



SOUTHERN OREGON  
WINE INSTITUTE

**Wine Cluster Conference  
Grants Pass, Oregon  
December 17, 2008**

## **Summary Report and Action Plan**

Eighty-five Southern Oregon business people braved winter weather December 17, 2008, to attend the first Wine Cluster Conference, held in Grants Pass. The day-long session, presented by the Southern Oregon Wine Institute at Umpqua Community College, focused exclusively on generating additional support for the region's fast-growing wine industry.

Winegrape growers and winery owners came together with economic development and workforce advisers, educators, lenders, tourism and hospitality specialists and experts in many other fields to learn about cluster strategies and brainstorm ways to collaborate. The energy at the event was very high and participants were quite serious about working together to take Southern Oregon to the next level and make it one of America's emerging wine regions.

Clustering is a concept that works well in many other industries, but is fairly new to winery operations and winegrape production. In essence, similar businesses come together to increase their individual effectiveness and strengthen the overall competitiveness of the group.

The conference was supported in part by Workforce Development Act funds from the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, under contract with The Oregon Consortium.

For more information on the Cluster Conference or Umpqua Community College's Viticulture and Enology Program, contact Chris Lake, director, Southern Oregon Wine Institute, at (541) 440-4709 or [chris.lake@umpqua.edu](mailto:chris.lake@umpqua.edu).

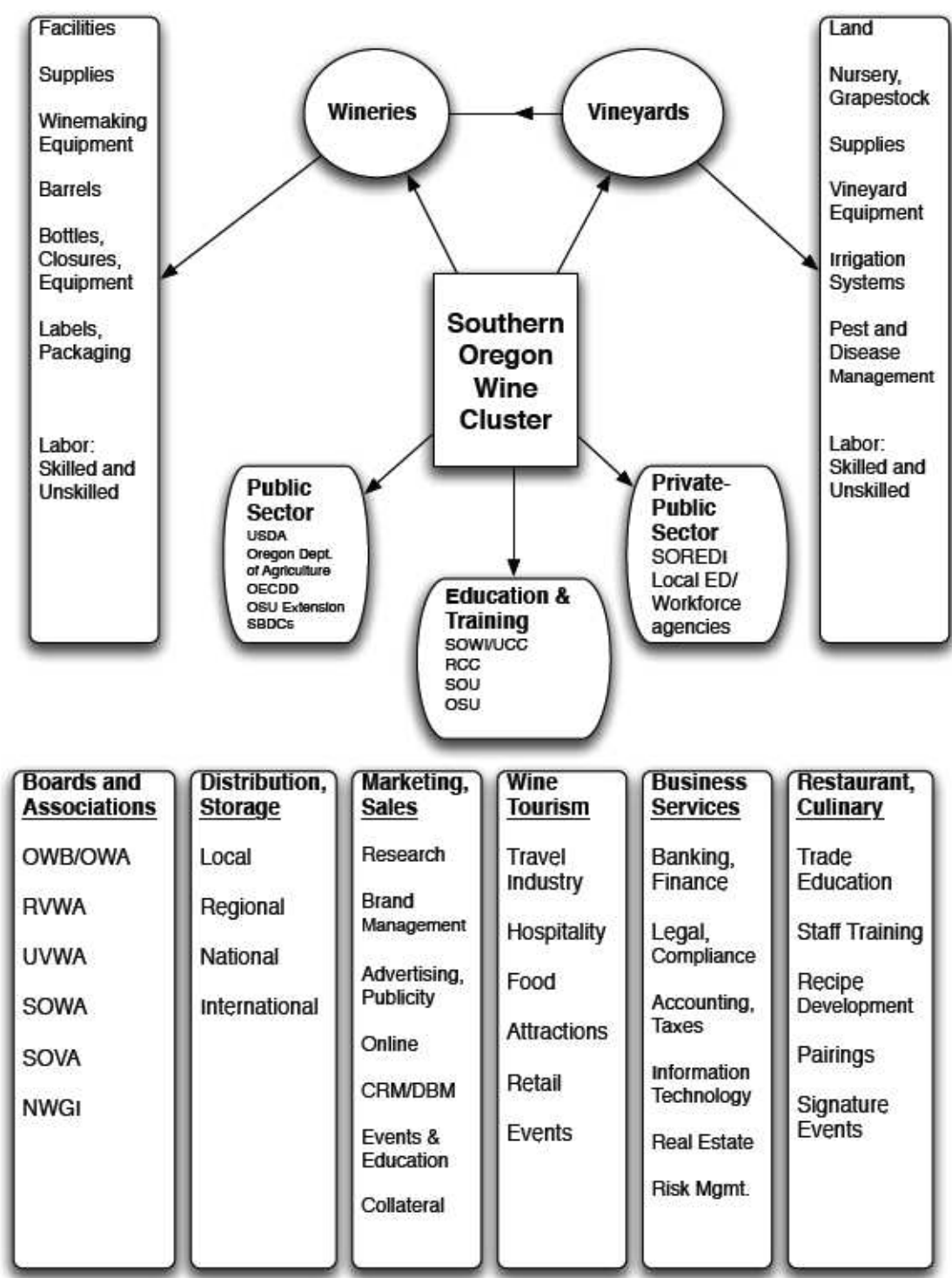


Figure by Marilyn Hawkins, adapted from Michael E. Porter, *On Competition*, Harvard Business School Press, 2008.

## Presentation Summaries

### **“Economic Impacts of the Oregon Wine Industry”**

Ted Farthing, executive director, Oregon Wine Board

In brief remarks, Farthing emphasized the tremendous impact the wine industry has on Oregon’s economy. The *Full Glass* research study conducted in 2004 estimated that impact to be \$1.42 billion, and Farthing suggested the current number may be closer to \$2 billion. Oregon produced two million cases of wine in 2007, representing approximately one percent of domestic production. There are 350 wineries in the state today and roughly 800 wine-related businesses (wineries and vineyards combined). Winegrapes are one of the leading value-added products in Oregon and they retain a significant amount of profit with the state.

### **“What Are Clusters and How Do They Work?”**

Ron Fox, executive director, Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc.

Fox outlined the basic theory behind clustering and emphasized that they can help businesses achieve a competitive advantage by promoting common interests, as well as making the public sector more effective in supporting business issues. He explained that clusters can:

- Increase access to special inputs, services, employees, information and institutions.
- Ease coordination and transactions among companies.
- Encourage rapid diffusion of best practices.
- Provide visible performance comparisons and incentives to improve.
- Enhance opportunities for innovation.
- Allow multiple suppliers/institutions to assist with knowledge creation.
- Lessen costly experimentation.

### **“Workforce Trends Affecting Southern Oregon Agriculture, Wine and Tourism”**

Brian T. Rooney, regional economist Lane-Douglas counties, Oregon Employment Dept.

In his presentation, Rooney addressed four main topics:

- The current state of the economy in Oregon and when a recovery from the statewide recession can be expected.
- Available data about wine production by county and employment trends related to the wine industry and broad conclusions drawn from the data.
- Tourism related employment in Southern Oregon.
- Employment Department (Research) products and services available on the Web and otherwise.

Rooney noted that winegrape production in Douglas, Jackson and Josephine counties is skyrocketing. From 1997-2007, Douglas County saw a 201 percent increase, Jackson climbed 266 percent, and Josephine increased 164 percent. They now represent three of the seven largest winegrape-producing counties in the state. “While the overall employment outlook in Oregon is fairly grim, the wine industry is a genuine bright spot,” said Rooney. “Current data clearly shows a need for additional workers with skills and experience in vineyards and wineries.”

### “The Value of – and Barriers to – Clusters”

Anne H. Root, co-owner/general manager, EdenVale Winery, and Commissioner, Oregon Economic and Community Development Commission

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Root explained that clusters are “geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries and associated institutions (i.e., universities, standards agencies and trade associations) in particular fields that compete, but also cooperate.” She noted that a healthy rivalry is an essential driver of rapid improvement and entrepreneurship, and that creation of new firms and institutions is integral to cluster development.

Root also identified some potential hurdles in Southern Oregon:

- The wine industry is still emerging and marked by new entrants with little clout, reputation or industry knowledge.
- Supporting suppliers are not located in the region – or are just developing themselves.
- The region’s consumers/buyers are learning and developing, but have relatively low experience with and awareness of the industry. Linkages to the region’s wine businesses are still in the development stage.
- There is a wide range of varieties grown here, thus the region is hard to define.
- Public policy is still developing around the emerging wine industry.

### “Bringing an Industry Together: The Lodi Story”

Mark Chandler, executive director, Lodi Winegrape Commission

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A highlight of the conference was a luncheon presentation by Chandler. He laid out the concrete steps Lodi, California, took over the past 20 years to improve the region’s wine quality, establish a unified brand, increase sales and drive an enormous jump in wine tourism. Attendees immediately grasped the parallels to Southern Oregon and began talking about how to adopt Lodi’s best practices.

Chandler’s prescription for success involved what he called the Seven Cs:

1. Development of a grower **Community**
2. **Commitment** of energy, resources and focus
3. **Consistent** internal and external messaging
4. **Critical Mass** of vineyards and wineries developed over time
5. **Credibility** of the Lodi story
6. **Collaboration** among all partners to leverage their assets
7. **Consistent Improvement** in grapes, wine and marketing efforts

## Brainstorming Breakout Sessions

In two afternoon breakout sessions, participants developed ideas and action plans in five key categories: winery and vineyard operations, education and workforce development, wine destination tourism, marketing/sales and distribution, and business services.

## 1. Vineyard and Winery Operations

Facilitator: Chris Lake, director, Southern Oregon Wine Institute at Umpqua Community College, [chris.lake@umpqua.edu](mailto:chris.lake@umpqua.edu), (541) 440-4709

### General Issues

Overall, there is a perception that the vineyard and winery operations in Southern Oregon are doing a good job producing sound grapes and wine. The challenge to both grape growers and winemakers is improving the quality of their products to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive marketplace.

While specific areas for improvement were discussed, the major theme that surfaced and resurfaced in the two breakout sessions was that marketing of wines made in Southern Oregon has the biggest impact on current vineyard and winery operations. Most of the participants also agreed that marketing has the greatest impact on the future direction of grape-growing and winemaking enterprises in our area.

The groups were in general agreement that Southern Oregon is an area where many different cultivars of winegrapes can be successfully produced. This presents a dilemma for both the grower and winemaker, in that, without a “flagship” cultivar, the area lacks a specific marketing target to help advance the reputation of the wines made here.

Some discussion revolved around trying to identify the key cultivars that are best suited to the area and may be promoted to flagship cultivar status. Many participants thought that this would be a worthwhile endeavor, although the nature of the research process would require a multi-year, multi-site and resource intensive project to produce reliable results. Additionally, focusing on a single cultivar would lessen the potential for marketing other, equally successful cultivars that produce high-quality wine here.

Below is a bulleted list of the items of concern to grape-growers and winemakers, aside from the overarching concern about marketing the wines of Southern Oregon.

### Vineyard Issues

- Evaluation of various clones, rootstocks
  - In the hierarchy of decisions about selection of the best suited plant material to use in our vineyards, these concerns fall below the larger issue of flagship cultivar.
- Grape quality
  - This concept involves optimum grape maturity, acceptable levels of disease and pest damage, and overall grape specifications at harvest time.
- Clean plant material
  - Recognition of the potential transmission of pests and disease through grapevine propagation.
  - Establishment of reasonable criteria for reduction or prevention of the spread of pests and disease through the use of clean plant material.
- What is vineyard sanitation?
  - What are the tools that a grape-grower has that will achieve a balance between vineyard productivity, economic viability and environmental stewardship?

- Site selection
  - With anticipated growth in vineyard development in the region, defining the best sites to plant and promoting the use of appropriate site selection criteria.
- Irrigation
  - What are appropriate irrigation schemes to implement in our region?
- Economic sustainability
  - To be included in relevant discussions of Environmental Sustainability.
- Technical assistance
  - Many thought that this would be most useful in the form of a diagnostician – an entity that would provide immediate feedback to growers on problems encountered in vineyard development and grape production. (This is not to imply that OSU Extension did not provide this service, just that resources are lacking in servicing the regional need.)
- Education and communications
  - More technical symposia and workshops would address the needs of experienced growers; education is also needed for those new to grape-growing or farming in general.

### Winery Issues

- Availability of affordable equipment
  - There is a need to attract vendors to the area that could supply equipment to both start-up and growing winemaking operations.
- Sanitation
  - The reduction of wine defects by promotion of industry-standard sanitation practices. This implies the methods of detection for wine defects are commonly available. It would be of benefit to the industry to have a wine testing service located in the region.
- Technical assistance
  - In many ways this is a parallel to the concern expressed in the Vineyard Issues area. There is the need for a diagnostician, an entity that would provide immediate feedback to winemakers on problems encountered in wine production. (Not to imply that OSU Extension did not provide this service, just that resources are lacking in servicing the regional need.)
- Symposia – private
  - A venue for winemakers to gather for critical peer review of their wines without concern for the impact on the region's wine marketing efforts (confidential, critical review without media involvement).

### Conclusions

The overarching response to these breakout sessions was that the most prominent concern for the participants was marketing: **What is the flag we fly?** The next level down in our hierarchy of needs was relatively evenly divided into a series of technical concerns that would assist our regional grape and wine industries in producing higher quality fruit and wine. Some of these technical issues involved education and communication to better integrate the knowledge base with the stakeholders in the region. Many participants expressed a desire to meet again, with the intention of pursuing solutions relevant to concerns raised during these sessions.

## 2. Economic and Workforce Development

Facilitator: Vicki Griesinger, president, Griesinger Group. [vicki@griesingergroup.com](mailto:vicki@griesingergroup.com)  
(541) 552-9989

### Market and Industry Forecasts

Findings and Gaps: Many forecasts are historical in nature and do not look ahead. They are not helpful for predictive needs. The regional wine industry needs much more look-ahead market data.

#### Recommendations:

- Accept Brian Rooney's (Oregon Dept. of Employment) invitation to conduct surveys on various topics to help the industry.
- Update the 2004 *Full Glass* research report on economic impacts of the Oregon wine industry and include more information on Southern Oregon.

### Education and Workforce Readiness

Findings and Gaps: Not all regional growers and wineries know enough yet about what defines high quality in wine, nor what drives quality. For both, the bar must be raised.

Some growers and vintners only have Southern Oregon knowledge, which has to be expanded.

There may be an overabundance of "hobbyists" in the local industry and not widespread enough knowledge of best practices in viticulture and enology.

There is a shortage of both skilled and unskilled labor.

A lack of visibility for the Southern Oregon wine industry limits expansion potential.

Only a limited number site-selection consultants practice in this region.

The Southern Oregon Winery Association and the two growers associations (UVWA and RVWA) don't work closely enough together and this lack of alignment must be addressed.

#### Recommendations:

- Create a new alliance or consortium that includes growers, wineries and support services to promote greater collaboration.
  - Hire an executive director.
  - Develop programs to directly support workforce development.
  - Create collaborations tailored to business size (both small and large wineries).
- Assist in the creation of full-time, year-round employment opportunities for workers. That may involve some combination of work in vineyards/wineries, at Harry & David, etc.
- Develop plans with temporary staffing agencies (which currently assist in this area) to combine job opportunities with an employee-benefits package, in order to attract higher-quality staff.
- Expand educational workshops and availability of consulting professionals to provide expertise in:
  - Business and Economic Principles of Grape Growing and Winemaking:
    - Business planning, marketing, basic economics, vineyard and winery contracts, time value of money, wine grape establishment and production costs for vineyards, financial statements and financial ratio analysis, economics of grape production, impacts of production/ cultural decisions on cash flow, leverage and sources of credit, cost of supplies and equipment, etc.
  - Expand training for tasting room and hospitality/culinary staff.

- Conduct workshops or courses in technical areas such as soil analysis, soil and tissue sampling, site selection, varietal selection, lab tests, sanitation, spraying, irrigation, pruning, canopy management, cultural practices, pesticide management, etc. (NOTE: SOU Chemistry Department has provided some lab techs to local wineries.)
- Keep employers updated on immigration issues, perhaps in partnership with local chapter of the Society of Human Resource Management.
- Further develop certificate and associate degree programs in viticulture, enology, and the business of wine. Consider partnerships with RCC and SOU to effectively extend geographic reach.
- Encourage staff rotational assignments to other successful wine regions to increase knowledge. Develop more global knowledge of the industry in general and hire people from other areas.
- Develop some basic tools:
  - Directories of subject-matter experts and association members.
  - Succinct summaries of modern vineyard management strategies and tactics, in both English and Spanish.
  - Checklists and templates of “What to do if” – like [www.vinewise.org](http://www.vinewise.org) in Washington state
- Investigate feasibility of mechanization vs. manual harvesting in future vineyards, in order to address current and looming farmworker shortage.
- Hire wine writer to write stories and white papers – and place articles.
- Create more demonstration, training and teaching wineries and vineyards.
- Develop cooperatives for sharing consultant resources, ideas, equipment, etc. – while recognizing need for sanitation to avoid potential spread of pests and disease.

### **Job Creation Strategies**

Findings and Gaps: Lack of visibility about regional wine job opportunities or pools of potential employees.

Only two levels of workers: minimum wage and higher paid consultants (\$90-100/hour.)

Still not enough wine production in Southern Oregon. Many grapes transported to the Willamette Valley.

Some indication that 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of family members may be leaving the region and the industry.

Recommendations:

- Develop website for Southern Oregon wine industry to post jobs, available employees/contractors, internships, shadowing and mentoring opportunities, etc.
- Develop hierarchical job families, descriptions of jobs and career paths, with prerequisites to moving up the ladder. Specify education and experience needed at each level and compensation rates.
- Develop “Fellows” program – to allow for mentoring/shadowing
- Implement more training in business succession planning.

### **Grant Funding**

Findings and Gaps: Lack of matching funds among local businesses for USDA Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG) and other grants

Lack of knowledge about how to successfully apply for grants and then manage them.

Recommendations:



- Combine entities (association members, groups of vineyards or wineries) to ensure sufficient matching funds are available.
- Develop a Commission – with a mandatory fee structure – to provide funding for all of the above, similar to a merchants association or chamber of commerce, which are fee-based.

### 3. Wine Destination Tourism

Facilitator: Carolyn Hill, CEO, Southern Oregon Visitors Association, (541) 552-0502  
[carolyn@sova.org](mailto:carolyn@sova.org)

#### Why Did You Attend This Conference?

- Learning (6)
- Sharing / hearing marketing ideas (4)
- Growing wine destination tourism (4)
- Learning about the winery business (2)
- Promoting local wines (2)
- Contribute to cluster project
- Identifying the wine traveler
- Improve identity of a specific destination (Ashland)
- Building business through cooperative marketing with attractions such as the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Britt Festival
- Staffing questions, solutions
- Grow profitability
- Passion for tourism

**Defining Wine Tourism** (facilitator): *“Visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals, and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors.”*

#### Obstacles to Development of Wine Destination Tourism

- Pervasive branding of pinot noir as “the Oregon” wine”
- Perception of rainy Oregon climate
- Relatively immature market for fine wines
- Anti-imbibing emphasis, e.g. “DARE” program, MADD
- Lack of good signage, difficulty in gaining attention of a visitor once here
- Lack of identity as a fine wine region
- Insufficient dining and lodging in some areas (especially Umpqua region)
- Poor global economy
- Distance from major urban feeder market

#### Opportunities for Development of Wine Destination Tourism

- Increasing knowledge/spending power of “Millennials”
- Commodity pairing opportunities are abundant, ties into agri-tourism, sustainable farming, artisan foods
- Abundant cultural and culinary amenities available
- Natural beauty
- Cooperative marketing to lengthen stay of visitors to region

- Variety of high-quality wines
- Reasonably priced lodging
- Proximity to major travel corridors (I-5, Highway 101, others)

### **Brainstorming Ideas**

- Tourist Train/Wine Loop of Southern Oregon: connecting the south coast to Umpqua, through High Lakes area, into Ashland and the Rogue Valley.
- Must identify a brand for the regional wine product! Top ideas: State of Jefferson Wine; Sunbelt Wines of Oregon; Big Reds of Southern Oregon; Oregon's Sunshine Wine Loop.
- Siskiyou Welcome Center interpretive exhibit/signage, focusing on the "trip as the destination" and identify wineries throughout the region. Complemented by road signage in a similar style as a visual clue to the traveler.
- Wine Show – on the road tastings. Continue and increase these types of endeavors, especially in San Francisco and Portland.
- Create industry FAMs – excursions for winemakers, lodging and culinary, visitors center workers, et al. Every group that comes into contact with the visitor can increase their knowledge and direct experience of the region, which helps increase tourism and lengthen visitor stays. Invite travel agents from around the Western U.S. to participate.
- Create an exit off of I-5 that is branded as the chief wine destination "stop" and will route people into the Jacksonville/Applegate Valley area.
- Create a Southern Oregon Wine Tasting/Food Co-op store in Portland's Pearl District – top floor of Powell's Books would be ideal.
- Targeted campaigns to specific geographic areas: Willamette Valley; San Francisco Bay Area. "Tired of Pinot Noir? Tired of Crowds? Visit Southern Oregon (insert brand)!"
- Extend the current World of Wine Festival (or create another event) that is a three-day festival with food/culinary the first day, area attractions (rivers? lakes?) The second, and the final day open houses at all participating wineries. Position event at shoulder seasons, create opportunity to transact business there (sell wine!).
- Create "Super Wine Visitors Centers": wine centers with tasting rooms, visitor information/maps, retail, dining, art, spas, and more. Located in Ashland, Grants Pass, Roseburg, and on the south coast (Bandon). Possible names: Artisan Showcase; Wine Showcase Center.
- Create HUGE website for Southern Oregon wines. Spend resources necessary to gain dominance in search engines. Wine Blogs, et al.
- Create "Southern Oregon Wine TV" – public access or other channel devoted to wine destination tourism.

## **4. Marketing, Sales and Distribution**

Facilitator: Marilyn Hawkins, president, Hawkins & Company PR  
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### **Big-Picture Strategies**

- "Change the way we think." Put aside past barriers and animosities, real or imagined, and begin using the power of collaboration and clustering to significantly expand both the region's reputation for wine and its market share.

- Answer the core question and stick with it: Should Southern Oregon – with wineries and vineyards from Elkton to Ashland – be presented as: (1) One completely unified region, Southern Oregon; (2) A loosely affiliated assemblage of AVAs under the Southern Oregon umbrella; (3) Independent, yet cooperating AVAs; or (4) Every AVA for itself.
- Commit to continuously improving the quality of wine and winegrapes produced here. Attract more accomplished winemakers to this region; help established winemakers expand their knowledge base and skill.
- Develop a true “wine culture” in Southern Oregon. Borrow the best ideas from other areas that have successfully added a serious wine component to their regional character and economy.

### **Planning & Infrastructure Development**

- Outline the components of an initial marketing plan and budget, then determine what the regional industry is willing to invest – and how best to raise the necessary resources.
- Investigate generating additional funds for operations and marketing through a rebate of increased OWB assessments back to Southern Oregon. (Currently, \$25/ton, 45¢/case.)
- Develop a job description for and hire an executive director for an organization to help unify and promote the Southern Oregon wine/winegrape industry.
- Long-term, develop a focal point facility that showcases regional wines, does wine education, serves as a “clubhouse” for the industry, and performs other vital functions. If appropriate, partner with local municipalities, county governments, chambers of commerce and/or visitors bureaus to operate and promote the facility.
- Encourage representatives from Southern Oregon to get more involved in statewide boards and commissions, beyond OWB/OWA, so this region has more leverage.

### **Market Positioning & Branding**

- Assess direct and indirect competitors (wine and non-wine) and develop a legitimate positioning strategy for the region’s wine.
- Answer the question once and for all: “Should Southern Oregon have a flagship wine (or wines)? If so, what should it/they be – and why?”
- Craft a comprehensible, relevant story for Southern Oregon wine. What is the history, the present situation and future of wine here?
- Develop a genuine sense of *place* for Southern Oregon wine. What can someone get here that’s not created anywhere else, and why?

Shape a true brand for Southern Oregon wine and winegrapes. Suggested elements:

- Tremendous variety/diversity of grapes grown here and wines produced (Albariño to Zinfandel)
- Family-owned and operated businesses producing hand-crafted wines
- Beautiful area to visit, with many attractions and diversions
- Approachable wines that accompany practically any cuisine
- “Unstuffy”

Acknowledge and address current disadvantages:

- Little recognition of this area as a wine-producing region
- Confusion over what is grown and made here
- No overarching, integrated image for the area
- Variance in wine quality
- No nearby large population base

- Living in the shadow of the Willamette Valley’s success with pinot noir
- Limited distribution options, especially for smaller producers
- Wines perceived by some locals as expensive

### **Culinary Connections**

- Own our own turf: Partner more closely with specialty and artisan food producers and farmers in the region, capitalizing on appropriate pairings with Southern Oregon wines.
- Engage in a concerted effort to get on many more restaurant, catering, institutional and related wine lists.
- Create more demand among visitors (and locals) for Southern Oregon wines. Get people to voice: “Hmmm. I sure wish you had more regional wines on your list. When I travel, I like to have the full local experience.”

### **Wine Tourism**

- Partner more extensively with the Southern Oregon Visitors Association and local Convention & Visitors Bureaus to encourage greater wine-related destination tourism.
- Coordinate better with Travel Oregon on the Oregon Bounty program so everyone in the industry (not just wine tasting rooms) benefit from that extensive promotion.
- Create powerful new cross-marketing opportunities with key regional tourism attractions including Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Crater Lake, Britt Festival and others.
- Install more – and more visible – highway signage, especially along I-5, that promotes this area as a wine region and better directs tourists off the freeway.

### **Distribution & Storage**

- Develop greater instate distribution for Southern Oregon wines, especially in Portland, Bend and other population centers.
- Encourage the creation of additional local wine distribution and storage capacity.
- Investigate opportunities for some form of cooperative distribution.

### **Marketing Communications**

- Outline a basic annual plan that may include advertising, expansion of web presence, direct marketing, special events, etc.
- Encourage the local industry to get much smarter about social media/Media 2.0 strategies and how they can help individual businesses and the region as a whole.
- Significantly expand media relations/publicity efforts with wine trade, general business and consumer media, print and non-print.

### **Outreach to Influentials**

- Get more Southern Oregon wines reviewed by influential wine writers and bloggers. Try the “Make the Case” idea, borrowed from Lodi: Have qualified wine judges select the top 12 wines from this region and send that mixed case to key reviewers.
- Hold a smaller-scale version of Pinot Camp, where wine writers and other industry influentials come together to learn about and taste regional wines.

### **Consumer & Trade Education**

- Investigate development of a new regional Wine Education Foundation, the purpose of which is create more sophisticated wine buyers and consumers.
- Continue to upgrade the skills of tasting room personnel to enhance each customer’s overall experience.

## 5. Business and Professional Services

Facilitator: Terry Swagerty, director, Small Business Development Center  
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### Banking & Finance

- Prepare businesses now for better times ahead.
- Write or expand the company's business plan; upgrade its management team; educate and train staff.
- Understand and better use existing regional resources: SOREDI, CCD, Small Business Development Centers, SBA, Farm Credit Bureau, etc.
- If possible, take advantage of fairly low interest rates (approx. 6% for wineries).

### Legal & Compliance

- Acknowledge that all states have different laws and that can mean onerous reporting requirements, confusing shipping regulations and significant paperwork. However, good compliance by all wineries will benefit the region as a whole.
- Look for simple ways to streamline recordkeeping and share best practices among wineries in the cluster.
- Determine if there is a regional resource that can assist wineries with compliance.

### Accounting

- Understand the importance and value of modern cost-center accounting, even in a small operation.
- Encourage a cadre of CPAs based here to become highly proficient in all aspects of working with vineyards and wineries (including business advising, tax and audit).
- Be willing to create different financial models for a business – based on base, medium, best-case and worst-case scenarios.

### Real Estate & Land Use

- Work effectively through regulatory channels to preserve sufficient land that is inexpensive enough to farm.
- Acknowledge the tension associated with urban/suburban encroachment into ag lands and seek creative solutions to concerns re: dust, spray, PortaPotties, etc.
- Increase the industry's knowledge of regional water resources and water rights.
- Understand that Oregon's historic land-use laws are unfavorable to "infertile" soils, which can often be best for vineyards. Work toward reasonable change.
- Advocate for more responsive building permit processes for ag uses.

### Information Technology

- Significantly improve the Southern Oregon wine industry's presence on the Internet.
- Encourage the development of more online sales, when and where feasible.
- Employ simple tools such as Google Analytics to track and analyze website traffic and related data.

### Other

- Expand the number of vineyards and wineries in Southern Oregon – and the use of cluster thinking throughout the industry.
- Encourage greater use of appropriate "green" technologies and approaches in both vineyards and wineries.

## **Overall Conference Observations**

“I enjoyed the conference and felt it was both very informative as well as timely. I am very excited of what is happening at UCC.”

– Eric Weisinger, wine consultant

“The Southern Oregon Wine Community and the industries integral to it met to consider ways in which our respective businesses could support and enhance each other and the economy of our community...Our meeting was about finding our collective voice as community of interested businesses and about learning how to use that collective voice in a constructive way to benefit not just ourselves but all of Southern Oregon. That was the story: that wineries and bankers and insurance agents and realtors and accountants and lawyers and many others came together to find ways to cooperate and help our industries and our community. This meeting was historic.”

– Don Mixon, proprietor and winemaker, Madrone Mountain

“It was a great event that focused on a candid SWOT analysis of our industry...”

– Michael Donovan, managing director, RoxyAnn Winery

“Thanks for your efforts in putting on the program. I really felt that there were some very interesting things that came out of the interactions between folks of different areas of the business community. A great first step!”

– Randy Gold, owner, Pacific Crest Vineyard Services, LLC