

CHANGING TACTICS DURING A PANDEMIC: DTC Shapes Up & Ships Out in Record Numbers



Due to the coronavirus pandemic, wineries have been forced to close their tasting rooms. No longer able to sell directly in person, wineries have to seek alternatives to keep up their bottom line. Clearly, given the “pantry-stocking” surge in wine sales, the consumer interest is strong. As a result, wineries with a well-established DTC business are expanding it further, and many of those that haven’t been doing much DTC are ramping up to increase sales. Relying more heavily on DTC is a both a challenge and an opportunity. Wineries will need to take new steps to protect their wine quality during transport, and in so doing, they have a chance to engage their customers and build their brand.

As wineries in North America extend their shipments into the warmer summer months to meet customer demands, it will be even more critical to carefully assess weather forecasts, packaging options and shipping routes, and use that information in creating strategic shipment plans that maintain optimal shipment conditions to protect wine quality.

TEMPERATURE MATTERS

Improper temperature is known to be a leading cause of damage to wine during shipment. When wine is subjected to high temperatures, a series of chemical reactions is accelerated, which begin to degrade color, aroma, taste and aging ability. Even short DTC shipments can experience dramatic and damaging temperature swings that can ruin wine before it ever reaches the consumer. Furthermore, the damage is not always visible or obvious. If damage occurs, customers will taste the difference but not necessarily know or understand the cause – if they simply don’t like the wine, the brand reputation suffers.

MONITORING QUALITY

So how can wineries and their consumers be sure that wine quality has been preserved? The key is monitoring. Specifically, monitoring technology that is based on in-depth research and innovative analytics. eProvenance conducted extensive research with industry renowned ETS Laboratories in St. Helena, California to determine the impact of heat on wine. eProvenance then developed a patented monitoring system and a proprietary algorithm to quantify wine damage and assign an *eProvenance Score* (0-100) that clearly indicates whether the wine has been damaged, not just whether the shipment temperatures were problematic. eProvenance monitoring and analysis delivers clear actionable insights. Our clients use these insights to make informed decisions about shipments so they can deliver top quality wine to their consumers and protect their brand.

ENGAGED CUSTOMERS PURCHASE MORE WINE

While improper temperature is a top cause of damage to wine shipments, monitoring shipment conditions lowers instances of damage and increases customer engagement, which often leads to higher sales. When consumers learn their wine has been monitored, they are reassured about the quality and impressed by the dedication of the winery to that quality promise. In fact, they generally become more loyal repeat customers.

ASSURE YOUR WINE QUALITY

Wineries make an uncompromising commitment to quality in the vineyard, in winemaking and in serving their customers. As more of their wine is shipped direct to their consumers, monitoring is both a sensible solution to assuring quality and a great method to build brand value and market share.