

EMAIL MARKETING FOR WINERIES

Email Marketing for Wineries

Idyllic days in the sunshine. Ruby liquid in sparkling glasses. Merry picnickers and live music. It's these moments – drinking your wines and visiting your vineyards – that your customers remember. But even the best of memories fade.

Wine sales have slumped with the economy, and only [slight recovery](#) is predicted. Wineries are dipping into a vat of ideas to increase sales, and email marketing is bubbling to the top.

It's worth noting that millennials, the newest generation of wine drinkers, [prefer their wine promotions online](#). And as consumers become more comfortable vetting their purchases online, this trend will continue.

By shifting some of your marketing efforts into email, you can take advantage of this trend. Get people to subscribe to your marketing emails. Design messages to build relationships with them. Then when they're looking for a place to relax or a good bottle of wine, you're the first thing they think of.

Grow More Than Grapes: Cultivating Your Subscriber List

Another benefit of email marketing is the ability to reach everyone at once – people who've never been to your winery, those who visit weekly and those who order it from afar.

But to email any of them, you first need them to sign up to your list of subscribers. Try these techniques for some creative list building that can make your emails just as popular as your gold-medal merlot.

Web Forms

A web form is a place where interested people can request your messages by entering their contact information. Usually, the form is placed on your web site so you can direct people there easily.

- Ideally, you should have a sign up form on every page of your site
- If you have a fan page set up on Facebook, you can [add your web form](#) so your contacts can sign up.
- If you have a blog, you may be able to post your web form on your blog page. If not, you could still post an invitation to sign up with a link to the form on your site.
- If you have an account with an email service provider, they may host your web form on its own page for you. This gives you the option of offering online sign-up **even if you don't have your own site**.

[How to create a hosted form in AWeber](#)



Sign Up for Our Newsletters

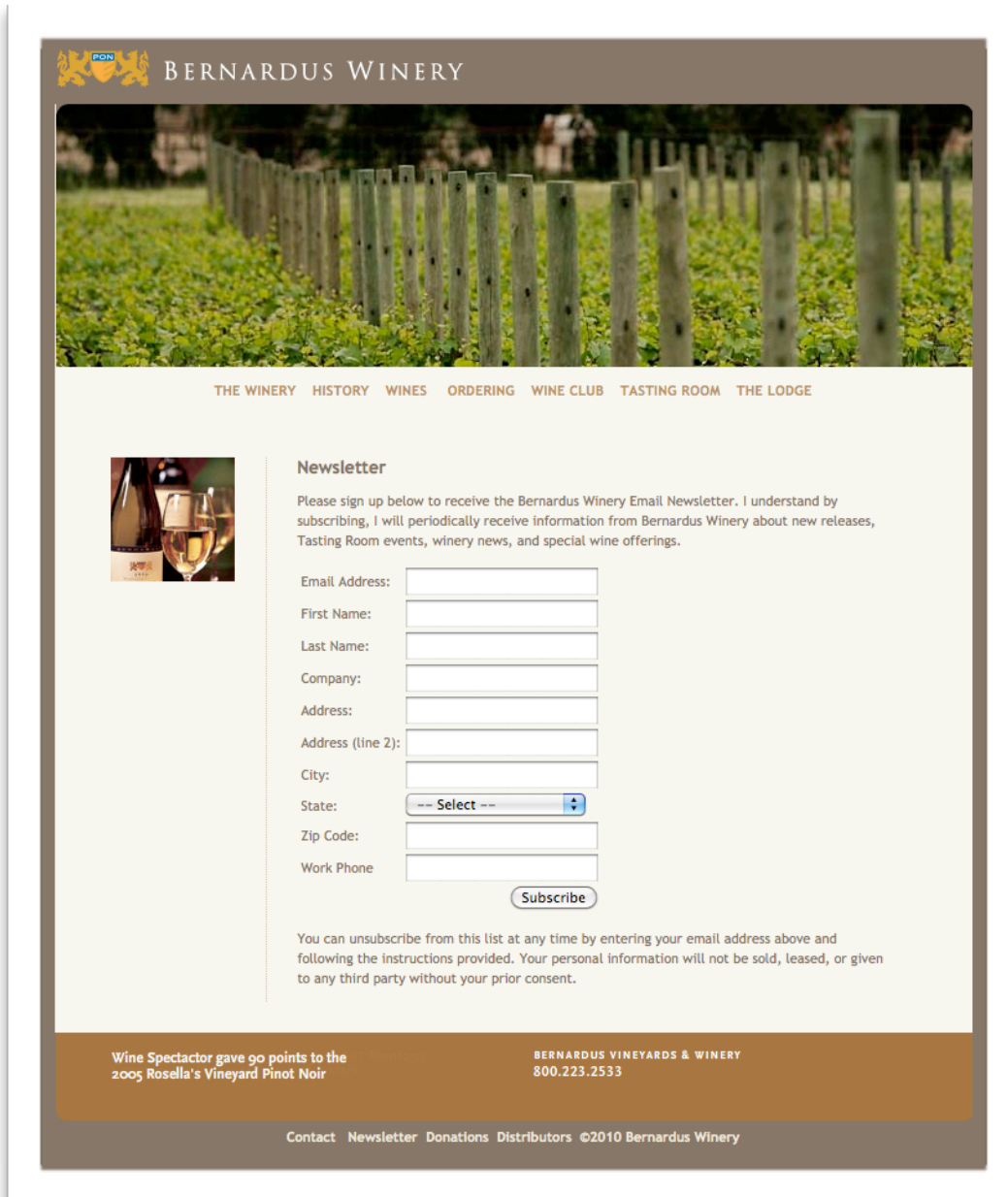
Don't ever miss a Sand Castle Event or Sale again!
Our newsletter is for educating and informing all those who are interested in learning more about Sand Castle Winery and its retail store, TASTE. Sign up for our mailing list and receive a barrel tour for one. One per email address please!

Your email will not be sold or used by any third parties.

Email Address:

Setting The Right Expectations With Your Web Form

Every place you put your web form, make sure to explain what subscribers will get so they'll know what to expect when they sign up.



The screenshot shows the Bernardus Winery website. At the top, there is a logo with a crest and the text "BERNARDUS WINERY". Below the logo is a large image of a vineyard with wooden posts. A navigation menu is visible with links: "THE WINERY", "HISTORY", "WINES", "ORDERING", "WINE CLUB", "TASTING ROOM", and "THE LODGE".

The main content area features a "Newsletter" section. On the left is a small image of a wine bottle and glass. To the right, the text reads: "Please sign up below to receive the Bernardus Winery Email Newsletter. I understand by subscribing, I will periodically receive information from Bernardus Winery about new releases, Tasting Room events, winery news, and special wine offerings."

The form fields are as follows:

- Email Address:
- First Name:
- Last Name:
- Company:
- Address:
- Address (line 2):
- City:
- State:
- Zip Code:
- Work Phone:

A "Subscribe" button is located below the form fields.

Below the form, a privacy policy statement reads: "You can unsubscribe from this list at any time by entering your email address above and following the instructions provided. Your personal information will not be sold, leased, or given to any third party without your prior consent."

The footer contains the following information:

- Wine Spectator gave 90 points to the 2005 Rosella's Vineyard Pinot Noir
- BERNARDUS VINEYARDS & WINERY
800.223.2533
- Contact Newsletter Donations Distributors ©2010 Bernardus Winery

For example, Bernardus Winery of Carmel Valley, California lists the different kind of information they'll send in their emails. They also spell out their specific privacy policy.

Getting People to Your Web Form

Your form will be a fantastic tool for collecting subscribers, but many people may never bump into it on their own. So you need to send people to it. Here are some strategies for encouraging online sign up:

- Make sure your web site includes updated contact information, lists your wines and has sign up forms (on every page – you never know when people will be ready to subscribe.
- Hold a name-that-vintage contest. Describe your newest brew and ask for name suggestions. Announce it on your bottle labels, your web site, your tasting room wall. Require an email subscription to participate, then send the official entry form with your welcome email. Broadcast the form to your existing subscribers so they can participate, too.
- If you sell gift baskets, add a card inviting the recipient to sign up for your emails. Direct them to the URL for your web form.
- If you take orders from restaurants and retailers over the phone, ask your clients for their email addresses. (Keep a subscriber list near the phone so you don't ask twice.)
- If you use an online order form, add a web form to that page.
- Join networking sites like [Global Wine & Spirits](#). Include a call to subscribe with a link to your web form in your profile.

Finding Subscribers Offline

While a web form can help you attract subscribers who may never find you otherwise, there are plenty of people you encounter offline who you could engage with your emails.

- Keep a sign-up sheet on your tasting room counter or wall.
- Rent a booth at a state fair or farm show, like the Pennsylvania State Farm Show. Offer tastings – for free or for a fee – and ask those who participate to sign up for your emails.
- Wine expos happen both online, like Wine 2.0's New York Expo, and in person, like the Boston Wine Expo. Show up with some solid wines and a way to collect email addresses – try raffling off a premium bottle, and asking each contestant if they'd like to sign up.
- Bring free samples to stores and restaurants that don't stock your winess yet. And while you're there, ask if they'd like to get your emails. Explain that you'll send out information about new releases for them to consider.
- Advertise your emails directly on your wine bottles. Print an invitation to sign up on your labels, a sticker you slap on each bottle or a hangtag. Make sure to include directions to your sign up form!
- If you use a printed order form, include a call to sign up with a place to enter an email address.

Confirmed Opt-In: Put a Cork in Spam Complaints

Whichever sign up methods you use, we recommend following up with confirmed opt-in. This simply means you ask new subscribers to click a link confirming their interest in your emails.

Think of confirmed opt-in as a preventive measure to keep your list from spoiling. Without it, you could slip into the following problems:

Malicious sign ups. Occasionally, computer scripts (or even people) will stumble across your web form and sign up - with someone else's email address. The person who gets your email will think you're spamming them out of nowhere.

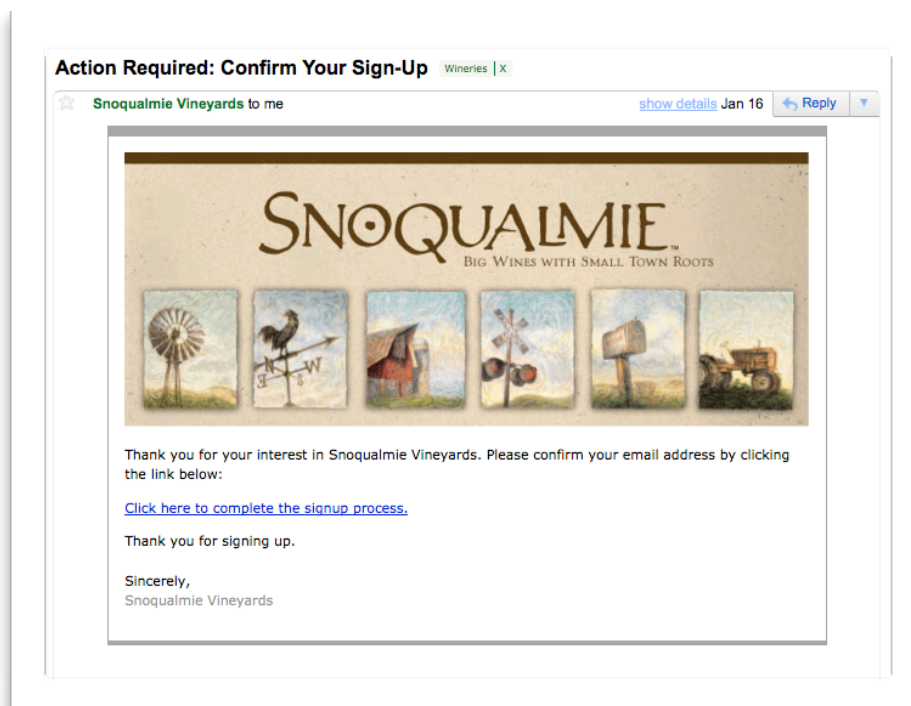
Misspelled addresses. Typos happen. And when they happen in your web form, you end up sending to the wrong people. You're not likely to get good results from people who weren't interested in the first place, and again, you risk being reported for spam.

Blacklisting. If ISPs (Gmail, Hotmail and the like) notice enough people reporting your emails as spam, they can blacklist you. Then future emails with your website in them could be blocked.

Account termination. If you have an account with an email service provider and you get blacklisted, any other messages coming from the same IP address will also be blocked. Your ESP may choose to solve the problem by kicking you off their service.

Confirmed opt-in avoids these issues and make sure subscriptions go smoothly.

To request confirmation, set up a message to be sent automatically to each new subscriber, like this one from Snoqualmie in Prosser, Washington.



How To Create Sparkling Messages

Once you build up a solid list of subscribers, you'll need some creative ideas to spark your customers' memories and bring them back for more.

Pairings and Recipes

If your chardonnay sparkles with scallops, let your customers know. Pair your wines with complementary dishes and share the recipes.

If your Burgundy is excellent in beef stew, share that, too. Original recipes for dishes cooked with your wines are even more valuable. If you have an online store, make sure to link up the wines.

Seasonal Gifts

People are always searching for unique gifts. Show them what you have to offer, whether it's festively wrapped wines for the holidays, wine and chocolate sets for Valentine's Day or picnic baskets for Mothers' Day.

Fun Facts

Identify wine myths vs. facts. Quote some trivia your readers will want to quote themselves. Feature a rotating glossary of wine-making terms.

Your customers may not know why [racking wine](#) does not mean putting bottles into wine racks. Tell them why. Give them more than just discounts – **give them an education.**

With insider information, they'll feel good about themselves and grateful to you.

New Merchandise

Giddy tasters and frequent visitors alike bring home the winery experience with glass charms, drunken olives and other goodies. If you add a new must-have item, email your list – they'll be sure to keep an eye out for it next time they visit.

Video Footage

Videos show off your winery even when your doors are closed. They also let you share more content than the typical email can hold.

Use video for educational demonstrations, "meet our team" introductions and sweeping panoramas of your estate that call visitors back. Post them to [YouTube](#) and link to them with a clickable screenshots in your emails.)

New Releases.

Stir in some excitement! Introduce new vintages with fanfare. Tell your subscribers where they can find the new wine, and let them know that you can't wait for their reaction!

Special Discounts.

As faithful readers of your content and proclaimed fans of your winery, your subscribers might deserve a little extra once in awhile. [Reward subscribers](#) (and keep them coming in) with email-exclusive discounts and offers.

Events.

Live music performances, tastings, tours of your production area, grape stomping festivals, wine education classes with guest speakers – if you host these, get the word out!

Invite your local subscribers (try segmenting [by location](#)). Send early enough for them to plan ahead, but not so early that they forget!

Rating Requests.

Your wines may win regional awards, but aside from recognizing this as a mark of quality, customers may not have much reaction. Instead of telling them someone else's opinion, ask theirs.

Have visitors to your tasting room rate your wines. Periodically invite your readers to send ratings to your "from" address. Announce the winners in an email that subscribers will check to see – Did their favorite win?

Images.

Don't forget [pictures](#)! Ambiance is an important part of the wine lifestyle, so extend yours to your newsletter. Show the grapes being crushed, the wine being bottled. Feature your winemakers, bartenders and grape pickers – give your readers faces to recognize when they visit.

The Four Types of Email

The purpose of every marketing email is the same – to advertise your winery and attract business. But the amount of time and content you can put into each one will vary.

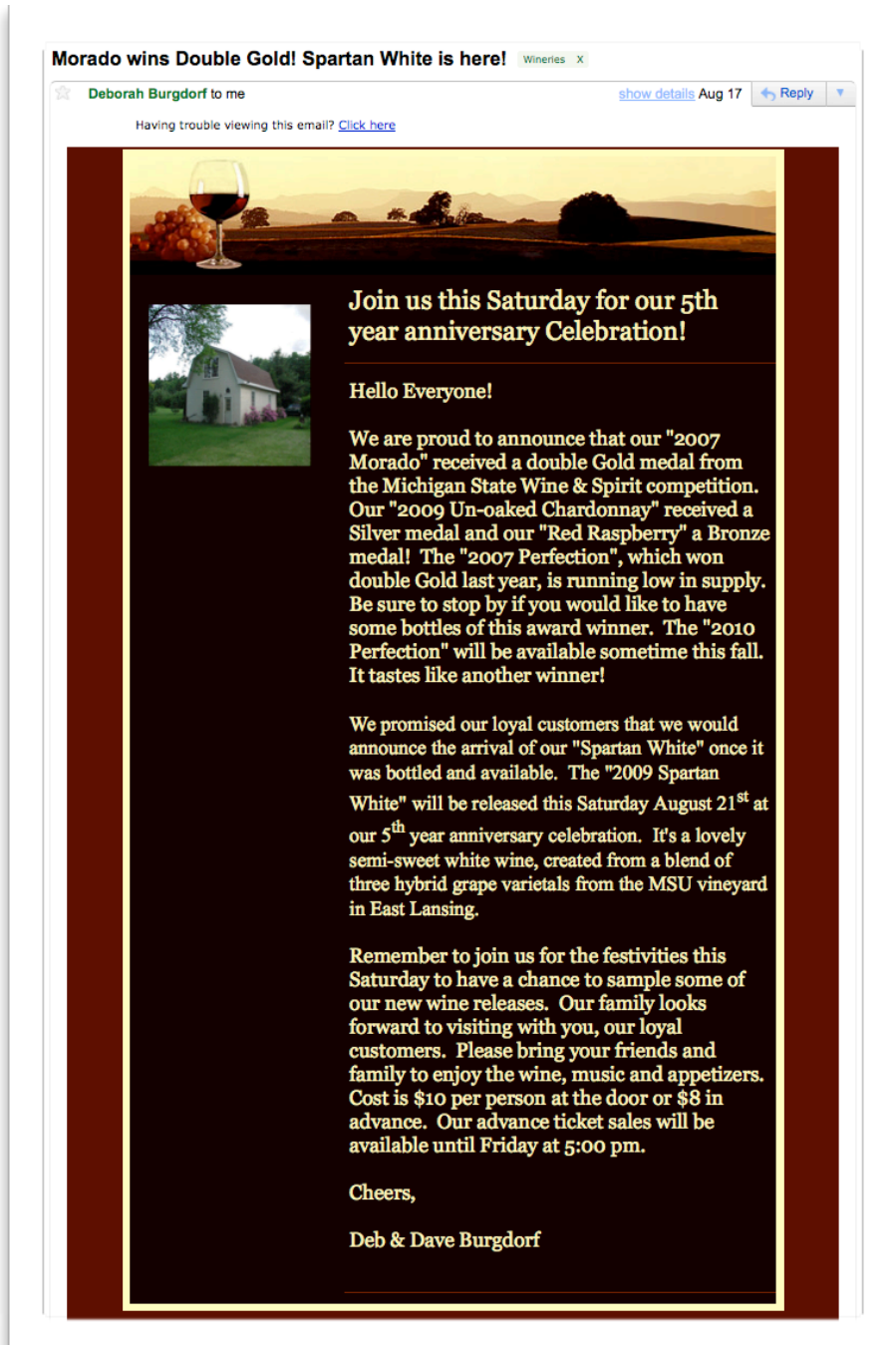
So the first step to creating each message is determining which of these four options is the most effective and efficient way to present the information at hand.

Broadcasts

Broadcasts are one-time emails, each with a specific subject. Send these between your newsletters for information that can't wait.

Burgdorf Winery of Haslett, Michigan sends an occasional broadcast to their subscribers with the latest news and happenings.

Here, they announce recent awards they've won, plus the return of a locally favored varietal at their anniversary celebration.



Newsletters

Sent on a consistent basis, newsletters help you become and stay part of your subscribers' regular routines.

Should you choose to send one, your newsletter is your opportunity to send an update on the latest happenings and newest opportunities. Include anything exciting that's recently happened, new techniques or tips that you've found or upcoming opportunities.

Oliver Winery in Bloomington, Indiana sends season-appropriate promotions, suggestions from their staff and invitations to upcoming events. Note their sidebar – the links and buttons are the same in each issue, giving their readers convenient access to all their options.



Blog Broadcasts

By writing a blog, you take the sense of engagement with your winery to the next level. Posting frequent updates keeps your customers and followers feeling like they're part of a community.

Link your blog to your email campaign, and you can send those updates out automatically as messages. People won't have to remember to come check your site – they'll find you right in their inbox.

Opici Wines in Glen Rock, New Jersey keeps their blog current with season-appropriate posts, which they email to their email subscribers to keep them in the loop.


[How to set up blog broadcasting in AWeber](#)


Opici Wines Inbox | X

★ **Opici Wines**Opici Wines to me

[show details](#) 10:40 AM (4 minutes ago) [Reply](#)

Opici Wines






[Spooky Wines for Halloween](#)

Posted: 27 Oct 2010 12:33 PM PDT

Trick or treat is not just for kids – the adults enjoy Halloween as well. Those attending grown-up Halloween parties may want to bring along a bottle or two of wine ... but what wine goes with ghouls?



Here is a selection that "screams" Halloween:


[Altos del Cuco Monastrell – Syrah – Tempranillo](#)

The black and orange bottle fits perfectly into the traditional Halloween color theme patterned after the jack-o-lantern. And the "Cuco" name faintly reminds one of the crazy villains who escaped mental institutions in gory slasher movies such as, um, "Halloween".

[Casa de la Ermita Petit Verdot](#)


The haunting images and ghostly stories that symbolize All Hallow's Eve match well with dark and brooding wines such as Petit Verdot. Bold and earthy with a dark purple – almost black – color, it's easy to imagine a goblin guzzling down a glass.

[Dominio de Tares Exaltos](#)



Is it me, or does that label look like a scene from somewhere scary?

[Opici Sangria](#)



"Sangria" comes from the Spanish word *sangre*, meaning for "blood" ... sounds like a drink for a vampire! Additionally, the black box with red and yellow highlights fits with typical Halloween decor, and it's the equivalent of 4 bottles of wine – the perfect party size! Not to mention, sangria is a fun and flavorful drink that just about everyone likes, with a sweet taste that matches well with Halloween candy.

[Email this](#) [Post to Google Buzz](#) [Add to del.icio.us](#) [Digg This!](#) [Share on Facebook](#) [Stumble It!](#) [Add to Mix!](#)

Follow Up Messages

Providing helpful information at the beginning of your campaign helps establish trust with your subscribers. But as people drop onto and off of your list, it's hard to make sure that everyone gets the same messages.

You can start everyone off on the same foot with a follow-up series. This is a sequence of messages that are automatically sent to new subscribers. Each follows the other at an intervals that you set up beforehand.

You can design your follow-up series around whatever information you think would make a helpful introduction to your campaign, but here are a few suggestions:

- Create a make-your-own-wine e-course for amateur home brewers. Explain which type of grapes to use for each varietal, tips for safety and sanitation and anything else they'd need to know.
- Introduce each of your wines. Tell the story behind each one. Describe the flavor. Offer pairing suggestions. Not only will your subscribers appreciate the education, they'll have reasons to buy what you have to offer.

Over time, you'll become a fixture in your subscribers' inboxes. And when you send that promotional email, they'll be ready to respond.

Special Caution: Marketing to Minors

Many countries have laws about advertising to those under the legal drinking age. Emailing marketing messages to minors could result in fines.

Make age a required field on all your sign up forms to stay safe.

Laws on Advertising Alcohol Beverages

Europe: World Health Organization's [*Framework for Alcohol Policy for the European Region*](#) specifies that alcohol advertising “may not be aimed specifically at minors.”

United States: Federal law regarding the advertising of alcohol beverages can be found in the *Federal Alcohol Administration Act Section 205(f)*, [*Part 4: Labeling and Advertising of Wine*](#).

The laws in each country, state and province vary. Before sending out your newsletter (or any form of advertising), explore your local rulings to make sure your promotions fall within legal boundaries.

About AWeber

What do leading sites such as Social Media Examiner, Copyblogger, Which Test Won, ProBlogger and Harvard Business Review all have in common?

They rely on AWeber for easy-to-use email and social media tools to cultivate relationships with their readers. Since 1998, AWeber has been the email engine powering the growth of organizations around the world.

Today, more than 110,000 small- and midsize-businesses, entrepreneurs, agencies and nonprofits are making the most of AWeber's sophisticated segmentation and analytics capabilities, social media and testing applications, extensive template libraries, and industry-leading deliverability and live support.

For marketing advice, examples and inspiration, please join us here:

