

# Wine Tasting Through Typography

*Written By: Dayna Goldman*

Graphic Communication  
College of Liberal Arts  
California Polytechnic State University, 2012

## Approval Page

Title: Wine Tasting Through Typography

Author: Dayna Goldman

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Professor Gordon Rivera

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Senior Project Advisor

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Signature

# Abstract

## Wine Tasting Through Typography

Dayna Goldman

Graphic Communication Department, June, 2012

Advisor: Professor Gordon Rivera

The purpose of this study is to find the connection, if any, between the design and typography of wine labels with the flavor attributes of the wine itself. If there is a lacking connection, wineries can use this information to better market their wines so that consumers know more about the wines they are purchasing and can make a more informed decision. This allows these wineries to better market themselves and differentiate from their competitors.

The research focuses mainly on smaller, local wineries because these are the businesses that need more assistance or direction in creating and marketing their brand. Results from a sample size of seventy-one individuals that were surveyed show that it is very difficult for the average consumer to agree on a few specific descriptive words about a wine based solely on its label. This means that the packaging is not doing its job in marketing the product. The researcher also interviewed a number of local winery owners who attested to this fact that it is very difficult to maintain a brand image consistently while still giving each wine the unique design it deserves.

A solution to this disconnect would be to begin to look at the wine packaging industry in an entirely new light. If local wineries started to rebrand themselves by focusing on the taste of the wines they produce, they would not only differentiate themselves and thus garner consumer interest, but they would also help consumers in making their purchasing decisions.

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# Ch 1. Purpose of the Study

## Statement of the Problem

California is the home to the very first vineyard in America and currently the number one wine producing state (Tasting Wine). California's 3,000 wineries and \$17.9 billion in sales make it difficult for a winery to create a wine that stands out among this vastly growing industry (Wine Institute 2009). As this number increases, smaller wineries are forced to figure out unique ways to differentiate themselves while staying true to their product. One way they can do this is through their label and packaging. Packaging plays a powerful role in determining customer purchasing decisions. The package is the first thing that catches our eye and peaks our interest. Often, the package is the only physical indication of the characteristics of the product inside. In the wine industry, the types of packages and level of creativity are limited because wine is a highly perishable product. Therefore, with some exceptions, the wine industry has pigeonholed itself into one main package: a standard 750 mL glass bottle with an adhesive label. This label is often the only resource a buyer has for evaluating the wine before purchasing it (George, 1989). With a limited amount of space on a label, details such as typeface, alignment, colors, etc. have an immense impact.

However, there is a lack of information in how our brains respond to typefaces and overall design. People associate brands in part through a brand label's typography. These brand associations are created using shapes, colors, strokes, textures, etc. Graphic designers seek to create the best fit between the look of a company or product's logo and the characteristics of the company or product itself. However, this is not always the case in the wine industry. For example, on a standard grocery wine aisle, script typefaces run rampant, causing wines to be indistinguishable from another. Why do winemakers make this decision if they know there are

thousands of other labels just like theirs out there when their wine is so unique? Because of this, it is often impossible for a consumer to understand the nature of a wine based solely on its label.

The purpose of this research is to better connect the design and typography in wine labels in order to effectively market said wines. By interviewing local winemakers about their product, a correlation between the words used to describe their wine and a label that conveys the same feel can be made. For example, if a winery says their Merlot is deep and robust, the researcher could potentially aim to find a typeface that denotes those adjectives as well and pair them together. The winemaker could also include worded information about the taste of the wine into the design. By using design as a tool and a selling point, wineries would have an easier time representing their wine by its package. This also helps consumers in making a purchasing decision on wines because they will have more information about the product itself.

## Significance of Research

This research will improve the connection between design, typography and wine labels in order to effectively market wines. Currently, the wine packaging industry is unlike any other packaging industry because it is often producer-based rather than consumer-based. This is especially noticeable with smaller wineries. Often, labels are designed based on winery preference, rather than the demographic of customers looking for a specific wine. For example, the researcher visited Autry Cellars, a winery located in San Luis Obispo. After interviewing Autry Cellars' owner, Steve Autry, conclusions were made about the decisions that influenced the design of the wine label (shown in Figure 1). The label is a mixture of the owner's passion for bass guitar (as shown by the bass clef note) and an attempt to target an older, more distinguished demographic through the color palette. Autry, however, did not attempt to distinguish what his actual wine tastes like through the label. Both sides win in creating a label that has the look and



feel the producer wants and the information the consumers need to make their purchasing decision.

According to Steven Kolpan of Salon.com, “American wine consumers are 40 percent more likely to buy a wine with a cute animal on the label when compared to a straightforward label that gives standard information” even though that information tells the consumer a lot more about the wine than most graphics do (Salon.com). This includes the name of the producer, the name of the grape, the name of the place where the vineyards are located and the year in which the grapes were picked. Using this data would create an increase in clarity for the consumer, however most wineries tend to go in the opposite direction because of the results of studies such as the one Kolpan refers to. By finding a compromise between using graphics that consumers would be attracted to and including information (not limited to words) that says more about the wine itself, changes in the standards of wine label design can be made.



Figure 1. Autry Cellars standard wine label.

## Interest in the Study

Throughout the researcher’s past year in San Luis Obispo, she has been introduced to a huge community of local wineries that create a completely unique product compared to larger, national and international brands. With her education in Graphic Communication, she has been particularly fascinated by the huge effect that typography and packaging have on a product’s overall design and what that design says about the product. While wine-tasting one day, she noticed that although the label of the wine she was drinking was interesting, it did not really reflect the wine.

Furthermore, when grocery shopping she found it difficult to choose a wine that she could not only afford but that made her confident that it would taste good. She noted that when

purchasing wine, it is often a hit or miss and the only thing you really have to judge on is the label. All of these thoughts combined into this research project. By finding patterns between the detailed aspects of a typeface and design with the detailed notes and flavors in a wine, the local wine industry can better adapt to the process other companies go through when designing their packaging, giving more information about their product rather than design on a whim.

## Ch 2. Literature Review

### A Brief History of Typography and Graphic Design

The timeline for written languages dates back to over 5000 years ago when the Egyptians assigned images as representations of everyday objects, known today as pictographs or hieroglyphics. The type that we recognize today was created by the Greeks, who were the first to develop our modern alphabet, and the Romans, the first to use thick and thin strokes and serifs in their letterforms. Typography, defined as the art and technique of arranging type in order to make language visible (Drupalry.com), has rapidly developed over a very short period of time. Even in the past decade, the range of typefaces we have to choose from has become staggering. It is estimated that there are over 300,000 different typefaces in existence with more being created every day (NYU.edu). Originally, typographers were anyone who arranged type for a living. With the digital revolution, typography was opened up to a new generation, and it has been said that "typography is now something everybody does" (Jury, 2004, p. 63). With the rise in desktop publishing, anyone can now also consider themselves a designer. Graphic design or visual communication, like typography, dates back to these ancient times when animal drawings were made on cave walls. These images combined with written languages are at the foundation of graphic art.

### Our Response to and Associations with Type and Design

An important aspect of traditional typography and design is that the effect should be invisible, meaning there is a lack of awareness on the reader's part. However, designers also use typography and graphics to grab the reader's attention, using decorative fonts, eye-catching colors and varying layouts. With each decision the designer makes, the consumer alternatively makes

certain judgments and associations about the overall look and feel of the piece. Robert J. Bliwise (2011) makes note of these associations in his article, *What's My Type?*, which reviews, *Just My Type: A Book About Fonts*, by Simon Garfield. In the following excerpt, Bliwise responds to Garfield's claim that fonts have conditioned us to make certain associations:

"I told him that scholars of various stripes would have a field day with his discussion of type and gender associations. Heavy, bold, jagged fonts are tied to maleness, he writes, while whimsical, lighter, curly fonts are female. 'It's the same with color: You see a baby dressed in pink—that's a girl. Type has us conditioned from birth.' As an aspect of that early conditioning, we have specific emotional reactions to type. Honesty and fairness, for example. According to Garfield, we have been conditioned to look at Times New Roman with those associations." (Bliwise, 2011, p. 2)

How each individual responds to most design is different; however, there are often common themes amongst these responses. In a 2009 article, Haeinn Lee, Jungtae Lee and Ssanghee Seo published their study about whether the decision of design being good or bad is the result of the human brain process. Using MRI and EEG scanning, the team viewed the brain activity of participants when they were showed examples of different designs. They concluded that the categorizations into good and bad occur in the front and occipital lobes. They also found that the brain responds faster and stronger to the perception of a bad design (and bad feelings in general). Because every human's brain acts differently, it can be concluded that everyone's response to design differs from another, even if the general results of certain decisions are similar.

Ruth Lewy (2011), writer for *The New York Times*, said in her article, *What's Your Type?*: "The shape of the letters give them life. When we read them we respond to their shape as well as their linguistic meaning...and when we choose them, we define who we are" (p. 3). We have come to learn to connect the characteristics of a typeface with a feeling or circumstance. For example, many people associate certain script fonts with value and elegance, while sans serif fonts

allude to a modern, clean feel. A big part of a designer's job is to figure out what the personality of the product or service is and choose a typeface that matches it. Lewy continues, "the democratization of the media through the internet — now that everyone can become a publisher — has unleashed these latent opinions [on type] like never before" (p. 3). Never before have designers had the vast amount of options then they do today. Small businesses are especially affected by this vast collection of design and type options because they are less likely to be as equipped as a larger company with a graphic designer or even someone with any design skills at all. This often leaves the owner of the company with the responsibility to make the majority of the decisions pertaining to the face of their product or service. This is specifically the case with many smaller wineries, who do not have the funds to employ a graphic designer and thus rely on their own resources to create the look of their brand.

## The Wine Label Industry

The first thing we see (other than the glass container) when choosing a bottle of wine is the label. It is one of the only cues the average consumer has to judge what is inside. Therefore, choosing the right design is a crucial part of the marketing process. Most importantly, the label should accurately convey how the wine tastes. Skye Hallberg and Ron Woloshun of Cogito Creative Works contend that they want winemakers to acknowledge what the label says about their wine. They suggest the producers ask themselves: "Does the label suggest 'heavy and peppery' when the wine is refreshing and fruity" (*Practical Winery & Vineyard Journal*)? With a limited amount of space on a label, details like typeface, alignment, colors, etc. have a big impact. In Figure 2, Hallberg and Woloshun break down how to effectively redesign Scherrer's wine label in accordance with the taste of the winery's Zinfandel. Figure 3 gives additional insight into what each of the aspects of a wine label actually mean.

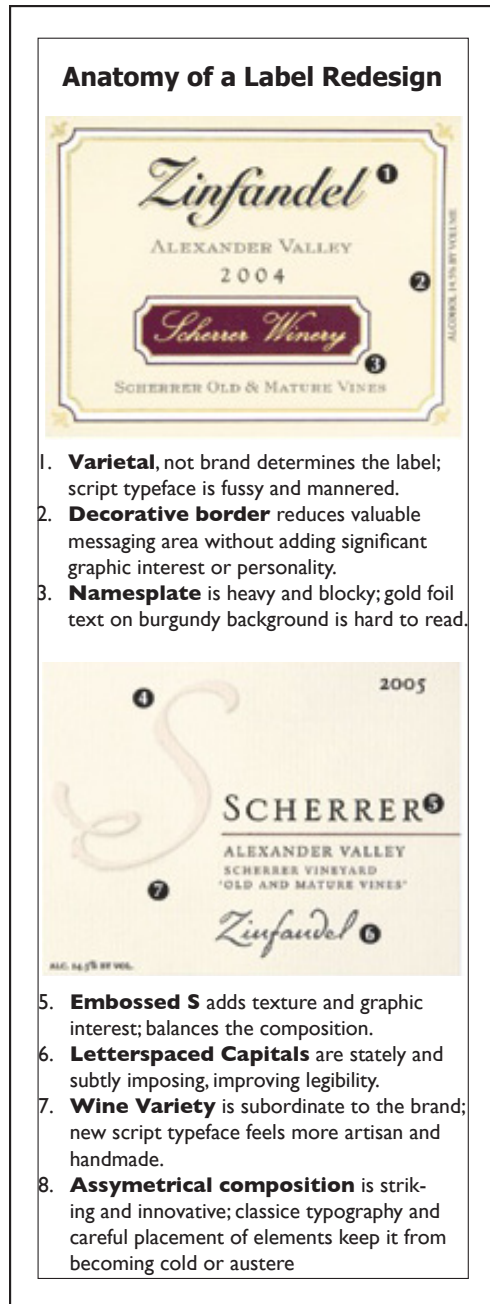


Figure 2. Label Redesign, Practical Winery



Figure 3. Aspects of a label, Snooth.com

According to Matthew Latkiewicz in his sartorial article entitled, “*Sloshed: Maybe We Should be Judging Wines by their Labels*” (June 8, 2011), there are general categories that almost all wine labels fall into. The first is “*The French*.” This label is ‘word-heavy and relies on classic fonts.’ Latkiewicz contends what the consumer can expect with this kind of wine: “It’s the fancy stuff,

and it will taste sort of like dirt, but in a good way.” The French category has a subcategory named the, “*Diluted French*,” which is often meant to convey the same feeling of tradition and upper class, often with the use of script fonts, but with more white space. “The winemaker often isn't actually French, but is instead an American making wine in the French style. That means it will taste sort of like dirt *and* fruit. You know how people say, ‘I don’t know, tastes like red wine to me?’ This is what they are talking about.” Lakiewicz continues by examining categories such as, “*Animals Doing Things*,” “*The Graphic Design Student*,” “*Nostalgic Small-Town Vacation*,” and “*Painting*.” Although his article was meant to be humorous, he points out some of the major trends in wine labels today and what each label can say about the wine itself. Figure 3 below organizes all of the different categories that Lakiewicz highlights. This example is an interesting piece to research because although it is not very technical, it does see the wine industry similarly to how many Americans might see it, especially the younger generation, which is the largest group of the survey’s sample (mentioned later) and will become the biggest wine buyers in coming years.

Figure 4. “The only authoritative chart on wine labels that you're likely to see today.”  
Newyork.grubstreet.com



## Ch 3. Methodology

The purpose of this research is to find and improve the relationship between design, typography and wine labels in order to more effectively market those wines. Currently in the local wine market, wineries know that consumers' purchasing decisions are affected by packaging, however, they often do not have a solid understanding of what their packaging, (often limited to the label) says about their wine.

The first objective is to identify whether there is currently a connection between the typography of a wine label and the wine itself. In order to do this, historical information, case studies and experimental research will be employed. Historical information will be collected from existing wine labels. Case studies will be conducted with owners of several wineries and/or private wine producers. They will be interviewed to discover their reasoning for choosing the look of their labels and what their design preferences might say about their wines.

Lastly, experimental research will be conducted to determine a consumer's preference for a wine based on its label. Labels will be varied based on the following parameters:

- typeface
- color of type and design
- size of type
- graphics
- embellishment
- extras (foils, stamps, embossing, etc.)





A survey will be sent out to individuals of different ages, occupations, social status, etc. They will be asked to compare samples of label design and typography, answering a series of questions. By dividing the sample into age and other differentiating demographic factors, the group represents a well-rounded series of opinions (i.e. what a 21 year old looks for in a wine is likely different than what a 50 year old looks for).

Four bottles of wine labeled A, B, C and D will be used. The labels chosen for A, B, C, and D cover a wide range of the differing types and costs of wines from all over the world. Wine A is highly rated wine, costing \$175 per bottle, yet the label is very simple with minimal graphic elements. Wine B is an interesting and bold design but does not tell the consumer much about the wine. It costs about \$18 per bottle depending on where you buy it. Wine C is a more well-known brand with a well-designed label but again, without much information about the wine

itself and costing only about \$4 per bottle. This wine is an example of a larger company having the resources to design a good label and market it well enough to become nationally distributed, but without the same value the other wines in this sample have. Lastly, Wine D's label is not very impressive yet the wine won first place in Wine Spectator's Top 100 Wines of 2011 competition. One bottle costs \$52. Interestingly, Wine A was ranked at number fifty in this same competition, yet it is three times as expensive. The following are the questions asked in the survey:

#### Appendix A:

The Research Question: What, if any, is the correlation between the typography and design of a wine label with the way the wine actually tastes? Should one convey the other?

1. Which age range do you fall between?
  - a. 20 or younger
  - b. 21-29
  - c. 30-39
  - d. 40-49
  - e. 50-59
  - f. 60 or older
2. What is your occupation?
3. Which label do you prefer?
  - a. Label A
  - b. Label B
  - c. Label C
  - d. Label D
4. Which wine looks the most expensive?
  - a. Wine A
  - b. Wine B
  - c. Wine C
  - d. Wine D
5. Which wine do you think you are most likely to purchase?
  - a. Wine A
  - b. Wine B
  - c. Wine C
  - d. Wine D
6. Based on the label, what are the words you would use to describe wine A?

Oak	Cloves	Green apple	Roses
Red Berries	Herbal	Plum	Yeast
Grapefruit	Mineral	Tobacco	Smokey
Chocolate	Pepper	Honey	Caramel

7. Based on the label, what are the words you would use to describe wine B?

Oak	Cloves	Green apple	Roses
Red Berries	Herbal	Plum	Yeast
Grapefruit	Mineral	Tobacco	Smokey
Chocolate	Pepper	Honey	Caramel

8. Based on the label, what are the words you would use to describe wine C?

Oak	Cloves	Green apple	Roses
Red Berries	Herbal	Plum	Yeast
Grapefruit	Mineral	Tobacco	Smokey
Chocolate	Pepper	Honey	Caramel

9. Based on the label, what are the words you would use to describe wine D?

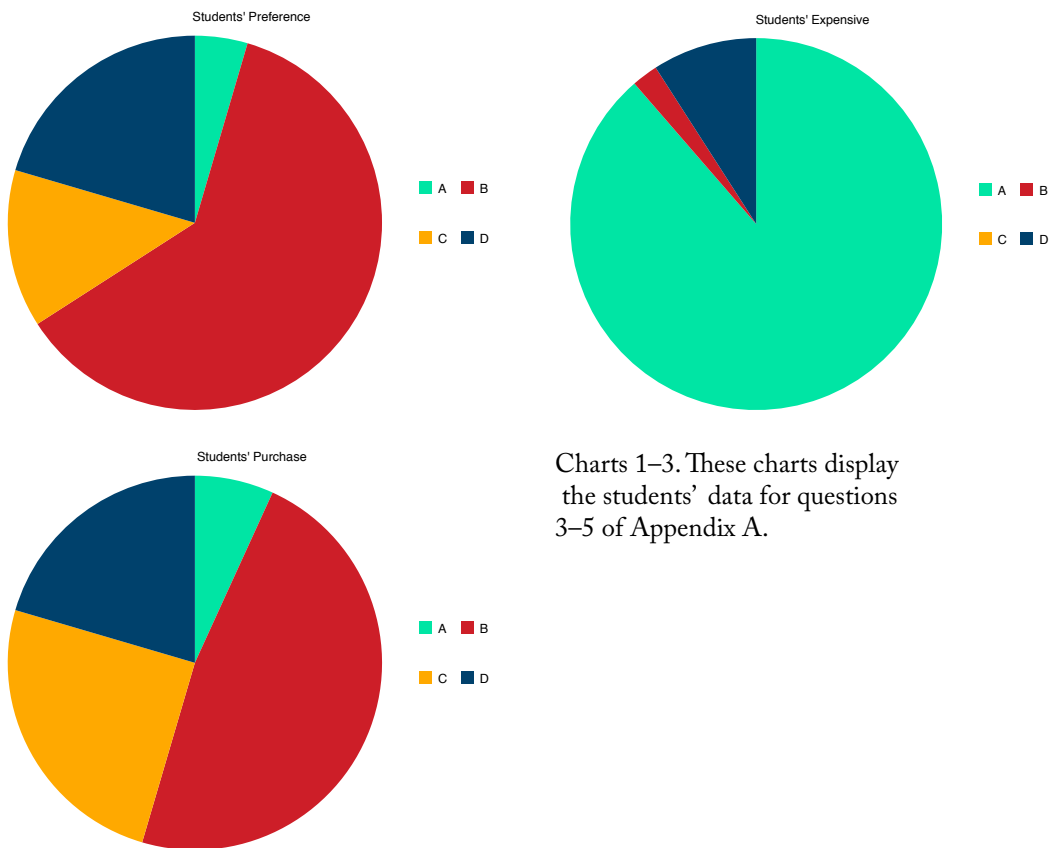
Oak	Cloves	Green apple	Roses
Red Berries	Herbal	Plum	Yeast
Grapefruit	Mineral	Tobacco	Smokey
Chocolate	Pepper	Honey	Caramel

## Ch 4. Results



### Survey

To obtain market data for this research, the aforementioned survey was sent out to a random sample of people through email and social media. A total of seventy-one people responded over the course of five days. In this sample, there were twenty-one people in the 20 or younger age range, thirty-two age 21-29, three age 30-39, four age 40-49, nine age 50-59, two age 60 or older. Because the twenty-one people in the 20 or younger age range are not legally old enough to purchase or drink wine, certain considerations were made when reviewing their data. However, the research includes their responses because they are



Charts 1–3. These charts display the students' data for questions 3–5 of Appendix A.

a large portion of the sample and their opinions are still valued. The largest group of one occupation were the forty-four Students, most of whom fall between the 21-29 age range. As shown in Charts 1–3, the majority of students preferred Wine B's label, considered Wine A to be the most expensive, and would most likely purchase Wine B. One reason for this preference for Wine B may be because this younger demographic prefers bolder, more graphic designs. Also, only one respondent said that Wine B looked the most expensive while 84.9% said so about Wine A. The students (and sample in general) most likely chose Wine B as their preferred purchase because it looked less expensive.

The other occupations chosen contained far fewer individuals than the Student option. Four chose Management, two in Business, two in Architecture and Engineering, one in Legal, two in Education, seven in Arts and Design, four in Healthcare, one in Food Handling, two in Sales, two in Office Administration, and two that classified themselves as Other. This wide range

of occupations gives the research a decent pool of data, helping to decrease the bias that would have occurred if, for example, all the respondents were students.

The value behind asking the first two questions about the sample's ages and occupations is that by these two factors — age and occupation, an individual's purchasing decisions are greatly influenced. The type of wine that a 50 year old is attracted to is very different than that for a 21 year old. Similarly, a student might have different opinions about the wine than someone employed in a management position. Knowing this personal information aids the researcher in drawing conclusions and making connections about why the individuals chose the answers that they did. These questions make the survey personal because demographic data is being collected.

Because students made up such a large portion of the sample, their majority answers are also the sample's most popular answers. 49.3% preferred Wine B's label, 85.9% reported that Wine A looked the most expensive, and 40.8% would be most likely to purchase Wine B. This preference question had the closest range in answers, as shown in Chart 4.

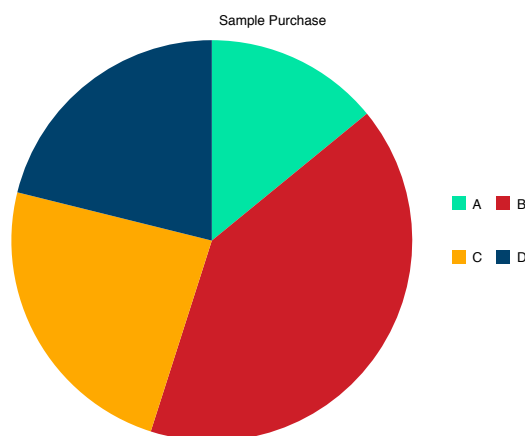


Chart 4. The distribution of which Wine the sample would be most likely to purchase.

The remainder of the questions asked the sample to choose descriptive words to match each wine based on the label. These answers were also very ranged, with almost every word being used to describe each wine. The top three descriptors for each wine are as follows:

Wine A: Oak (60.6%), Red Berries (32.4%) and Plum (32.4%).

Wine B: Red Berries (50.7%), Plum (49.3%) and Chocolate (22.5%)

Wine C: Green Apple (70.4%), Honey (39.4%) and Herbal (35.2%)

Wine D: Red Berries (52.1%), Chocolate (39.4%) and Plum (33.8%)

As previously mentioned, all of the descriptors were used for each of the wine (with the exception of 'chocolate' for Wine C). This high amount of variation shows that based solely on the label, it is almost impossible for the average consumer to tell what the wine would taste like. As an alternative option, the survey provides a space to list other descriptive words. In the question asking to describe Wine A, one individual wrote: "If I know the type of wine it is, I can usually tell what to describe it, (ie pinot are usually reds, can be oak/smokey/pepper/etc.) the label usually 95% of time can't tell what type of wine it is." Those surveyed most likely did not use the look of the label to decipher what the wine tastes like, but rather the varietals of wine and whether it was red or white. This explains why the top three descriptive words used for each of the red were overlapping.

This survey was generated using Survey Monkey, a free online service that allows you to create and distribute your own survey. One issue with this service is that it limits you to ten questions unless you upgrade to a paid membership. Because of this, the survey could not include other relevant questions such as:

*What is your gender?*

*How often do you drink wine?*

*How often do you purchase wine?*

*What are the biggest influences on your purchasing decision for wine?*

The answers to these questions would have supplemented the research with further information on the sample and the process the individuals go through when purchasing wine.

Although surveying a sample is a good way to gather data, there are some issues that must be considered. It is important for the researcher to attempt to obtain a random sampling of

individuals, allowing the data to be unbiased. When using the internet to send out the survey, the researcher aimed to target people from all over the country, of various ages and occupations. By sending the survey to the Administrative Support Coordinator of the Graphic Communication department at Cal Poly, the researcher ensured that students and faculty both had access to taking it. This explains why the majority of the sample responded that they were students. There is also the issue of relying on the sample to be completely honest. The data is completely dependent on these responses and thus can be an inaccurate generalization of the market's behavior. Furthermore, without face-to-face conversation, the sample's individuals are unable to ask questions. All of these things are unavoidable with online surveys, however, it is still important to keep them in mind when analyzing the data.

A benefit of using the internet is that it avoids the geographic limitations that traditional surveys can cause. By sending the survey to friends and family from all over the US, the responses represent a wide demographic range of individuals.

## Wineries

The other aspect of research implemented was direct interviews with owners of local wineries. After emailing dozens of owners, heads of marketing, producers, and customer service representatives, the researcher was able to set up interviews over email, phone, and in person. The first winery that the researcher went to was Autry Cellars, mentioned in Chapter One. They produce only about 500 cases of wine each year, which they sell out every year. Thus, the owner of Autry Cellars, Steve Autry, designed the label based on his personal preferences because people will buy the wine either way. A lot of the other wineries interviewed are very similar. For example, Penman Springs Vineyard's owner Beth McCasland said over email that their logo is a copy of an actual stainless glass piece of artwork created by the owner's brother. McCasland also said that over the past 13 years of owning their winery, the changes they have made to their label



have been based on trying to find what would be the best way to incorporate the artwork into the label. When asked how or if the label relates to their wine, Beth responded: “It has nothing to do with wine except that it is totally upbeat and positive!” Because the wine produced by the owners of small vineyards represents them personally, designing a label that does the same is, in a way, designing based on the wine. By using something that is important to them for their label, they manage to stay true to their company and their product. This is true for most small businesses because all of the decisions being made remain at a very personal level. Comparatively, it would not make sense for a toothpaste brand to put an image of the ocean on their package solely because the CEO likes the beach. The local wine industry is very unique in this way in that owners can tailor their business around their personal preferences. Where this gets more complicated is at the larger wineries who produce a higher volume of wine each year and thus have to market themselves appropriately to make a profit.

One of these larger wineries interviewed was Salisbury Vineyards. The researcher spoke with Jennifer Rucks, head of Marketing and Operations. Rucks said:

“It is more about the design and layout than most people will ever know. But for longevity you can only have flexibility in design when you have consistently good wines. From day one, I always had the feeling that each of our wines were such different children, all needing individual attention and accolades. But maintaining brand recognition in the endless outside market can be a challenge when there isn't much consistency.”

This echoes the previous point that there seems to be a difficult balance between creating a brand that resonates well with consumers while maintaining the values of the winery. Salisbury attempts to do this by maintaining a common theme between each of their labels while still maintaining a unique look for each of their wines.

Villa Creek Cellars is a smaller winery that does think about the taste and feel of their wine when designing their labels. JoAnn Cherry, the owner and head of Public Relations and Design, explains their reasoning behind the design:

“One of our mottos is TERROIR TEXTURE TASTE. Our general design aesthetic is rustic modern which describes the direction we take with our wines and our labels. Each label has elements of texture, whether it be a thick craft paper, an emboss or a tactile varnish. Earthiness is usually in the form a simple graphic that portrays some element of nature — a plant, a tree, an animal. The personality of each wine is usually portrayed by its fanciful name and any colors used in the graphic as well as in the type. We always prefer clean and simple designs. Less is always more.”

The above comments show that although they are a small business, Villa Creek Cellars still think about how they can connect their product with the brand they put forward. Figures 5 and 6 show how their restaurant interior and wine labels follow the same theme of earthiness and rustic.

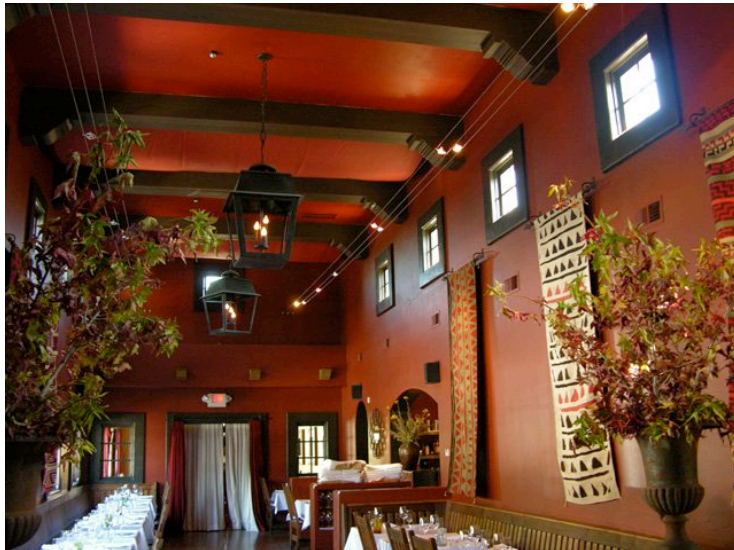


Figure 5. Villa Creek Restaurant



Figure 6. Villa Creek Cellars wine labels

The last two wineries this research will touch on are Écluse Wines and Chamisal Vineyards. Both follow the same idea of creating the design and brand around the wine, which is based on the owners' or producers' preference. In this way, the wineries are successful in connecting their design and their product, but only because the common themes are based around their preferences. According to Brette Ann Womack, the Hospitality and Event Coordinator, Chamisal developed a series of labels which reflect certain aspects of their story. Their look and feel is described as 'barn chic,' which reflects the historical value of their property. The third aspect is based on the tier of wine which the label signifies. By using their own personal story of how their winery has come to where it is today, they manage to tie everything together. Écluse similarly uses aspects of their family history to tie into their wine and their brand image. The word 'écluse' is French for the locks on the canals that gently carve their way through the French wine countryside. The owners, Pam and Steve Lock, have enjoyed numerous trips to France and thus found this a fitting name to represent their winery. The image on their labels is a photo of one of these locks that Pam took on one of their trips. The only thing that Écluse fails to mention is whether the taste of their wines mirror this same feel. However, as has been repeatedly stated, these smaller wineries have more freedom to design their brands as they please rather than constantly keeping their consumers in mind. Therefore, how these wineries use typography and design on their labels is generally inconsequential because they are selling all of their wine either way. They can afford to include personal aspects into their brand because consumers have become used to not expecting the wine's packaging to give them certain information about the wine itself but rather about the winery that they're a member of, visiting, tasting at, etc.

One of the most important things this research has shown is that most of these winery owners work in the industry producing wine because they love it, not to make a profit. For a lot of them, this is either something that has been in their families for generations or was not their

first career. For example, Steve Autry was formerly an aerospace engineer, beekeeper and professional bass player before he got into the wine industry. He sees it as another one of his hobbies rather than his career, which is why he treats his label as an extension of himself rather than a marketing ploy. Furthermore, most of their marketing events include their family and friends, and even the club members have been close acquaintances with the owners. These sorts of ties with their business is what allows the design to remain personal rather than corporate. The only downside of this is that it may deter outsiders from becoming interested in purchasing the wine.

## Ch 5. Conclusion

The main objective of this research is to study the connection or lack thereof between a wine label and the wine the bottle contains. The question to be answered is: What does the typography and design of the label tell the consumer about what the wine will taste like? Through surveying an anonymous sample of seventy-one individuals and directly interviewing owners and producers of local wineries on the Central Coast, the researcher was able to gather enough data to draw conclusions.

If this research were to be extended, one recommendation would be to change the survey so that the survey taker would taste each of the wines, A, B, C and D, and match the labels to the how they taste. There are potential legal issues with this method, such as needing to acquire a liquor license or accidentally serving to minors. Also, the research could extend into national brands and assess how they tie their design into their wines. However, with the resources available on the Central Coast, the researcher chose to focus on only local wineries in order to obtain more detailed data than attempting to contact large corporations and the lack of personal data they would supply. If national wineries were successfully contacted, the next step would be to find out how their process of designing occurs. Contacting the design firm or designer on these accounts would also be necessary to fully understanding their process. Furthermore, increasing the number of individuals in the sample and aiming to obtain a more diverse group would aid in making the data a more accurate representation of consumer beliefs. Because there were so many students taking the survey, the relevant market was well-represented for San Luis Obispo but not for all of California.

Many of the aforementioned wineries have chosen to recreate their brand by using their own personal experiences, histories, hobbies, etc. to create their brand. In most other industries, the founder's personal experiences are rarely used as a base for their image and marketing.

However, because the wine industry is so unique and personal, the wineries are able to incorporate aspects of their own lives into their product and packaging without harming the credibility of their product. This means that typography and design of the label hold relatively no bearing on whether these small wineries sell their wine. Thus, there is little to no product relevancy between the wine itself and the packaging.

The survey results show that because of wide variation in the answers to questions 6–9 (asking the sample to describe the wine based on the labels shown) the average consumer has a very difficult time doing so. If the researcher had chosen to only show the label rather than the whole bottle, the individuals being surveyed would have had an even more difficult time as many of them seemed to use the knowledge of whether the wine was red or white to aid their answers. With such a high level of ambiguity, it can be said that solely based on the label, the average consumer has almost no idea what the wine will taste like. If a winery knows this, one way they can differentiate themselves from the competition would be to make their wines' accents known to the consumer through the design on their label. Some labels already do this on the back, where they explain what the wine would pair well with and which accents it contains. However, this could be made more noticeable on the front of the label as a graphic element so that consumers scanning the aisles can make a quick but knowledgeable purchasing decision. The solution to the disconnect between the wine label and the wine itself is to begin to look at the label options from a new angle. The great thing about wine label design is that the more it stands out, the more consumer interest is generated. If the way to make the label stand out better was by giving the consumer more information about the actual wine, both sides would benefit.

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Figure 5 & 6

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