

Taking Back Our Narrative: Modernizing the Messaging and Marketing of Wine

Susan Kostrzewa, Wine Journalist & Founder, Resplendent Ink Consulting



The wine landscape is more unpredictable, and crowded

- No one-size-fits-all consumer
- Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, video, podcast, print, digital...many channels in which to be present
- More winery businesses and product vs. flat or decreasing consumption
- Cost of running a winery going up
- Climate change a constant threat



Many opportunities to reach new, existing consumers

- Younger consumers trading up, attracted to higher-quality wines
- Regenerative, sustainable and responsible business practices matter to most and move the needle
- New and diverse wine-interested audiences continue to grow
- Wine travel on the rise and largely untapped
- Channels like SMS, audio and IG Live, Stories and Reels continue to reach wine consumers
- Consumers consistently drawn to the real people and sincere intentions behind wine brands



Prioritize getting your message out

Without a contemporary and strategic plan, all of the work put into your product, packaging and property may never be known.



The press is contributing to problematic messaging

These Elite Bottles of Wine Are So Exclusive, You Can't Just Buy Them

Certain rare bottlings from big-name wineries are available only to members of

NEWS


5 easy tricks to avoid looking stupid when ordering wine in public — while still getting exactly what you like



How To Make Bad White Wine Drinkable

Anti-alcohol messaging is gaining steam



 **World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific** 
@WHOWPRO


There is no safe level of alcohol consumption.


bit.ly/3Hs2faK


There is **no safe level**
of alcohol consumption.



The risk of cancer increases even with
low levels of alcohol consumption.

 **International Agency for Research on Cancer**

 **World Health Organization**

 **World Health Organization**
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

Why Wine is Damaging Our Body More Than We Thought

Download PDF Copy



By Dr. Liji Thomas, MD

CANCER | NEWS

Drinking Alcohol Increases the Risk of 6 Types of Cancer

Experts warn that no amount is safe.

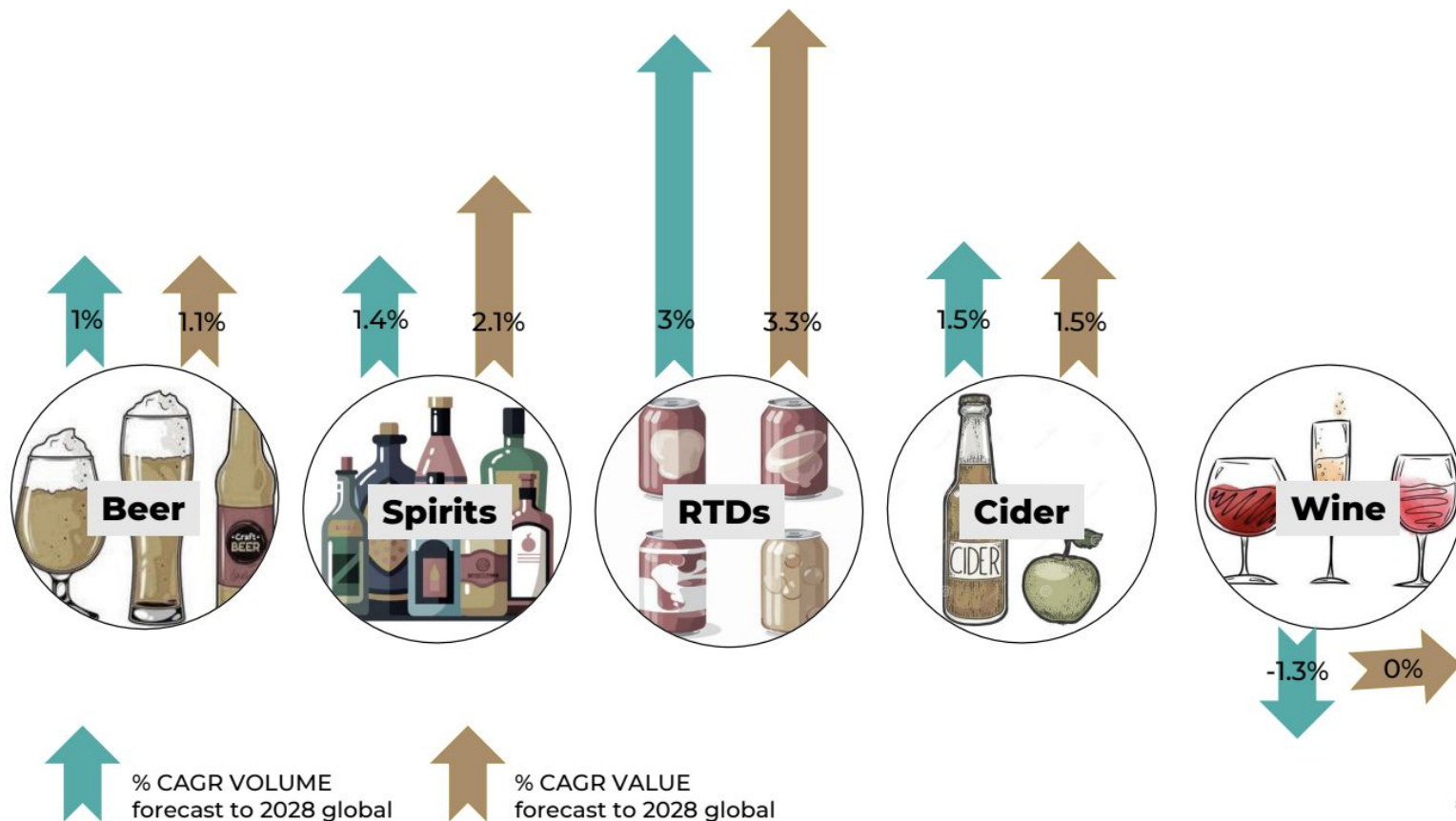


By Becky Upham



Published on September 26, 2024

Wine is not forecast to grow in aggregate



Wine has a compelling and modern story to tell

- Community and joyful social situations
- New experiences, culture, places
- A connection to the earth and real people
- A fun educational pursuit
- Many flavors and styles to explore, and ever evolving
- An important part of the future of sustainable agriculture



Q & A: Taking Back Our Narrative: Modernizing the Messaging and Marketing of Wine



Susan Kostrzewa & Barbara Gorder, President, Undisclosed Location

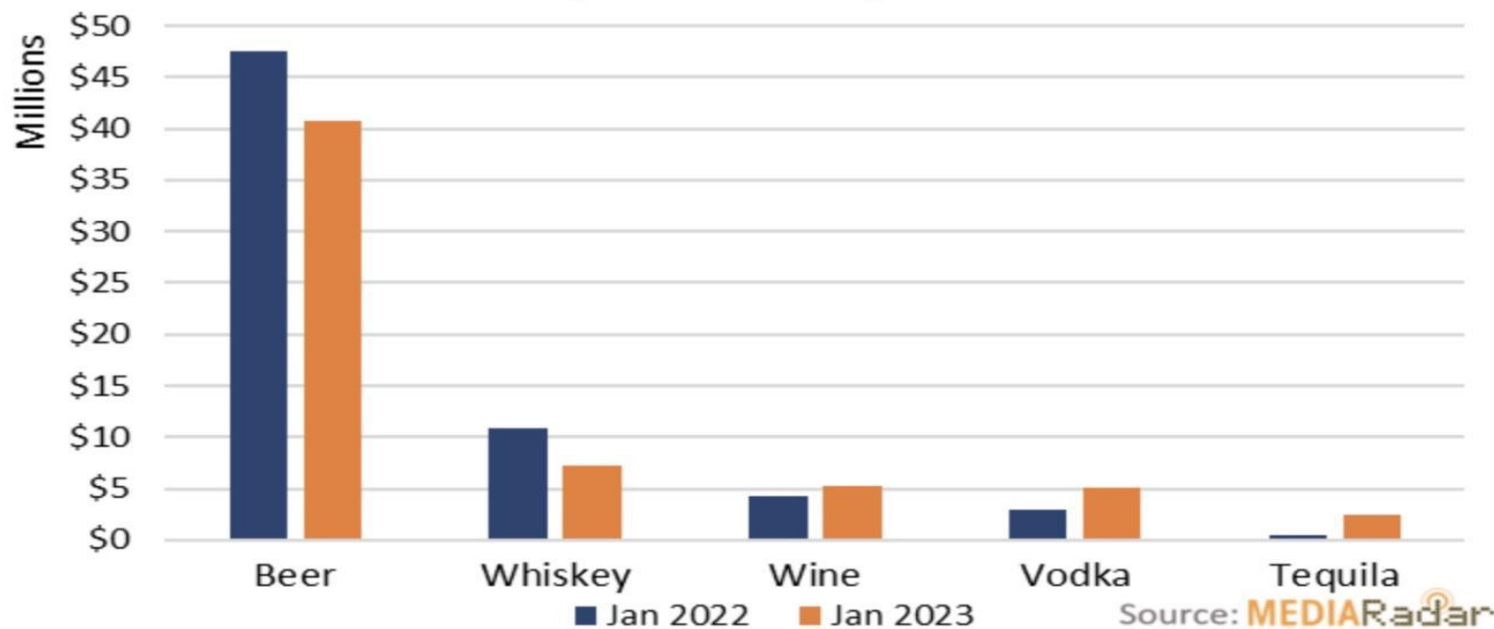
QUESTION

We talk about the need for strategic marketing and messaging in wine, but why do you think the wine world is frequently distrustful of marketing messages? Why should this shift now?



Alcohol Drivers Ad Spend

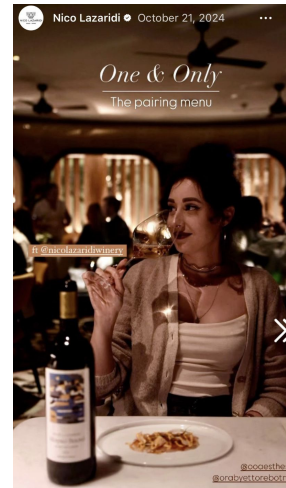
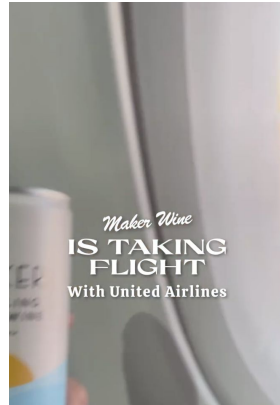
January 2022 vs January 2023



<https://mediaradar.com/blog/alcohol-advertisers-shift-approach/><https://mediaradar.com/blog/>

QUESTION

You mentioned some opportunity areas for communications including travel and ecotourism. Can we talk more about that and how wineries can benefit from this?

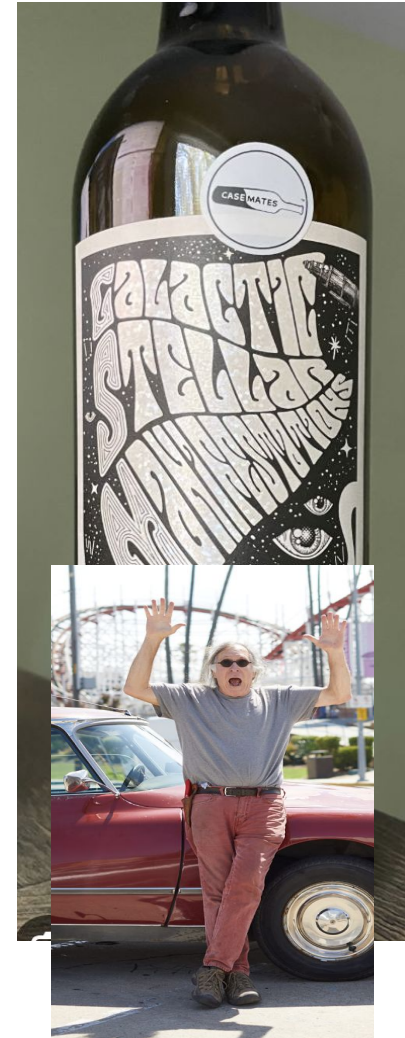


tablascreek Each year, Jason reaches out to members of our team, asks them to share their most memorable win...

This is always one of my favorite [@tablascreek](#) blogs to write, where I ask my team to share their most memorable wines of the last year. Why? Because it reminds me why wine is magical: a chance to travel in space and time while bringing people together.

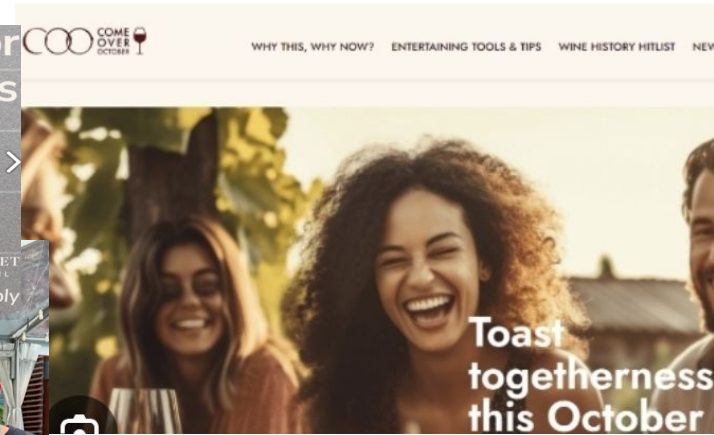
QUESTION

You talked earlier about segmentation and focus when identifying your audience. Why is this so important?



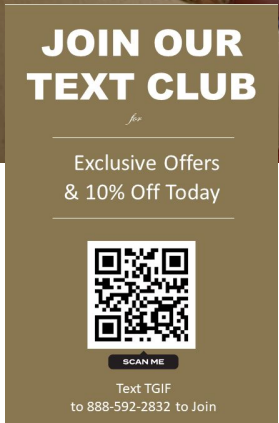
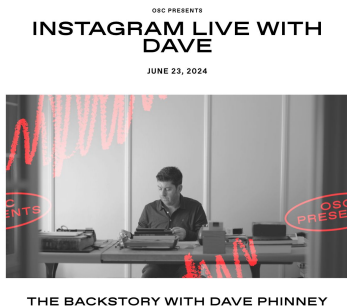
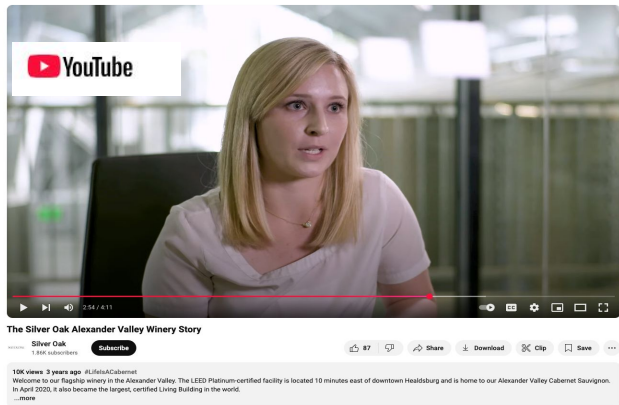
QUESTION

Karen MacNeil talked about combating the negative news currently in the media and beyond with “good news.” How can we take control of the wine narrative?



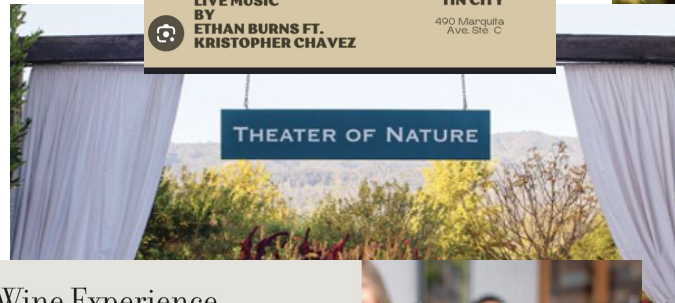
QUESTION

Let's talk more about the various channels of communication that can be utilized for messaging. What can we do better?



QUESTION

Does messaging also extend to the in-person experience at a winery, whether in the materials, the actual communications between your tasting room/winery staff and the customer and the events you host?



Bacon & Wine Experience

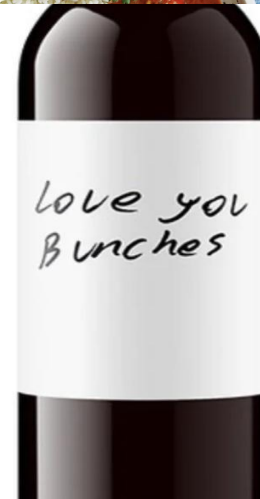
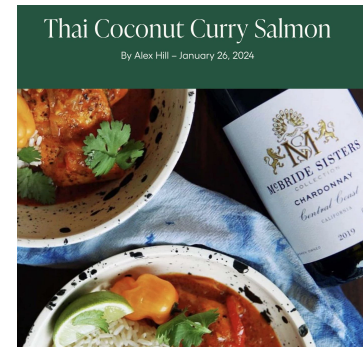
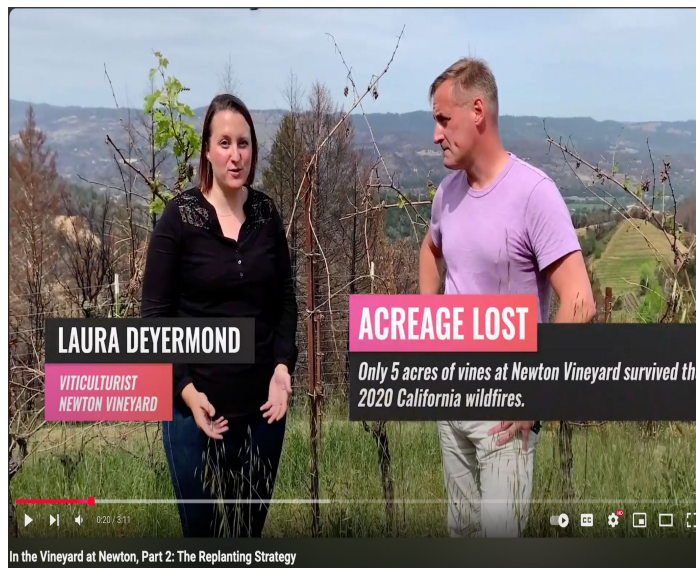
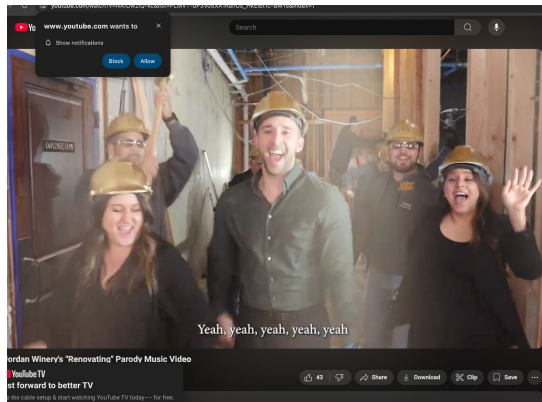
\$85/person Reservation for Parties of 1 to 4

Indulge in the Ultimate Bacon and Wine Experience at Priest Ranch! Calling all food and wine enthusiasts! Elevate your palate with our exclusive Bacon and Wine Experience at Priest Ranch. Delight in the perfect harmony of flavors as you savor four distinct cuts of succulent pork belly, each expertly paired with our carefully curated wines. This unique tasting adventure promises a sensory journey like no other, highlighting the exceptional quality and innovative spirit. Join us for an unforgettable culinary experience that will leave you craving more. Book your reservation today and treat yourself to the ultimate gourmet pairing at Priest Ranch.



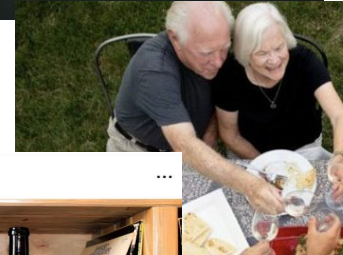
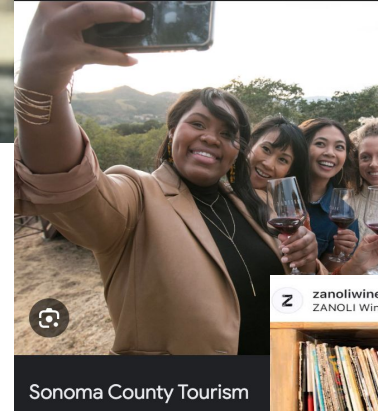
QUESTION

You talked about the “tone” of how we message wine and how we can better appeal to the consumer rather than alienating them or making wine feel like a “chore.” How can this be done?



QUESTION

Can we talk about visual messaging? We know this can illuminate the lifestyle and spirit of wine when done properly.



QUESTION

What about collective messaging? Can we do better regionally?



QUESTION

Should people still be focusing on getting scores as a source of marketing? Do scores still matter?



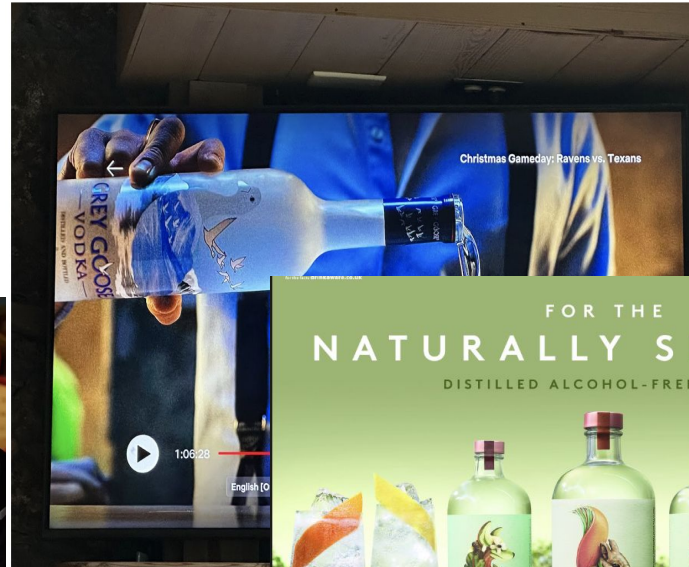
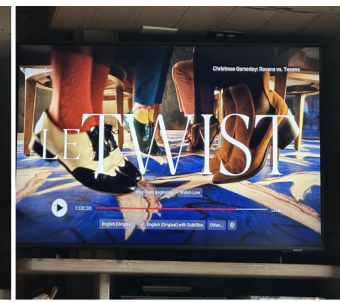
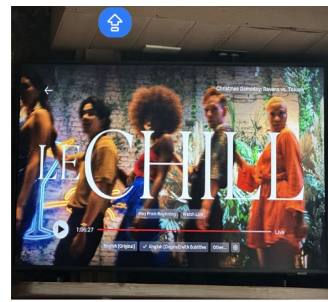
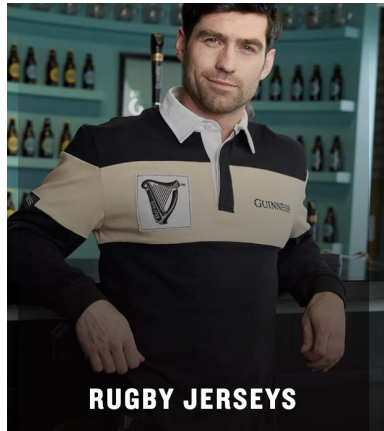
QUESTION

What about the concept of allocations? Do you think this kind of “marketing” still appeals to modern consumers?



QUESTION

How are other categories creating effective consumer marketing and appealing to consumers? What are some examples?



3 things to consider

- **How are you talking to your customer?** What's your tone? Consider humor, honesty, vulnerability. Be real.
- **What visuals are you using?** Are they inclusive, inviting, focused on people and real-life fun and not still-life, sterile shots?
- **Where are you talking about your business?** Consider new channels and go where the people are.

This Wine
PAIRS WELL WITH
DIFFICULT RELATIVES

Let's connect!

Email: resplendentink@gmail.com

Ph: 203-814-5518

Web: resplendentink.com

IG: @suskostrzewa

FB: @Susan Kostrzewa

LinkedIn: Susan Kostrzewa



Resplendent ink

SUSAN KOSTRZEWA, FOUNDER

I believe that wine, spirits, food and their adjacent cultures should be accessible to everyone and that learning can and should be collaborative, exciting and entertaining. I'm passionate about broadening and evolving the wine, spirits and culinary world by championing gender equality, creating a more diverse and inclusive environment for trade and consumers, and emphasizing the importance of sustainable practices in the vineyard and beyond.

ABOUT RESPLENDENT INK

Founded in 2022, Resplendent Ink is a content strategy consultancy specializing in wine, food and adjacent cultural lifestyle communications. From editorial strategy and direction to marketing messaging and nuts-and-bolts campaign ideation and implementation, I help clients identify their own mission and heartbeat and craft content that not only speaks to their unique identity, but attracts and fulfills the audiences they seek.

I am also an experienced national podcast, radio and TV/video personality as well as global panelist, educator and moderator. I have been a professional wine taster and critic for 14+ years.

