Rock the Vine
Wine Market
Collaboration with SLO Brew

A Senior Project
Presented to
The Faculty of the Agricultural Education and Communication Department
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

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

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Introduction
There are hundreds of wineries along the Central Coast and many of them do not have brick and mortar tasting rooms. On the SLO Wine Country website tasting rooms available to visit are listed (www.slowine.com/taste/). However, the tasting room list is short compared to the number of wineries in the county. The proposed wine market event will allow small scale wineries to compete with the larger wineries. The goal of this senior project is to provide a “tasting room” for the winemakers of the Central Coast while providing a community event with music and food. The Wine Market will address the need for small and local wineries that do not have a brick-and-mortar tasting room. This event will allow these “mom and pop” wine businesses to showcase their wines to the public in a farm-to-fork marketing style. It will provide a place for customers to come taste and enjoy wines and be able to buy wine without winemakers investing in a tasting room facility.

**Methodology**

**Research** To successfully carry out this event, studying the success of similar events is imperative. The SF Vintners market is the most closely related existing event to analyze. According to its website, the Wine Market takes place twice a year in the spring and the fall at the Fort Mason Festival Pavilion. “San Francisco Vintners Market is the first and only farmer’s market in the U.S. created especially for wineries. Founded in 2010 as a way for winemakers to connect with wine lovers to sell wine directly to consumer and trade buyers,” (SF Vintners Market, 2017). Local wineries without their own tasting facilities or small scale tasting rooms are invited to participate.

**Legalities** It’s important to research and apply for the correct permits to sell or serve alcohol before arranging the event. San Luis Obispo County and the State of California have specific permits and legislation that must be complied with. Alcohol will be sold at the wine market event via a purchased ticket at the entrance to the event or will call where people have purchased online tickets. Participants will be provided a wrist band and the wine booth connoisseurs will be certified to serve. This event will require an Alcohol Beverage Commission (ABC) approval which administers the state’s liquor laws. The ABC license didn’t allow the physical sale of wine, but customers were allowed to make credit card or cash orders from the winemakers.

**Budget** “The first thing you need to do is to establish how much money you can set aside for the event. Even the smallest event requires a serious financial commitment,” (Allen, 2008, p.5). With this particular event, the authors are going to be working closely with SLO Brew and its event planning staff to determine any financial information and barriers. “As you begin to plan out your event, laying out your proposed budget on a cost sheet in excel will allow you to clearly see what items can be included and still keep you within your budget” (Allen, 2008, p.41). The budget was broken down into 6 sections with projected costs for each. As the event progressed quotes were given and then our final total for each added up to the grand total of $4,019.84. When projecting you prospective budget it’s important to consider the total cost of the event in order the price the tickets accordingly. The goal is to make your profit margin large enough to make the time, energy, and materials that make up your expenses less than your total net profit.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
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In this case the gross sales were $5,265.00 creating a profit margin of $1,245.16.
Our profit came from ticket sales for “Rock the Vine.” 100 pre-sale tickets were sold for $20.00 a piece, 79 day-of tickets were sold for $25.00 via credit card, and 52 day of tickets were sold for $25.00 via cash. “Rock the Vine” sold a total of 231 tickets with approximately 300 people at the event to include volunteers, staff, and the winemakers.

**Advertising**  “As marketing gurus have been proclaiming for year, customer satisfaction isn’t the main thing; it is the only thing,” (Silvers, 2012, p. 228) In order to have a successful event, customers or the audience’s needs must be met above all else. When deciding how to promote or advertise, it is important to create materials that best represent an event. “Glossy brochures might enhance the perceived value of a conference event. Hand-done calligraphy on invitation to a gala fundraiser communicate exclusivity and elegance,” (Silvers, 2012, p. 230) There is a fine line between quality materials and giving the impression too much money was spent on the materials. When creating a logo, “consistent style and placement” and “anything associated with an event that is printed or digitized should have a uniform and recognizable image,” according to Silvers (2012, p. 233). In today’s society using online advertisements will be most effective in terms of printing costs and is environmentally friendly. Theses factors are important to the millennial audience and by using the internet to reach people could potentially widen the event’s reach (Silvers, 2012, p. 236). To implement these practices, advertisements for “Rock the Vine” included: Facebook and Instagram posts, website email blasts, posters were printed and presented in the community, Cal Poly announcements were made via clubs, organizations and classes, and word of mouth. In addition, the winemakers attending were asked to advertise the event on their websites and social media platforms. Local news and radio stations, as well as newspaper articles all played a large factor in the advertisements. An important aspect of advertising and marketing is often overlooked is word of mouth. The key to this events success was informing key players in the wine community of “Rock the Vine’s” mission and using these mentors as a tool to inform their following about the event.

**Event Flow**  According to Wood and Masterman, the success of an event depends on the following topics: Involvement – an emotional involvement with the brand, the event, the experience; Interaction – with brand ambassadors, with other attendees, with exhibits, with the brand; Immersion – of all senses, isolated from other messages; Intensity – memorable, high impact ;Individuality – unique, one-to-one opportunities, customisation. Each experience is different; Innovation – creative in content, location, timing, audience etc.; Integrity – seen as genuine and authentic and providing real benefits and value to the consumer (Wood and Masterman, 2008, p. 5). Event flow for this project also include preparing a parking map and a map for the booths promoting products. Attendees (guests and winemakers) were given specific day-of event details directing them where to set up, the time, supplies needed etc. Rock the Vine was kicked off with setting up the tables and seating area for winemakers and attendees. As winemakers arrived we greeted them and had pre-selected tables for their booth. The musician arrived and set up his equipment. It was important to have all cords and electricity set up ahead of time to ensure smooth set up. We prepped the entrance table with wristbands, a cash box, and guest lists were pre-made. Guests began arriving and we would greet guests, check in with winemakers, and coordinate event staff and volunteers before, during and after the event.
Creating a welcoming and relaxed environment was key. Our goal was to build relationships with guests and the winemakers participating in the event. Networking throughout was vital for creating lasting positive relationships.

**Results**

This event was created to provide small, local craft winemakers with a venue to showcase their product to the community. Via research we came to the conclusion that there was a need for this event. The central coast had nothing to compare it to in the area and small winemakers struggle to compete with the large corporate wineries. There were 19 subjects (17 winemakers, 2 cideries) who participated in the event and approximately 300 attendees at the event. 231 of those attendees were community members, college students, and tourists visiting the area. For a first time event this was a calculated success. Winemakers were able to meet potential wine club members, advertise their product and even sell to customers. The event gave the local wine community and attendees a place to discover new, boutique, craft wines and network.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, Rock the Vine, created a profit of $1,245.16, as well as a platform for the local community members taste and discover new boutique winemakers and cideries in the central coast region. This event could benefit with a larger target audience and add aspects to the event ie. food, more music, beer, games. Future events will acquire different themes in order to keep the event fresh and evolving just as the wine industry seasons do. Spring and summer seasons will focus on lighter wines like whites and rosé themed events. The research discovered a need for this style event on the central coast and after reviewing results we can conclude the wine industry and community responded positively and have created a demand.

**Work Cited**


