



Notes from Napa Valley

Insights from the Wines & Vines Packaging Conference

By Alex Kidd, Creative Design Manager, Avery Dennison

Recently, along with Associate Product Manager Stephanie D'Cruz, I took the opportunity to attend the 2017 *Wines & Vines* Packaging Conference in Yountville, California.

As part of the team behind the Avery Dennison Wine and Spirits Portfolio, Stephanie and I went looking to learn—and be inspired. Being in the heart of Napa Valley, the conference gave us a chance to rub elbows with converters, winery owners, and label designers operating in one of the world's premier wine regions.

Sure enough, we came away with several insights for converters looking to bring fresh ideas to their own creative work in the wine and spirits segment.

Here are six of our top takeaways:

1. A very touching trend: Tactile labels

One of the strongest emerging trends takes design beyond the visual, and into the tactile space. Embossing is big, and designers seem to be stretching creatively by using thicker facestocks and specialty materials such as wood veneer, leather-feel, varnished, and metal foil.

While I didn't see any examples of it, I think there also may be an opportunity for 'layered' looks, where the design features multiple layers of label material.





2. Yes, they can: Canning

Introduced a few years ago, canning has become more prevalent with wines. There are even contract canners in the region, embedded in the culture, who specialize in working with wineries.

Stephanie noted the decision to can brings up a few questions: How does a label designed for a bottle translate to a can? Which kinds of wines are best in a can? The less oaky rosés and whites tend to do best. How are the cans merchandised along with the bottles? But, if you can get these questions right, cans will make a statement. With the availability of pressure-sensitive label options, canning is also very doable, even for smaller wineries.



3. Inside-the-box thinking: Wine boxes

Paper containers—from larger boxes to single-serve tetra-packs—are becoming very popular.

I guess that once upon a time, we might have chuckled about someone having a wine box in the refrigerator. Well, no longer. As with cans, we're seeing more and more wines in a variety of box package formats. Aside from the convenience, these often provide larger and different billboards for designers to be creative. They can really help the wine stand out in the store.



4. The ice bucket challenge: Labels that stand up to wet environments

Designers seem to have an expanded definition of “shelf appeal.” They understand it’s not simply how the label looks on a store shelf, but how it looks throughout its lifetime. This means making sure even an uncoated facestock avoids greying, wilting, or peeling when it’s on ice.

Stephanie pointed out there’s a ready-to-use solution for this kind of performance: Avery Dennison Aqua Opaque™ adhesive technology. It’s available in our Wine and Spirits Portfolio, and helps paper stay white for two hours or longer on ice. Imagine the powerful statement the label makes looking just as great at a party in an ice bucket, as in the store on a shelf.

5. Growth by design: The label as an extension of the brand

In the competitive wine landscape, brand owners know the label is the main point of contact with the consumer. It's not simply a "tag" that identifies the maker of the wine. It's a canvas that connects with the buyer through striking visuals, graphics, and compelling storytelling.

Nielsen, the consumer insight firm, had a really interesting presentation about this. With no other advertising to go by, the consumer "buys with their eyes." So, with 3,500-plus wine products launched annually, and 750-plus on the average grocery shelf, wineries have to nail the branding and design. It's not just about putting a label on the bottle. It's about crafting a positive, branded experience for the consumer.

A slide in Nielsen's presentation said "Good design drives growth." I jotted that down... I certainly believe that in my line of work.

6. A social network: Designing for a connected clientele

Wineries and designers realize a key part of the consumer experience is the social media community that forms around a wine. So, designers are considering how photogenic a label appears: What's it going to look like posted to Instagram, or in a Facebook post?

Stephanie noted the social media trend seems like a perfect opportunity for intelligent labeling. Picture a wine buyer, in a store, trying to decide. Of course he has his smartphone out, trying to do a little on-the-spot research. A display catches his eye, and he just taps his phone against an embedded NFC chip. That little tap takes him directly to an online/social experience where he can learn more about the wine, connect with the winery and its fans, post a photo, and so on. We're seeing this kind of experience in other segments. Wine and spirits seems so right for it.

Turn inspiration to reality with the Wine and Spirits Portfolio

The Avery Dennison Wine and Spirits Portfolio has the products converters, designers, and winery owners need to turn inspiration to reality. It includes a diverse collection of traditional and contemporary papers and films, along with specialty products such as textured finishes and foils. View the portfolio online at label.averydennison.com.

