

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO WINE COUNTRY EVENT MARKETING 2020

MILESTONE

Events Group



This is the Ultimate Guide to Digital Event Marketing in 2020.

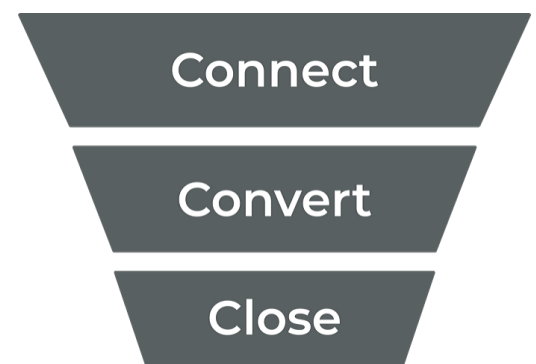
In this guide, we are going to take you step-by-step through the proven strategies that successful event sites are using to get new customers and grow their revenue.

We Are Going To Cover:

1. **How to design your marketing system**
2. **Connect- How to get more visitors to your website**
3. **Convert- How to increase conversions* on your site**
4. **Close- How to systematically nurture* your leads**

***A conversion** is when a person visiting your website takes a desired action to move to the next step in the buyer's journey (ex. Website visitor fills out a form to request information)

***Nurture** is the sales process of turning leads into customers.



By the end of this guide you will have a very clear road map to successfully market your site.

About The Author:

Amanda Vineyard (yes that's her real name) is the Marketing and Venue Manager at Milestone Events Group, LLC - a venue marketing company that works with permitted event properties to help sell more events on a success basis.

If we sell more, you make more. If we don't, it costs you nothing.

As a special thanks for downloading this guide, we will perform an audit of your inquiry flow to assess what steps need to be taken to increase your leads.



Goals

The first step to setting up a successful marketing campaign is to identify and measure your goals. In this section, we will focus on what you are trying to achieve.

“IT IS A CAPITAL MISTAKE TO THEORIZE BEFORE ONE HAS DATA.”

— Sherlock Holmes

This is called the “Marketing Funnel.” Using a model like this will help your company track and leverage data to better understand your sales process.



Every business should be able to track data and answer the following:

- How many visitors does your website get monthly?
- Where do they go within your site?
- What percentage of visitors become leads?
- How many leads does it take to get a sale?



REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

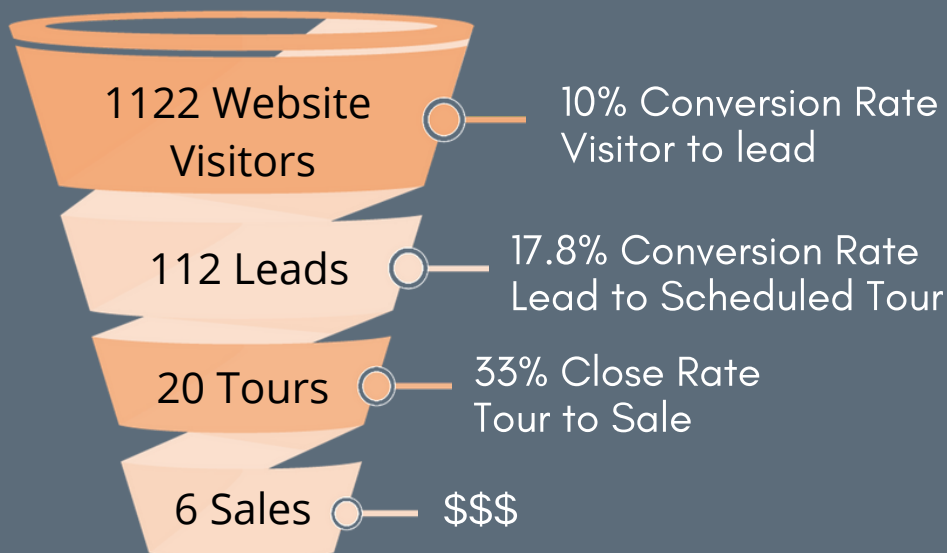
Let's look at a real-life example from a winery. For this example we can simply call this business "Venue A."

When we first met with "Venue A", their only source of website visitors was from wedding directories like Wedding Wire and the Knot.

When visitors came to their website there was no clear "call-to-action." The only way potential clients could communicate with "Venue A" was through a generic "Contact Us" page.

Slow response times and difficulty tracking leads resulted in many potential clients falling through the cracks.

After Milestone Events Group designed a **Connect Convert Close** sales funnel for "Venue A"- these were the results in 60 days.



1. Connect

At the very top of your marketing funnel is what we refer to as the “Connect” stage.

The main goal is to connect with potential clients by increasing the number of visitors to your website. This is done by making your website show up in more places across the internet.

There are 3 main sources for connecting with your potential clients: Search Engines, Directories, and Social Media.

The combination of these three sources will account for over 90% of your customers' activity online.

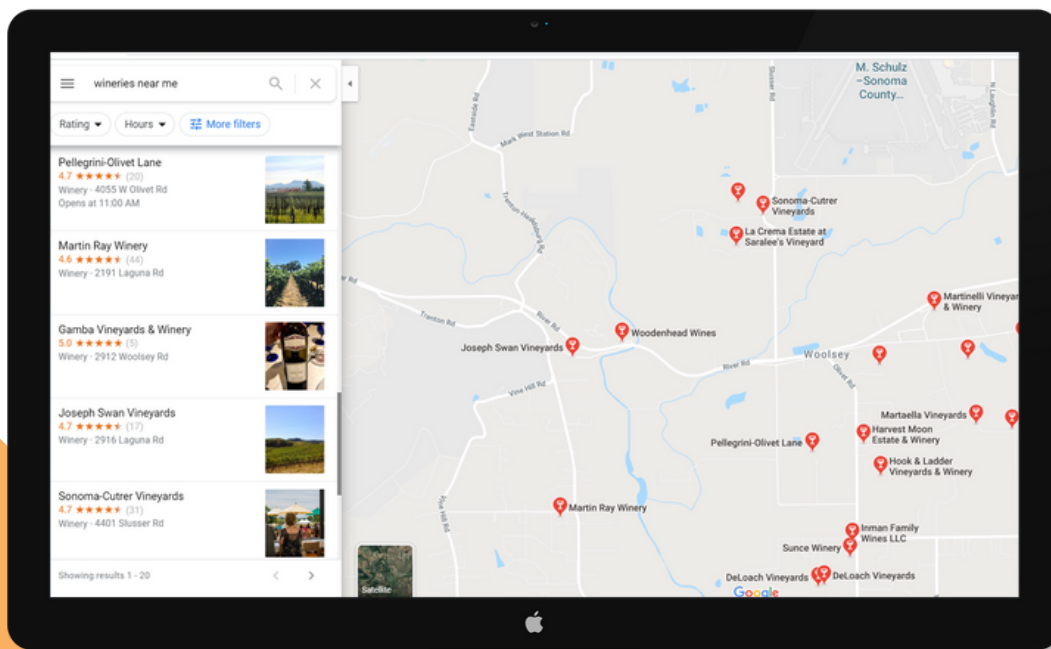
GOOGLE

Because Google uses **keyword-focused targeting** (Ex. "wineries near me"), as opposed to social media, which uses **demographic targeting** (shows ads based on age, gender, interest, etc.), Google is the #1 option for B2C professional services, hands down.

Let's think of it like this:

Google is like a mall. Back in the day, if you needed a new pair of shoes, you would go to the shopping mall. You knew what you needed, so you went directly to the shoe store and selected which pair you wanted to buy.

Think of keyword searches the same way. If I want to go wine tasting, I would go online and search "wineries near me" and I would look around until I found wineries I want to visit.



DIRECTORIES

Directories are like a modern day yellow pages for services. Remember before how we used the search term “wineries near me”?

If you Google that term, the top results will most likely be a directory like TripAdvisor, Yelp, & TravelZoo.

The majority of businesses are not fans of directories but the fact is: National Businesses almost ALWAYS outrank local business- and directory sites are typically national.

The best way to help mitigate this is to be part of something larger than yourself. Being part of a network will help with this issue.

A good way to show up on the top of Google’s organic results is to get the top directory spot. Optimize your profile with good content and reviews – and you should get enough business to make a return on your investment (ROI).

If you feel that directories are working for you, consider paying for a top placement.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is different from search engines. **Social media is more like a party than a mall.**

We call Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest social media- because people are there to socialize and engage in conversation.

You wouldn't walk up to someone at a party and say "Hey, do you need a wedding venue?" Because of this, the advertising strategy on social media is more informative. You might write an article titled something like "[A Fresh Approach to Finding a Wedding Venue.](#)"

Notice how you are starting a conversation, not selling something. The goal is to drive traffic to the article, and get leads from advertising in your own content. This is just like newspapers which advertise in their content.



TRAFFIC CHECKLIST

Every event venue should use a traffic checklist to increase the number of visitors to their site as well as raise brand awareness.

Use Google Ads

Google ads is a pay-per-click service that advertisers can use to pay to show up at the top of Google.

Tip: Make dedicated ads & landing pages that are targeted to the specific keywords you are advertising for.

Optimize Your Site For Search Engines

Just because directories dominate local search doesn't mean there isn't room for your business on the first page of Google.

Tip: For a sneak peek into how your website ranks vs. National directories (or your competition), visit Alexa.com and poke around. This can help you create an agenda to start ranking higher. You can't plan where to go, unless you know where to start.

Use Google MyBusiness

If you haven't already gotten a Google MyBusiness account- you need to stop reading and get one now! With any local searches like "wine tasting near me"- Google features a Map Pack highlighting 3 businesses in your area. It's free exposure on the first page of Google.

Tip: Make sure you are posting on your Google MyBusiness account and responding to reviews. Google likes when users are active on their accounts.

Create Content

Blogging is a great way to increase traffic and not have to pay for it! Think of blogging as a way to answer questions people might have while also being a resource. Venues can write a blog targeting people who search "Top 5 Things People Forget When Choosing a Wedding Venue?" and use it as an opportunity to get new leads.

Tip: Use Google's Keyword Planner Tool to see search volumes for keywords and use answerthepublic.com to see what questions people are asking about your keyword. This will give you a TON of things to blog about.

Advertise On Social Media

Advertising is a great way to get additional viewers to your content. Take advantage of Facebook's Audiences to advertising to your targeted demographic.

Tip: The best way to advertise on social media is with retargeting. Have you ever been shopping for shoes online and suddenly there are shoes everywhere on your timeline. That is the magical world of Facebook retargeting. It works great for keeping you top-of-mind with your traffic that has already been to your site.

2. Convert

So, you've been getting a lot of traffic to your site- does that mean you're getting a lot of new sales?

Not Necessarily.

Back to our "Venue A"- This specific client already had a steady flow of traffic- so the issue was actually converting more clicks into leads.

The two areas of focus in our Convert section will be based around your website's UX (user experience) and CTA (call-to-action). By the end of this section, you will have a better understanding how to implement these ideas into your own website.

USER EXPERIENCE

UX Design is defined as the overall experience of a person using a product such as a website or computer application, especially in terms of how easy or pleasing it is to use.

When looking at the UX of your website- you want to make sure that your visitors can:

1. Quickly and easily access the information they are specifically looking for.
2. Move through the website naturally to see information you want to present.

*Users should not be jumping around looking for information.

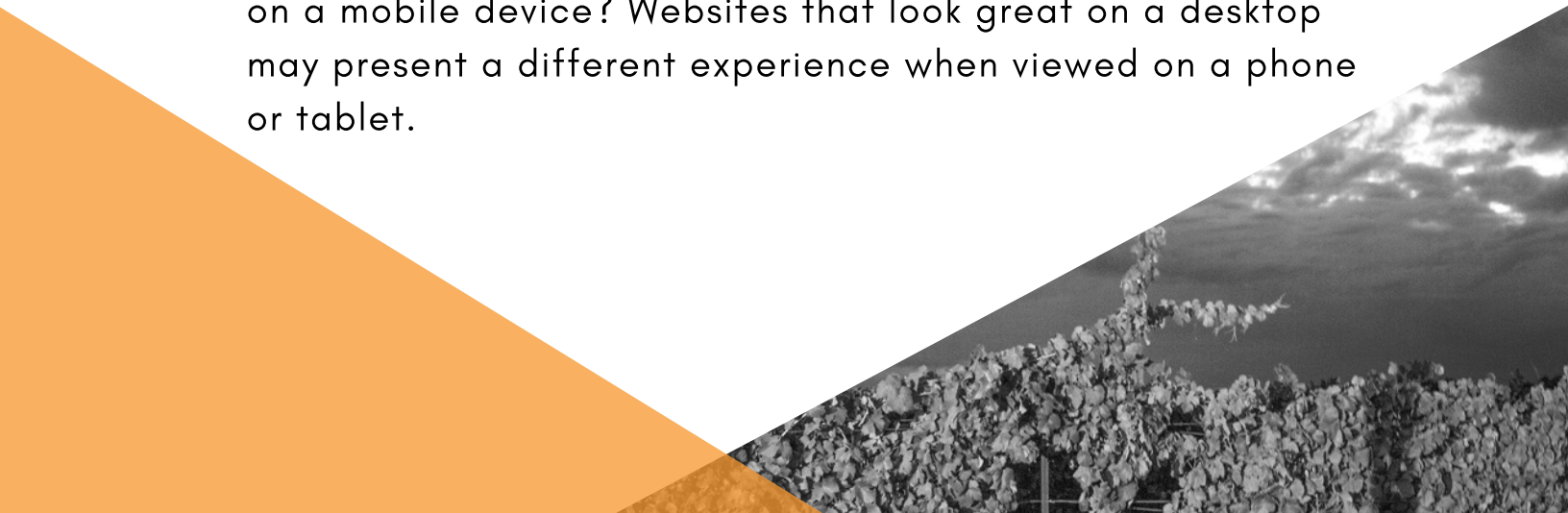
Depending on where your visitor found you online, they either will land on a relevant page or they will land on your home page and need to know where to go.

Take a quick look at your website and follow along with this checklist to see if your website is following UX best practices.



UX CHECKLIST

- ☐ Does your website have a natural flow? Are your visitors naturally guided from one page to the next?
- ☐ Is your website aesthetically pleasing? Do you have a professional, clean look?
- ☐ How simple is your website to use? Is there potentially too much “happening” on your site? (too many buttons, fonts, colors, ads, etc.)
- ☐ How easy to read is the text on your website? Do you have too much text? Are you communicating efficiently or using a lot of industry/buzz-wordy jargon?
- ☐ Is your website effectively using media? (professional photos, videos, graphics, etc..)
- ☐ Compared to your competitors, how well does your site stand out?
- ☐ If your website properly designed for those users who view it on a mobile device? Websites that look great on a desktop may present a different experience when viewed on a phone or tablet.



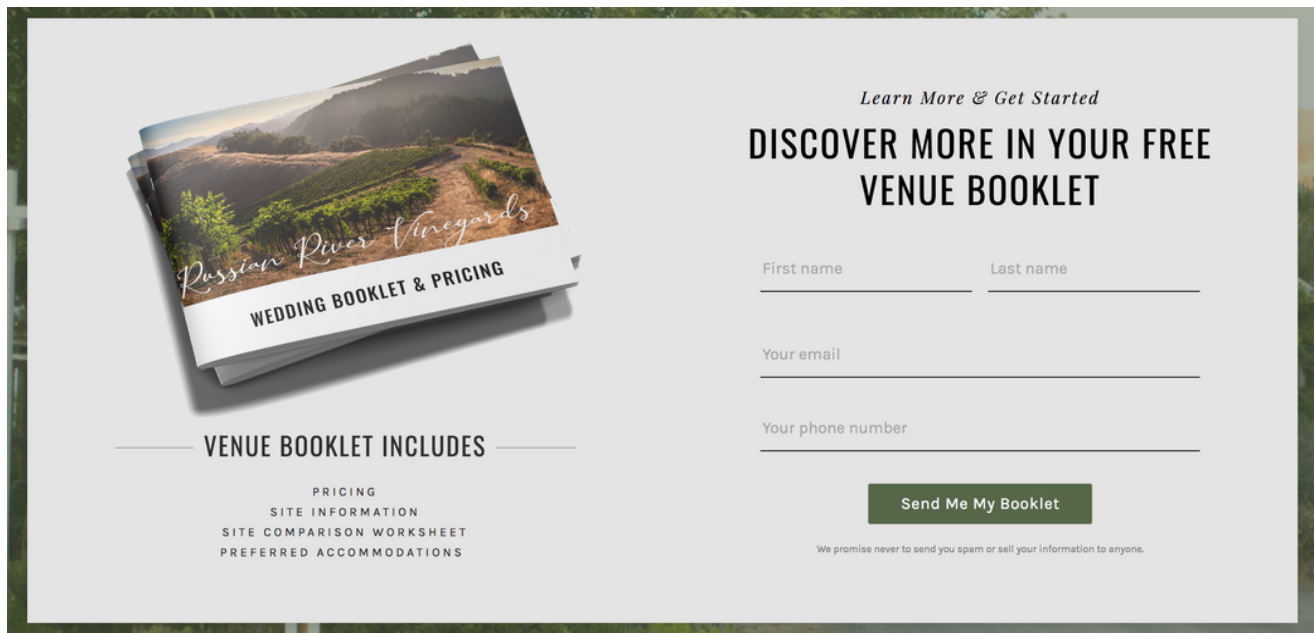
CALL TO ACTION

The most important part of your website is the call-to-action.

A call-to-action is an instruction to the audience designed to provoke an immediate response.

You should have a very clear call-to-action in the banner and footer on every page of your website.

Typically, your call-to-action should come in the form of a “micro-transaction.” Let’s go back to “Venue A” as an example.



Learn More & Get Started

DISCOVER MORE IN YOUR FREE VENUE BOOKLET

First name Last name

Your email

Your phone number

Send Me My Booklet

We promise never to send you spam or sell your information to anyone.

VENUE BOOKLET INCLUDES

- PRICING
- SITE INFORMATION
- SITE COMPARISON WORKSHEET
- PREFERRED ACCOMMODATIONS

CALL TO ACTION

On the banner and footer of their site we offer a free booklet that includes pricing, amenities, availability, and other useful information in exchange for the visitor's name, phone, email (visitor now becomes a lead).

This micro-transaction means you have given your visitors something **they want** (information about what they are shopping for) in exchange for something **you want** (information about the visitor).



CALL TO ACTION

The best way to build a strong call-to-action is to use our model, Inspiration/Education.

This concept is a simple 2-step process to getting more leads.

Step 1 - Inspiration

Elicit an emotional response from your visitors. Make the site design very pleasing and don't overload your customers with too much information. Give them the information they want, to help them get to know your business more.



Step 2 - Education

Offer a call-to-action to educate or delight your audience. A few examples would be:

- A winery offering a free tasting
- A marketing company offering a guide to help businesses understand marketing better
- A wedding venue offering a brochure with additional information

"Effective digital marketing is meant to establish connection online like people actually interact. It's about building relationships- and steps are involved to that process."

3. Close

So, you've been getting a lot of leads – does that mean you're getting a lot of new sales?

Again, not necessarily.

When you get a new lead, you need to have a system in place to help guide these leads along a buyer's journey. A buyer's journey is a series of steps a lead takes before becoming a customer.

This is called Lead Nurturing.

In this section we will learn some lead nurturing strategies.

Close

OFFER

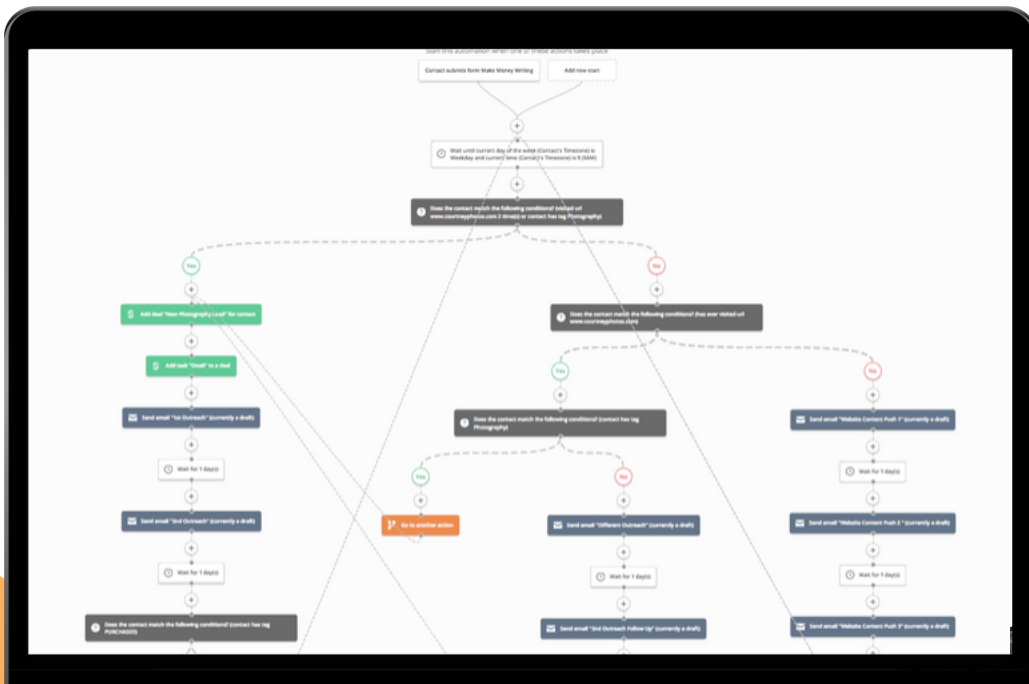
The first step to developing a lead nurturing process is to ask yourself:

"What motivation do my leads have to make a purchase?"

"How am I motivating my leads into making a purchase?"

What do my leads need from me along the sales process?

While that answer may be different from business to business- we have developed a general strategy that works well for everyone.



OFFER

Your offer is a special deal you can give to someone who has not yet done business with you before.

This gives them extra encouragement to work with you instead of your competition.

The model we will often use for our offers is called
Opportunity/ Urgency.

It's a very simple concept.

Give someone an opportunity when they work with you, and you put a deadline on this deal.

Let's look at "Venue A" again as an example.

"Venue A" had a large number of leads with interest every week but not very many of these new leads were coming to visit the property.



Thank you! Your brochure will be in your email shortly.

Get a FREE Bottle of Wine when you scheduled your visit in the next 14 days!

↓ Schedule Your Visit Now

EXPANDING CAMPAIGNS

Most wineries typically offer more than one product. Instead of sending visitors to the homepage of your site- it's ALWAYS more effective to have a separate funnel for each of your services.

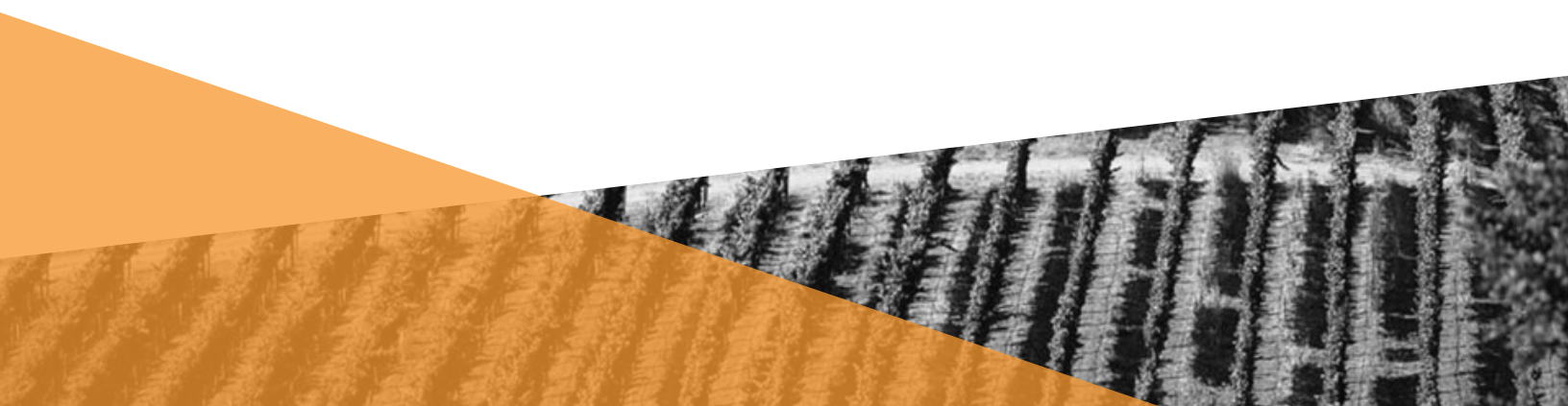
As a winery, you provide tasting room experiences, food & wine pairings, vineyard tours, your wine club and event services....

For this example, you create a campaign to get new visitors.

You will need to have the following:

- Winery Specific ads that focus on winery related keywords
- Winery Specific landing pages for ads
- Winery specific content/ blogs/ videos
- Winery specific pages for SEO
- Winery specific call-to-action
- Winery specific offer for clients

You can personalize your customer's experience by segmenting your website visitors into the proper funnel. This allows you to present information specifically for the service they are searching for.



Budget

Included in this section is an info-graphic that will help you make informative decisions about your marketing budget.

Your overall marketing budget will include three primary components. They are creation/maintenance of the marketing infrastructure, advertising, and personnel costs. Within this example, we will only deal with the first two. However, it is essential to factor in the third component as you build your budget.

Advertising costs at a typical venue will average \$3,000 per booked event. Legacy sites with lots of event experience, top tier event spaces and a strong Internet presence showing previous successful events may be able to spend less. However, costs will likely be even higher for a site new to events or lacking the above attributes.

It is also worthwhile to note that there is a diseconomy of scale as it relates to advertising costs in booking events.

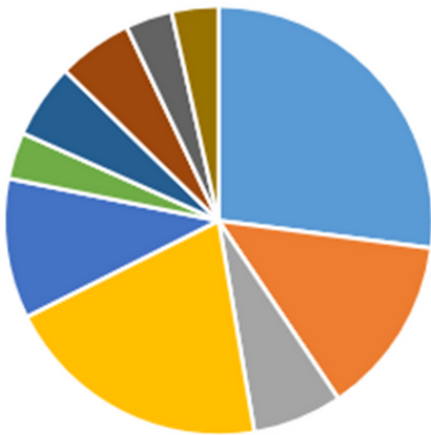
Once the low hanging fruit (desirable dates) are gone, finding clients interested in the remaining dates becomes more difficult and your costs to book incremental dates will climb.

Marketing Budget Template

for

An Emerging Venue

Event Venue Marketing Budget



<div></div>	Paid Search	\$19,200
<div></div>	Display Advertising/Re-Targeting	\$9,600
<div></div>	Social Media	\$4,800
<div></div>	Wedding Centric Advertisers	\$14,400
	Advertising Subtotal	\$48,000
<div></div>	Website Design	\$7,500
<div></div>	Custom Landing Pages	\$2,500
<div></div>	Search Engine Optimization	\$4,000
<div></div>	Video/Photography	\$4,000
<div></div>	Marketing Content /Copywriting	\$2,500
<div></div>	CRM Software & Customization	\$2,500
	Marketing Infrastructure Subtotal	\$23,000
	Total Marketing Budget	\$71,000

For this example, we are using a venue that is targeting 16 events per year. Advertising costs will vary depending on the competitiveness of your site, but on average, those costs will be between \$2,500 and \$3,500 per booking.

The marketing infrastructure also needs to be created and maintained. The numbers shown are for the initial creation of this marketing infrastructure.

We have found that a site should budget 40% of their initial spend on updating and maintaining the marketing infrastructure annually. It is important to ensure your web site and the components supporting your advertising are up to date both visually as well as functionally.

Final Word

First we want to thank you for making it all the way to the end of our guide. We know a lot was covered- and yet, this is only the tip of the iceberg.

This guide was intended to explain the basic concepts of effective event marketing in today's world. The application of these concepts is much more in-depth (and different from business to business).

The first step to implement an effective marketing system is to schedule your lead flow audit.

If you are interested in having your marketing done FOR YOU or WITH YOU please [visit our website here](#) to learn more.

Questions or Comments?

Feel free to reach out directly to
avineyard@milestoneeventsgroup.com

We look forward to connecting with you soon.