

Up and Coming Wine Tourism Destinations, Notes from Session

Discussion of the challenges faced by up and coming wine tourism destinations and how collaboration, creativity, and confidence can overcome.

Panelists:

Mike Steele, Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce

Moya Dolsby, Idaho Wine Commission

January Wiese, Texas Wine Trail

Key Takeaways and Ideas

- Develop cross-industry marketing/networking opportunities – forge symbiotic relationships.
- Play to your strengths – capitalize on what you do have.
- Be a visionary.
- Communicate effectively your value and what you're trying to do – this will get you buy-in.
- Begin on a local, grassroots level and work your way out from there.
 - Need to first establish a confidence and pride in your wine on a local level. Demand to be taken seriously.
 - Then, you can broaden your borders.
- Get creative about where you network and market:
 - January joined Texas CattleWomen.
 - Moya joined the Junior League.
 - Know your communities and get involved.
- Research can be key – use metrics (tax revenue is a big one!) to substantiate your efforts, especially with government officials.
 - Know your economic impact! Then get others to recognize it.
- Host creative, fun events. They can create revenue and build your customer base.
 - Lake Chelan's Winterfest Wine Walk is a great example!
<http://www.lakechelanwinterfest.com/wine-walk.html>
- Find alternative revenue sources. This funds research, marketing, etc.
 - Collect dues, take on sponsors, accept donations.
 - Find out where other money is (grants, statewide tourism dollars, your economic development office, etc.) and go after it.
- Volunteer with (even chair) some local associations and/or organizations.
- Be aware that you may constantly be educating (and re-educating) your local political leaders, among other partners.
- Engage with policy makers.
- Show how wine fills the gap of the shoulder season of main visitor times.
- Enter your wine into competitions.
- Meet with journalists.
- You may need to do more for your wineries and be a bigger resource to them.
- Encourage people, restaurants, hotels to go local with their wine.
- Capitalize on the current tourism infrastructure in place.