



2014 Speakers



Brian Baker
VP Sales and Marketing, Chateau Montelena Winery

Brian Baker honed his marketing skills in the Travel Industry with Dollar Rent Car, and the San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau in brand marketing, partnership and consumer direct sales. While in San Francisco he pioneered the Foodie Marketing Strategy and created the “I Left My Heart in San Francisco” line of merchandise. With a determination to find a way into the wine business, he landed a position at Jackson Family Wines, setting up and operating their enterprise CRM program and he now oversees Consumer Direct Sales and Marketing at Chateau Montelena. Brian has passed the introductory level of the sommelier exam, serves as a judge in several international wine and spirits competitions and is an accomplished professional speaker on subjects ranging from Web 2.0 to Foodie Tourism.



Karen Barnes
Owner, Wine Direct Marketing Services, LLC

Karen Barnes has been working in the wine industry in Napa Valley for over sixteen years, focusing on Direct to Consumer sales and management. She began Wine Direct Marketing Services in 2002, focusing on managing wine clubs, allocation release programs, online marketing and eCommerce solutions for small and virtual wineries who want to increase and expand their Direct to Consumer business. A graduate of the University of Colorado, with a degree in English and History and graduate studies in Technical Writing, Karen’s earlier career focused on non-profit management and fund-development. Karen is a member of the [eMarketing Association](#) Network, Women for Winesense, Non-profit Technology Network and is a member of the University of Colorado Alumni Association Board.



Sean Brosnihan
Guest Services Manager, Jordan Vineyard & Winery

After fifteen years in the restaurant industry, Sean relocated to Sonoma County from his native New England to pursue his passion for wine. Sean has been with Jordan Winery in the Alexander Valley for the last six years, operating the Guest Services Department. Sean oversees direct to consumer sales and the visitor experience for all guests at Jordan

Winery.



Zach DeVincent
Account Supervisor, Agent Silverfox

Zach came over to Silverfox with an extensive background in local Bay Area television and music. He received a degree in Media from Purdue University and moved to San Francisco in 2001. Zach has lead in the development and execution of the social strategies for both Bonterra wine and Fetzer Crimson & Quartz, exploring meaningful ways to connect both brands to their audiences across the social landscape. Outside of the Foxhole Zach's passion is electronic music. He currently writes and produces tracks for various dance labels around the world, and DJs regularly around the city. **Client Experience:** Fetzer, 24 Hour Fitness, Franklin Templeton, Wizards of the Coast, element14



Taylor Eason
Brand and DTC Senior Manager, J Vineyards & Winery

Since 1997, Taylor Eason has educated thousands of readers about her favorite subjects, wine and food. To support her expensive culinary habit — since writing only pays the soul well — she completed her MBA in Marketing in 2001 while serving as Director of Marketing and Product Development at *Creative Loafing Newspapers*. There, she established her syndicated wine education column but also specialized in new media marketing, market research, social media and event branding strategies. Since moving to Northern California a little over two years ago, Taylor straddles two wine worlds: maintaining a regular wine education column on her website as well as marketing and selling the wines of J Vineyards & Winery in Healdsburg.



Jeff Carroll
Vice President Compliance & Strategy, ShipCompliant

Jeff Carroll, Vice President Compliance & Strategy, heads the Strategy and Compliance arms of ShipCompliant. In this role since 2005, Jeff is charged with overseeing the direction and update of ShipCompliant products and services that allow producers and importers of alcohol beverages to accurately comply with 1000's of state and federal alcohol laws and regulations and ship and distribute their products efficiently. In addition, Jeff oversees a team that constantly monitors changes in alcohol regulations across the country and works with regulators at the state and federal level to assure ShipCompliant tools and services meet the evolving needs of their clients. Jeff is often invited to speak at industry events where regulatory and political topics are discussed and debated. Jeff lives in Boulder, Colorado with his wife Ghita and their two children.



Gary Finnan
Managing Partner, Ovation Guild

As a creative development and strategic management specialist, Gary is focused on creating and strengthening customer experience, brand performance, and market ROI for new and existing businesses in the wine, spirits, banking, hospitality, retail and franchise industries. Gary helps businesses fulfill the promises made to customers through brand essence and destination experience. With more than 25 years' experience as a Destination Retail specialist focusing on Project Development, Strategic Planning, Creative Facilitation, Destination Design, Training and Project Management. Gary specializes in the business of creativity and as a catalyst in the development of strategic solutions.



Stephanie Friedman
Direct Sales Manager, Gary Farrell Vineyards & Winery

Stephanie Friedman is an effective direct-to-consumer leader, skilled in translating “brand essence” into compelling DTC programs by thinking like the customer and being sales-service-oriented. Since 2007, she has managed direct sales and marketing for fine wine brands including Gary Farrell Winery and Quivira Vineyards, and has been instrumental in launching two new wine brands, Anaba and La Follette. Stephanie has led strategic wine club design and re-structures that have increased conversion and annual revenue while improving valuable customer relationships. A Bay Area native, Stephanie fell in love with Sonoma County while earning a Wine Business MBA degree from Sonoma State University, and in her free time she enjoys dining with friends in Healdsburg, reading, traveling, and playing with her black Lab, Marsanne.



Glen Gilmore
Social Media Strategist, One of Forbes’ “Top 50 Social Media Influencers”

A Forbes “Top 50 Social Media Influencer”, Glen Gilmore is a social media strategist, educator, author and attorney. He is the author of “Social Media Law for Business” and contributing author to “Strategic Digital Marketing”. A Rutgers University instructor of Digital Marketing, Social Media Law, and Crisis Communications, Gilmore provides customized social media training to members of the Fortune 500, as well as businesses and non-profits of all sizes. His practice of law focuses on matters concerning social media governance and compliance. With over 200,000 followers on the social network Twitter, Gilmore has been called a “Twitter Powerhouse” by the Huffington Post. Online Colleges has also ranked Gilmore second in their list of “Top 50 Social Media Savvy Professors In America”.

Gilmore, a restaurateur, has used social media to transform a small “BYOW” restaurant into a major caterer, catering at over a dozen locations. Gilmore credits social media with skyrocketing sales for his own small business.



Steve Gross
Vice President, State Relations; Wine Institute

Steve Gross is Vice President, State Relations at Wine Institute, where he has been employed since 1986. Steve’s duties entail overseeing the activities of Wine Institute’s six State Relations Regional Counsels and Regional Managers as they address state legislation affecting the wine industry, as well as coordinating Wine Institute’s legislative and regulatory activities with staff, contract lobbyists and member wineries. Steve regularly participates in many national programs dealing with issues facing the wine industry, both on the legislative and regulatory levels. Steve serves on the Board of Directors of both Sustainable Conservation and the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance (CCEEB). He also serves on the Sonoma State University Wine Business Institute’s Executive Board. A native of Nebraska, Steve brought to Wine Institute knowledge garnered during his ten years of employment in the on-sale food and beverage industry, as well as extensive experience in political campaigns and legislative activism.



Lulie Halstead
Chief Executive at Wine Intelligence Ltd.

Lulie is an experienced wine industry practitioner and leading wine marketing academic. Prior to co-founding Wine Intelligence, she developed expertise in the wine industry in importing, marketing, retailing and new business development roles. She is an established marketing academic, focusing on wine consumer behaviour

and a full member of the Market Research Society. She is a frequent speaker at international wine industry and academic conferences around the world and an expert in both quantitative and qualitative research.



Lia Huber
Nourish Network & Founder & CEO, Lia Huber Consulting

Lia Huber was named 2012 Entrepreneur of the Year by the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP) for her work with NOURISH Network®, Inc., which she launched in 2009 to empower people to make a permanent shift from processed food to real food by making tweaks to their every day life. She is Bonterra Vineyard's Chef and Organic Life Aficionada, heavily involved in online content and social media strategy, and has consulted for a decade and a half on branding, messaging and social media for companies like Earthbound Farm, Hotel Healdsburg/h2 and Spectrum Organic Products. Lia is a widely published food writer for magazines like Cooking Light, Better Homes & Gardens and Eating Well, and appears frequently on local and national television, and as a guest chef and speaker at cooking schools, corporations and spas.



Ray Johnson
Director of the Wine Business Institute, Sonoma State University

Ray Johnson is the Director of the Wine Business Institute at Sonoma State, the first university in the United States to offer a BS in Wine Business in 1998 and the first to offer a Wine MBA in 2008. Johnson joined the wine business in 1986 at the Christian Brothers and went on to sell wine, first on the supplier side, working with the trade, and later in retail, working directly with consumers. Since 1998 Ray has been teaching in the areas of sensory evaluation, with an emphasis on European wine, and wine business, where he has focused on marketing and in particular, regional branding.



Michael Manny
Associate Creative Director, Silverfox

Manny, as he is known, Studied Engineering at Purdue University and then New Media at the Academy of Art San Francisco while getting his feet wet in Television as a producer of weekly music show, 'Distortion 2 Static.' Joining Silverfox in 2008, he established himself as a Designer and Art Director with a bag of tools and a taste for luxurious blood, but he didn't stop there. Manny followed his a passion for entertaining experiences strait into the depths of social content program creation. Live chats with Derrick Jeter, Cheering on Olympic athletes, 30-day workout challenges, real-time social feed experiences, national Facebook contests and of course daily social content strategy and production are a few examples of what happens when he's around. **Client Experience:** 24 Hour Fitness, Wizards of the Coast, Wine Insiders, Escape Studios, Junior State of America, element14, Fetzer



Norman S. Mitroff, Ph.D.
Prior to entering executive search, Norman was a Board Certified Clinical Psychologist. He brings expertise in understanding people, what motivates them, what hampers them from making effective career decisions and how to overcome an individual's resistance to making changes. His experience assures clients they will obtain the most qualified candidate for their company's goals and future success. His ability to help candidates work through their career directions maximizes the successful results of the search and assures timely completion.



Alf Nucifora
Chairman and Founder, Luxury Marketing Council

Alf Nucifora is the Chairman and Founder of The Luxury Marketing Council chapters in San Francisco and Las Vegas. Alf entered the advertising and marketing business on the corporate side working for two Fortune 500 companies. He then made the move to the advertising business and later advanced into agency management. He is an avid spokesperson for the continued growth and success of the marketing profession delivers speeches and seminars dedicated to sales, marketing and communications. Alf graduated from the University of Queensland with a B.A. Degree. He furthered his formal education in the United States, attending the Harvard Business School, where he earned an M.B.A.



Lesley Russell
General Manager, Saint Helena Winery

Lesley Keffer Russell is the General Manager of Saint Helena Winery in Napa Valley, a small Cabernet Sauvignon estate with wines made by Aaron Pott. Lesley has 24 years of experience in wine sales and marketing management, including 18 years at St. Supery Estate Vineyards and Winery where she was Vice President of Marketing and Direct Sales. She earned her MBA from UC Berkeley in 2002. Lesley lives in Napa with her husband, children and Duke, the dog.



Dev Sidhu
Manager, Direct Sales, Cakebread Cellars

With fifteen years of experience in the wine industry, Dev is part of the dynamic and fast-paced direct-to-consumer business for Cakebread Cellars. In his capacity, Dev is responsible for the company's Visitor Center, Wine Club, Customer Service, and Logistics departments, as well as its web presence. Dev lives in Napa and has a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Puget Sound, and a MBA from St. Mary's College in Moraga, CA.



Laila Subaie
Wine Club Manager, Miner Family Winery

With over ten years of experience creating and implementing DTC & club programs, Laila Subaie prides herself not only on the execution of these programs, but in surpassing industry service standards and expectations. Laila's dexterity in the comprehension and utilization of ever changing relationship-based marketing tactics have taken her career, sales numbers, and the teams she has worked with, to soaring and successful levels. Laila started on the direct-to-consumer path at Roche Winery in Sonoma and has since worked at some of the most renowned family wineries of varying size and case production, including Artesa Vineyards & Winery and Chappellet Vineyard & Winery. Currently, Laila runs wine club operations at Miner Family Winery in Oakville where she has recently completed the first phase of a club restructure. Her creativity and passion for an unforgettable club experience, starting at the tasting room level and resonating through all points of contact, keeps her members interested and engaged.



Katy Westgaard
Director of Direct-to-Consumer, Presqu'ile Winery. Owner, Vini Vino Vici

Katy Westgaard, a Cal Poly SLO graduate, has brought her entrepreneurial spirit to some of the top wine brands in the U.S. Her passion for wine began in college and resulted in her case study on social networking and wine clubs being published by AARES. Fresh out of college, Katy helped launch the Byron Winery tasting room and DTC business as a party of Jackson Family Wines. Shortly after that business was off the ground, she began working for Gallo as their Santa Barbara Territory Chain Manager. Missing that connection to the winery, Katy went back to Jackson Family Wines to manager their DTC business for both Cambria and Byron wineries in the Central Coast. After successfully managing a combined 250 thousand cases and increasing their membership to 2,500 members (a combined increase of over 225% over the previous fiscal year), Katy got the opportunity to go launch a new neighboring property, Presqu'ile Winery. At Presqu'ile, she has launched their new DTC business, including a successful wine club structure. She has effectively implemented DTC businesses that have led to fruitful wine clubs.

Katy also owns a customizable wine accessory company that caters to Wine Clubs called Vini Vino Vici. Some of her top clients have been Vermeil Wines, Live Nation, and Foley Winery. Katy is dedicated to her brands and to getting her consumers invested in them so that they themselves become brand ambassadors.



Dawn Wofford
Co-Founder, Benchmark Consulting

Dawn Wofford co-founded Benchmark Consulting in 1995, aspiring to combine her passion for the wine business with her expertise in attracting high-quality talent. Dawn oversees and takes the lead on all senior level searches at Benchmark Consulting, utilizing her prior wine experience in the business and keen understanding of clients' needs to create lasting relationships.



Brett Van Emst
Account Supervisor, Benson Marketing Group

Brett's experience in social media, marketing communications and brand building brings strategy and insight to clients and helps them communicate in a quickly changing marketplace. He is responsible for the seamless delivery of creative, consistent messages across print and digital media. Before joining Benson in 2009, Van Emst spent 12 years in advertising. He has an extensive project management background, working on both the corporate and agency side of advertising for companies such as Sanford Corporation in Chicago and Foote, Cone and Belding in New York City. Most recently, he was with the ad agency Butler, Shine, Stern & Partners where he was Senior Project Manager on Greyhound, Sun Microsystems, Priceline.com, and RadioShack. Brett graduated from Michigan State University.



Matthew Wood
Estate Director, Chandon USA

Matt Wood, Estate Director for Chandon USA, manages the the strategic direction of the two acclaimed wineries, Domaine Chandon and Newton Vineyard in Napa Valley. He is responsible for overseeing all business channels and operations, including the highly praised étoile Restaurant. Prior to joining Chandon in 2011, Matt was the Executive Vice

President, Direct to Consumer Marketing at Foley Family Wines where he managed a team of 120 people and oversaw the direct-to-consumer businesses, encompassing nine tasting rooms, multiple clubs and e-commerce sites, and provided a comprehensive DTC strategy.

Matt's previous roles was Vice President of Marketing and General Manager of Sales at Wine Tasting Network, part of the 1-800 Flowers portfolio, where his main objective was to improve the wine retail business and ensure the successful leverage of the 1-800 assets. The transition to 1-800 came after nearly 11 years at Constellation Wine Brands where he worked his way up from a tasting room assistant to Vice President, Retail Operations.

At Constellation he managed a team of over 300 individuals in 15 different locations within 3 states. He worked on cross-functional improvement projects, developed several innovative wine club marketing concepts and was a member on two global sourcing initiative projects. Matt holds a WSET diploma and a Bachelor of Law degree from Leeds University, England in 1988. He was born in Sheffield, in Yorkshire England. He lives in Napa Valley with his wife.