

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

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Introduction

By a quirk of timing, this newsletter is going out just before the end of the year, so we are able to wish you all a very Merry Christmas - or a very Happy Festival of whatever you celebrate. I will also report that Laurie and I are well. The Orangewood Wines team continues to grow the business with fine wines and happy customers.

In this month's newsletter I write about email, the 30 year old technology that has transformed business. I think it is a prerequisite for the wineries we represent and our team. It has limitations though, and this month's topic reminds us of them.

New Sales Person: Sarah Everman

Sarah is an Associate Professor of Kinesiology at A.T. Still University in Mesa. She is fascinated by the similarities between her subject (metabolic physiology) and the physiology of wine appreciation. She is bringing enthusiasm and a different perspective to us. She will be sharing her knowledge, passion for wine, and fresh ideas in the East Valley.

Email Etiquette

I found an old memo that I wrote in the 80's. These were the days when memos were typed by secretaries, usually with carbon copies (in case you every wondered what "CC" means), filed in filing cabinets. The gist of the memo was that email, once everyone is connected to it, would revolutionize communication. It certainly did that. I could send an email to anyone I wanted to and retain an electronic copy of it for future reference - as could the recipient. As the email systems evolved, things got better and better. One "feature" that did not get better was that the delivery of emails was a best effort attempt on the part of the email system. That is, if the mail can't be delivered within a couple of tries the system gives up.

Not much has changed in that area. Delivery is still a best effort deal and mostly the mail gets through. I am guessing that less than 1% is lost. Recently, however, we have been having waves of lost mail. Maybe it's spam detection getting overly exuberant, maybe it's intermittent communication links or maybe hostile government hackers are trying to disturb our

commerce. No matter, whether the frequency of loss is small or not so small, there are some rules of engagement to overcome the imperfect email system.

For individual communication: When I send an email to a specific person, I expect to get a response. If the email asks a question, the response may be the answer or it maybe an acknowledgement that the question has been received. When we ask our trucking company to bring some wine to Arizona, sometimes we get a "Will do". Sometimes, if they are busy right now, we get a "Received". Either way we know that the request has been delivered. If we get neither response within an hour or two, we either email again or pick up the telephone.

For group communication: A group communication is when an email is sent to a list of people. This newsletter is one. We don't want all those people having to reply (and we really don't want them doing a Reply All), so how do we make this kind of email reliable. The way I handle it is to send the emails on a more or less regular basis and to put a copy in some online place where the potential recipients can look if they feel they missed something. This newsletter, for example, is archived on our website within a day or two of being sent out. If you are worried that you missed one, you can find it at [our website](#). For emails going to all the sales people we archive them to a cloud based server (Dropbox) where they can be seen by the team.

Rambling

I was sitting pondering eternal truths the other day while staring at a roll of tissues. It occurred to me that there are two types of people. Those who prefer their tissues to unroll over (the free edge is on top or over the front) and those who prefer under (the free edge hanging down the back). There are arguments in favour of each side, some of them fervent, others less so. I don't think I was aware of the two configurations while growing up. I dispensed based on finding the loose edge. I have found some people who are so convinced that their way is the only way, that they will change the orientation of the roll in someone else's home if it is the "wrong" way. I have been finding more and more of these kinds of people in other settings. People who "know" what is best for me and, darn it, they are going to get me to change. You should eat margarine rather than butter. Oh no, hold that, butter is better after all. I was reading one of the recent articles with a title like "There is no safe amount of alcohol that you can drink". You probably saw it, too. I decided to look at who wrote it. They are an academic organization that sounded very professional and impartial, but they were funded by a foundation whose stated aim was temperance for all. Aren't journalists supposed to do the source checking rather than cutting and pasting news releases? Another article I saw had the headline saying James Bond was an alcoholic. They don't seem to realize that mixing a cocktail or opening a bottle of Champagne saves the script writer having to struggle with a couple of minutes of dialog. It used to be cigarettes. Go back and count the number of cigarettes that Humphrey Bogart smoked in 80 minutes of Casa Blanca. I once read an interview of

Mickey Spillane, author of many thrillers. He was asked why his hero, Mike Hammer, could not shoot the bad guy with one shot. Mickey said that he was paid by the word! None the less, the temperance people seem to be trying to convince us to give up something that has brought joy and great memories for thousands of years.

What has happened to toleration? As a New Year's resolution please work on tolerance of others. Resist the urge to change the rolls, or the Bentleys. My watch word will be "Whatever!"

The Rambler ponders on...

Cheers,

Richard (newsletter writer) and Laurie (editor)
Orangewood Wines

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