation is a thirsty one," Los Angeles Times, 12 Mar. 2008: 3, 21 Apr. 2001, <http://www.latimes.com/features/la-fo-youngwine12mar12,0,2147803.story>.

73 Lavin, Kate, "Marketing matters: how to engage Millennials," Wines and Vines, 1 Apr. 2009: 4, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://www.allbusiness.com/population-demographics/demographic-groups-baby-boomers/12313697-1.html>.

quality wine, Millennials welcome them as unique and new, qualities they search for when purchasing any product.[ibid. 3.]

Why Millennials Like Wine

As a generation that looks up to their parents, enjoys trying new things, and thrives in social atmospheres, it is no wonder that Millennials may soon surpass Baby Boomers as the largest wine consuming demographic. However, unlike any generation before them, Millennials like to try and learn about wine in their own way. They are a generation that likes to learn about wine by drinking it rather than reading reviews from well-known critics like Robert Parker. They get information from Internet search engines about wines from all over the world and buy more wine online than other generation. Though Millennials do make more online purchases, they will most likely not purchase any wine without advice from their peers or without tasting it first.[74]

A 2007 study done by Janeen E. Olsen, et al., compared the wine consumption habits of four U.S. generations: Millennials, Generation X, Baby Boomers, and Traditionalists (those age 65 or older). The study examined reasons each generation began consuming and continued to consume wine. Regarding why they began consuming wine, Millennials scored the highest in two categories: drinking wine because friends, family, and co-workers drank it; and drinking wine because it is more classy and sophisticated than beer. Though all four generations scored fairly high in these categories, Millennials were much more likely than the other generations to agree with these statements. Millennials were also much more likely than other generations to associate the image of wine with the word "sexy." Millennials seem to be turning to wine more

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ibid. 3. Lavin, 3.

[74] Brown, Corie, "Young Winos: The Millennial generation is a thirsty one," Los Angeles Times, 12 Mar. 2008: 3, 21 Apr. 2001, <http://www.latimes.com/features/la-fo-youngwine12mar12,0,2147803.story>.

than other generations due to influence from their peers, as well as the image they associate with wine, one of sophistication and sexiness.[75]

Millennials' avid adoption of wine consumption is what may push the market forward in the coming years. Though beer still accounts for 42 percent of Millennials' alcoholic drink purchases, and wine only 20 percent, these trends have been changing over the past several years. With higher quality bottles of wine increasingly being made available for prices that Millennials deem affordable, the margin between these percentages may narrow further in the coming years. They especially enjoy wine because it is something new to many of them, yet is also fairly convenient to purchase and consume. To account for this generation's increased affinity for wine and desire for convenience, 7-Eleven, a store many Millennials may have turned to for beer purchases, recently launched a new line of wines. Called Cherrywood Cellars, this brand is intended to entice the Millennial generation by offering convenience, as well as a quality wine offered for a fairly low price, at $7.99 to $8.99 per bottle.[76]

Much of why Millennials' enjoy wine may also be attributed to the social atmospheres it can facilitate. For this generation, learning more about wine, which is often done by drinking wine, facilitates conversation and increases knowledge about something new. For the Young Winos of Los Angeles, a social group of 21- to 29-year-olds started in 2006 by 22-year-old Jesse Porter, weekly group wine tastings are a way to learn about wine while surrounded by peers. The members of this group meet to taste wines, often unique or imported, and "are serious about improving their wine IQs."[77] The social setting established by the Young Winos for consuming

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[75] Olsen, Janeen E., et al., "Wine for My Generation: Exploring How US Wine Consumers are Socialized to Wine," Journal of Wine Research, Oct. 2006: 11-12, 5 June 2011, Academic Search Elite.

[76] Shultz, E.J., "Millennials: The Great White Hope for Wine Industry," Advertising Age, 6 Dec. 2010, 5 June 2011, Academic Search Elite.

[77] Brown, Corie, "Young Winos: The Millennial generation is a thirsty one," Los Angeles Times, 12 Mar. 2008: 2, 21 Apr. 2001, <http://www.latimes.com/features/la-fo-youngwine12mar12,0,2147803.story>.

wine exemplifies why Millennials are becoming so eager about wine – it is something new, it can be enjoyed in social settings, and it can be discussed with peers.

Millennials' propensity for wine consumption might also be fueled by the belief that moderate wine consumption might decrease one's risk of coronary heart disease, especially as Millennials in general tend to be highly health-conscious and interested in the idea of perpetuating their youth, both internally and externally.[78] Most Millennials were introduced at a young age to the idea that moderate wine consumption positively correlates with good health. In 1991, the "French Paradox" story was broadcast by CBS-TV's "60 Minutes" program. This story explored the "paradox" that though the French have a high-fat diet, smoke, and do little vigorous exercise, they had a 40 percent lower incidence of heart disease than Americans. The story suggested that moderate consumption of red wine might help to lower the risk of heart disease. An update in 1996 to the alcohol message for the "Dietary Guidelines for Americans" by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS) stated that moderate consumption of wine with meals is "associated with a lower risk for coronary heart disease."[79] Many Baby Boomers, and their Millennial children soon after, seem to have taken this statement quite seriously, as the consumption of red wine in the U.S. increased 44 percent in the four weeks after the story was broadcast. Within a year, U.S. red wine consumption had increased 49 percent from the pre-"French Paradox" story value.[80]

According to the 2010 Wine Market Council study, 42 percent of Millennials surveyed were consuming more wine in 2010 than in 2005. Compared with Generation X, the Baby

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[78] Packaged Facts, "The Adults of Generation Y in the U.S.: Hitting the Demographic, Lifestyle and Marketing Mark," December 2008: 244, 30 Apr. 2011. Google Scholar.
[79] Wine Institute, "California Wine Timeline," Discover California Wine, 2011: 2, 7 May 2011, <http://www.discovercaliforniawine.com/learn/california-wine-timeline>.
[80] The Marin Institute, "Drink Like the French, Die Like the French," Winter 2000, 22 May 2011, <http://www.marininstitute.org/alcohol_policy/french_drinking.htm>.

Boomers, and those age 65 and older, the wine consumption habits of Millennials have increased the most of any generation since 2005. Additionally, only eight percent of Millennials surveyed consumed less wine in 2010 than in 2005, compared with 14 percent of Baby Boomers.[81]

Though the percentage of all Baby Boomers who consume wine has decreased, the actual number might not necessarily be lower. These percentages are "affected by the growth in the increasing wine drinking habits of Millennials."[82] Still, Millennials are drinking more wine than any generation that came before them. According to a recent Gallup poll, they are also part of the reason that wine popularity is increasing in the U.S. as a whole.[83] Despite their trend setting habits among other generations, Millennials still tend to be more knowledgeable about and interested in wine than others, which could potentially lead to more spending on and consumption of wine by this generation in particular.[84]

How Wineries Can Connect With Millennials

Many wineries have turned to social media as a way to connect with Millennials, the newest and youngest group to show a strong interest in wine. Wineries have recognized that this technologically savvy generation prefers to learn about products in online, interactive forums. With so many Millennials choosing social media as their main device to learn about and even purchase wine, wineries are eager to connect with these consumers in as direct a way as possible.

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[81] Wine Market Council, "Consumer Research Data," 2010: 7, 21 Apr. 2010, <www.winemarketcouncil.com/research_slideview.asp?position=3>.

[82] Heeger, Jack, "Boomers, Millennials boost wine consumption," Napa Valley Register, 8 Feb. 2007: 1, 21 Apr. 2011, <http://napavalleyregister.com/lifestyles/food-and-cooking/wine/article_b084811a-60fd-5450-88ab-f87f4dd46cc1.html>.

[83] Nowak, Linda, et al., "Wowing the Millennials: creating brand equity in the wine industry," Journal of Product & Brand Management, Vol. 15, No. 5, 2006: 317, 21 Apr. 2011, ScienceDirect.

[84] Brown, Corie, "Young Winos: The Millennial generation is a thirsty one," Los Angeles Times, 12 Mar. 2008: 1-2, 21 Apr. 2001, <http://www.latimes.com/features/la-fo-youngwine12mar12,0,2147803.story>.

Unlike many other generations, Millennials are not afraid to seek advice when purchasing or consuming wine. However, also unlike other generations, Millennials tend to seek advice from friends on Facebook or Twitter.[85] Many wineries have recognized that social media is an ideal way to connect with the Millennial generation and are investing in a variety of social media campaigns. According to Adam Beaugh, who leads digital projects for Jackson Family Wines, "We need to create an opportunity for people to interact with it [wine] a little better without sounding too gimmicky." To accomplish this task, Beaugh has launched the "every bottle tells a story" campaign, which encourages consumers to submit their personal wine-drinking stories online via various social media.[ibid. 1.]

According to Gillespie, Facebook is one of the most beneficial types of social media, as a winery can not only create a profile page, but also purchase advertising space based on demographic characteristics. This ability allows wineries to directly target users of Facebook and "fish where the fish are,"[86] especially those likely to purchase wine. Highly targeted Facebook advertisements, in addition to creating a Facebook Group or Page, can help wineries communicate more directly with the Millennial generation.

Twitter is also an important social medium for wineries, as it allows wineries the opportunity to "humanize" themselves by creating a genuine, conversational voice. A generation that appreciates authenticity and honesty from a brand, Millennials feel that a real connection can be established with a winery through Twitter, as Twitter equates the winery with a Millennial's peers. Additionally, in the 2010 Wine Market Council Study, 45 percent of core wine drinkers surveyed said they follow wine people on Twitter, while 46 percent of core wine drinkers

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[85] Shultz, E.J., "Millennials: The Great White Hope for Wine Industry," Advertising Age, 6 Dec. 2010: 1, 81:43, 5 June 2011, Academic Search Elite.

[ibid. 1.] Shultz, 1.

[86] Lavin, Kate, "Marketing matters: how to engage Millennials," Wines and Vines, 1 Apr. 2009: 3, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://www.allbusiness.com/population-demographics/demographic-groups-baby-boomers/12313697-1.html>.

surveyed said their friends and family Tweet about wine.[87] As more Millennials become core wine drinkers and search for information they view as valid about wine, Twitter may become one of the most used and trusted sources Millennials will turn to.

Jordan Vineyard and Winery recognizes that there is a shift occurring in the wine consumption pattern: more Millennials and fewer Baby Boomers are consuming wine on a daily basis. The winery also recognizes that Millennials like to try wine themselves and make up their own mind about whether or not they would purchase a bottle, as they do not generally value the opinion of a critic.[88] Therefore, Millennials are turning to sources they trust: the opinion of their friends, peers, and social networking sites, like Facebook and Twitter. Facebook allows for targeted marketing and the establishment of loyal fans, while Twitter allows for two-way communication in an open and trusted forum. Facebook and Twitter can be used together by a winery to establish brand loyalty and build a connection with those of the Millennial generation.

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[87] Wine Market Council, "Consumer Research Data," 2010: 27, 21 Apr. 2010, <www.winemarketcouncil.com/research_slideview.asp?position=3>.

[88] Kelterer, Wayne, "Social Media More Than a Buzzword at Wineries Like Carr and Jordan," 16 June 2010: 4, 20 Apr. 2011, <http://palatepress.com/2010/06/wine/social-media-more-than-a-buzzword-at-wineries-like-carr-and-jordan/>.

V. Conclusion

As more Millennials come of drinking age every day and their affinity for wine rapidly increases, they may soon become the largest wine-consuming generation in the United States, replacing their Baby Boomer parents. A generation that is wary of blatant advertising, turning instead to the recommendations of friends and social media for information regarding new products (which they love), Millennials must be connected with in a way unlike any generation that came before them. Therefore, it is more important now than ever for wineries to establish social media campaigns that will build relationships with Millennials.

Facebook and Twitter are valuable social media for wineries to use, as they allow for two-way communication between a winery and its fans or followers. They are interactive forums that allow users to experience a winery without ever setting foot in the tasting room. Still, with ever-changing technology, some have started speculating about what might next be incorporated into a winery's marketing strategy. Some have called the future of wine marketing 'Wine 3.0,' which might include virtual reality components with the ability to smell and experience wine through a computer.[89] No matter what the future of wine marketing may hold, Millennials are sure to remain a driving force behind the wine industry. New, innovative technologies must be incorporated to ensure this generation stays interested in a winery's brand.

[89] Thach, Liz, "Wine 2.0 – The Next Phase of Wine Marketing? Exploring US Winery Adoption of Wine 2.0 Components," 28 Apr. 2009: 144, 21 Apr. 2011, EBSCOhost.

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