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FRIDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2022 4:44 PM

# How Instagram is changing the way people think about wine



LIBBY BRODIE



Though a few of the old guard may prefer wine to remain solely in the cellar (preferably theirs) or the members club tasting room, savvy wine brands have been working with social media to expand their reach, diversify their client base and make the industry, essentially, more enjoyable.

"The wine trade was late to the game on incorporating social media into their marketing mix," says Hannah Milnes, founder of Bouchon Media, "but with the pandemic, businesses, particularly those selling to the on trade, had to shift quickly to online retail and increase their digital marketing efforts. "One of the reasons social media works so well is because individuals and small brands can build up communities that span both on and offline. TikTok in particular has a reputation for strong communities".

The way people buy wine has drastically changed, with consumers keen to know the story behind the wine and winemaker and to engage and interact with a company, rather than basing their purchases on an expert's point scores, with whom they may not share the same taste.

"Instagram is the first thing most people look at these days, much more than browsing websites," says Jeany Cronk, co-founder of Mirabeau.

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"We show how our brand looks and feels and give lots of added value to the visitor, such as recipe ideas, cocktails and information on visiting the region. We reach about 4m people a year through @maisonmirabeau, so it's a great way for customers to interact with the brand.

"Our consumers want to know more about our wines, Provençal food and our personal lives. We can also use social media to support our distributors and key clients, who generally want brands that are active on social. The wine trade, on the other hand, can be a little more old-fashioned – many probably thought it was a waste of time."

Another Instagram success story is Riccardo Pasqua, CEO of Pasqua Wines, who was one of the first in the industry to embrace the power of Instagram, something he honed after spending time working in America.

He inherited a 100-year-old Italian company with strong heritage, legacy, and production but wanted to create a brand that would appeal to customers for the next 20 years, so he turned to the Gram.

"Our marketing team was genius and took inspiration from fashion, art and lifestyle," says Pasqua. "In this way we can break language and culture barriers because it's visual. Wanting to branch out from the traditional wine-comms model of old blokes talking about vintages, Pasqua began a mentoring scheme called "Talent Never Tasted Better".

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These individuals, from a range of backgrounds, created impactful visual imagery a world away from the classic bottle shots used by most wineries. Pasqua then used Instagram to promote the content, giving the wines and company a bold, unique personality, which you clearly see if you check out @pasquawines.

"People said, 'you're crazy!' What are you doing? Why are you giving a voice to these kids? They've never even been to Bordeaux! But these 'kids' learn and grow and touch an audience we don't with older nose-in-the-glass tradition.

"You take a risk, you move fast, you grow quicker – and some of those 'kids' we worked with are some of the most important voices in wine today".

So, if you want to know what's going on in the wine world, it is time to get online and follow voices you trust and producers you like.

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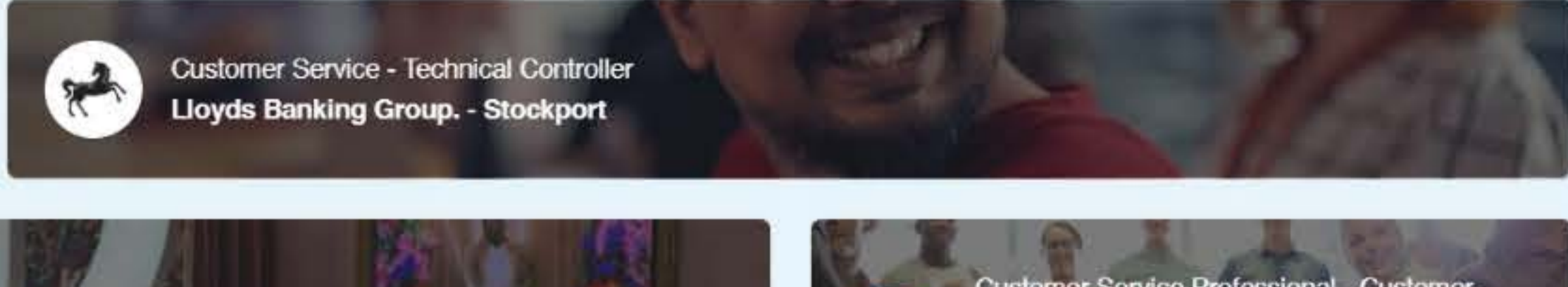
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