

**DO-IT-YOURSELF GUIDE**

FROM THE CREATORS OF ***BIG ON SMALL***  
THE OFFICIAL SMALL BUSINESS PODCAST

# **BIG SALES**

## **FOR SMALL WINERIES**

### THE ULTIMATE GROWTH GUIDE

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A complete step-by-step guide on how to market  
your small winery to a great BIG world!



**AUSTRALIAN  
EDITION**

**KAROLYN HART**

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# Growing Your Wine Sales Together



Maintaining a consistent position as the 6th largest producer of wine in the world, Australia is a country at the forefront of the wine industry, helping drive it forward in size, varietal and scale.

Back in 2010 when online selling was relatively new, the team at WK Digital were already working with producers to sell their wine beyond the cellar door to online audiences across the globe.

In the last 10 years, we've seen far too few producers effectively market themselves. It has become clear that producers need more than just an online store; they need a digital brand, communication, sales and marketing platform all in one.

At WK Digital, we talk with our clients about the importance of global thinking that is delivered locally. Our team is constantly on the lookout for the latest emerging trends and technologies as they develop around the world and then look to bring those to you.

When we were first introduced to the IHUBApp, we had never seen anything like it in the marketplace and immediately set to work to learn about this brand new award-winning technology and what it could do for our clients and specifically our wineries.

After two years of discovery and in working alongside of the InspireHUB team, WK Digital is proud to be a verified development partner of the IHUBApp that can help your winery not just survive but thrive in really tough conditions.

Combining our digital marketing experience across the Australian wine industry with the IHUBApp Digital Experience Platform and a team of experts in North America, we invite you to use the expertise shared here to drive impossible sales magic from even the harshest of economic conditions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Rodgers', written in a cursive style.

Amanda Rodgers  
Managing Director, WK Digital

# Welcome from the InspireHUB Founder



My first introduction to the wine industry happened when, as the Vice President of Economic Development, I was handed an industry portfolio and tasked with creating a strategy to help the local wine industry thrive. Over the next year, we completed in-depth research that included bringing in some of the world's leading minds, conducting dozens of interviews with stakeholders across the entire supply chain, and building out comparison matrices of those regions where local wineries were able to thrive.

As the project leader, I conducted dozens of interviews, performed the bulk of the research, and wrote the Wine Report that ultimately brought our team awards and more importantly served as the guide that helped to lead our wine region to grow.

As a winery owner, you already know the level of complexity that went into producing your wines, whether you own a vineyard and planted your first vines or partnered with grape growers. For everyone running a winery, it starts with a dream to produce something truly great. Like any entrepreneur, a winning product certainly can help with sales, but as our interviews revealed, winning awards is helpful but does not guarantee the growth of your winery. In fact, some of the wineries featuring the greatest volume of wine sales and increased membership to their Wine Clubs have not necessarily won prestigious awards.

This eBook is specifically designed for established boutique wineries (those producing less than 10,000 cases) as a step-by-step guide to achieving your best year in sales yet. It is packed with practical advice on everything from questions to ask the person who is managing your marketing, to insights into what consumers actually want in a Wine Club, and even a list of creative ideas to help generate additional revenue streams.

At InspireHUB, we know that 90% of businesses are small and that healthy small businesses lead to healthy communities. We've made it our mission to help as many small business owners thrive as possible. It is our sincerest hope that this guide will help your business grow and help more people experience the wine you've invested so much effort into making great!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "KZ Hart." The signature is stylized and fluid.

Karolyn Hart  
Founder and President, InspireHUB Inc.

# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

"Success is not final..."- Winston Churchill

If you found your way to this eBook, then it is likely that you are looking for *something* more when it comes to your current efforts. We are launching this book packed with free advice to help wineries who are being negatively impacted because of the pandemic. In working with winery owners, we discovered that everyone was quick to agree they wanted "more sales" but a few more pressing questions can reveal an entrenched belief system about what they feel is the right *way* to get sales. Before we get started, it's crucial for you to understand this guide is based on proven real-world practices. The fact that you are a winery owner means there is a very high likelihood that you've already experienced some wonderful success in your previous career. Some of what is presented in this guide may be in direct opposition to what you believe to be true about what it takes to grow wine sales or even how things *should* work.

One of the more interesting observations we've uncovered in our work with winery owners is that past professional success can actually hinder you when it comes to furthering sales at your winery. This is not unique to wineries but shared by many [successful professionals](#). Logic dictates that if you did something and it worked out well in the past that using those same tactics would be a practical and reasonable thing to do.

As humans, we love the idea of working with the familiar. Science has proven that, as a species, we are [resistant to change](#). The challenge, of course, is that what worked even five years ago may not work at all today. You likely understand this on the intellectual level even as your actions reveal the truth as you find yourself resistant to learn new technologies, social media platforms, or new programs that would help you get to the next level.

This guide will take you through an end-to-end process with the goal of helping you to take down the various barriers that may be blocking your success. We encourage you to approach the reading of this book the same way you approach trying a new wine. First, you must be open to trying a new wine. Next, you must carefully observe the makeup of the wine in the glass. Then, you must "taste" or read the guide fully and draw your own thoughts and conclusions. Finally, after doing all this, you must then look to pair what you learned here with your wine business.

Our only goal is to help as many boutique wineries continue to keep their dreams alive! The only thing we ask in return is that if this guide helps you that you share it with others and also let us know!

# THE ASSESSMENT

## STEP ONE: Identifying if you hold any sales myths about your small winery.

As you read the following, evaluate if you find yourself aligning with any of the statements:

- I can't wait until this pandemic is behind us and we can get back to business as usual at the winery.
- We are doing online orders, but I'm not convinced this will be a large part of our wine sales in the future.
- The real challenge with our wine sales is the fact a few key distributors hold all the reigns and gouge us with their fees.
- The only way our winery will become a household name is through wine industry acknowledgement.
- The best way for us to get the most growth is to get into the large grocery chains.

Any of those sound familiar? What if we could show you that these beliefs, while not "untrue", are providing unnecessary barriers to your success. At the time of this writing, online wine sales have mushroomed, with some online sellers reporting [year-over-year increases of 500 - 800%](#)! We're going to show you how exactly how your small winery can get in on this success right now and also how to use it to create lasting sales in the future.

## STEP TWO: Assess the current business mode of your small winery.

What we know for certain is the pandemic has already fundamentally altered the business models for many wineries. If you are reading this book because it's a matter of survival, your needs will be much different from the winery owner who is stable but seeking innovation. Understanding your present mode of business operations will help you know what step to take next.

- **Crisis Mode: Closure is imminent.**

In the [Ultimate Small Business Survival Guide](#), the first step we ask owners whose businesses are at risk of closure is to complete a self-assessment. Why? Understanding your mindset is something that is often overlooked as entrepreneurs tend towards being action-oriented. However, a clear understanding of your attitudes helps to create a distinct path to success. For a business in crisis, knowing if you're in the fight, flight or freeze mode mentally is a critical first step. If your winery is facing closure, we recommend that you simply call us, or read the [Ultimate Small Business Survival Guide](#). We've made a commitment to help rescue as many small businesses as possible and have created a "When You Win, We Win" partnership that helps you get the type of professional intervention necessary to stabilize your business.

- **Transformation Mode: An Uncertain Future**

If you are a winery in transformation mode, you've likely felt the impact of the pandemic shift to your winery, and not for the better. You read the headlines boasting that online wine sales were experiencing explosive growth as a part of the pandemic but wondering why this is not your reality? The first thing you must understand is that online wine sales and direct-to-consumer (DtC) sales were [already enjoying a growth prior to the pandemic](#). DtC is extremely important for smaller producers and is a game-changer when it comes to your future strategies. You may be new to online selling or may be struggling. If this is your present reality, you will benefit the most from this guide!

- **Growth Mode: Supercharging your growth.**

If you're a winery in growth mode, you've likely got a mature eCommerce store, a great social media strategy, and are looking for that "something extra special" to really drive sales. If this is your reality, we recommend that you skip down to our chapter on Wine Clubs and how our community-building Wine Club app may be just the thing you're looking for. Also, you will want to download our list of "must-read books". They're fantastic to help you continue to grow your brand online.

Regardless of the mode your winery is in, our goal is to provide you with proven tactics and advice to help you take advantage of the digital transformation engulfing the world, to help you survive now and continue thriving in the years to come.

At InspireHUB, we've designed a very specific approach and process that are proven to work, and leadership styles play an important part in the success. Let's take a look at the two different types of leadership styles:

	THE ANGRY VINTNER	THE FRIENDLY WINEMAKER
Leadership	Controlling "It needs to be my way because it's my vision."	Collaborative "I've got a vision that can be made better."
Mentality	Scarcity Mindset "Another winery opening up near me will mean less business."	Abundance Mindset "Another winery opening near me will attract more tourists and mean more sales."
Coaching	Bristles "I feel angry when I realize I've missed something important."	Accepts "I'm usually grateful when something is pointed out to me."
Learning	Closed "You have no idea how much effort and research I've done already. Who are you to tell me?"	Open "I'm a life-long learner when it comes to wine-making. What am I missing?"



It's important to note that we discovered that both leadership styles produce award-winning wines, but one leadership style consistently inhibits the sales of their wine. Can you guess which one? For the purposes of this guide:

If you identify with "The Angry Vintner", then allow us to help save you some time. This guide will focus on the power of partnerships and collaboration to drive significant sales. For you, we also recommend you read "[13 Ways to Kill Your Community](#)", which explains why collaborating those within your local industry will actually drive your sales and not "steal" them when properly employed. The lack of open-mindedness and unwillingness to collaborate means that our process will be a challenge for you. If you are an "Angry Vintner" you can still benefit from the data and research that is presented in this guide, but our entire process hinges on open-mindedness, collaboration, and partnering.

If you identify with "The Friendly Winemaker", then you will find the information within this guide refreshing. You're likely already sitting on numerous partnerships that you haven't yet fully leveraged. Additionally, we're going to show you how your winery can not only become a lovely place for tourists to kick back and enjoy life but a force to effect real change within your community and around the world!

WHEN LIFE HANDS  
A **WINERY OWNER**  
SOUR GRAPES A  
NEW VINTAGE  
GETS BORN.



[IHUB.WKDIGITAL.COM.AU/IHUBAPP-FOR-MYWINERY](http://IHUB.WKDIGITAL.COM.AU/IHUBAPP-FOR-MYWINERY)

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# DIGITAL MARKETING BASICS

## Why an inferior wine is outselling you.

In an ideal world, the efforts you have invested in producing an award-winning, quality wine should be enough to bring you sales. Agree? So do we. However, in reality, inferior products (and wines) regularly outsell superior products. Deep down, you know this is the truth because you're a consumer who has likely already lived this. If you've ever invested in what is supposed to be a high-quality product, only to be disappointed, then you know this. Alternatively, if you've ever bought something affordable and been BLOWN AWAY by the quality and wondered why they weren't charging more, then you have also experienced the harsh reality of sales and marketing.

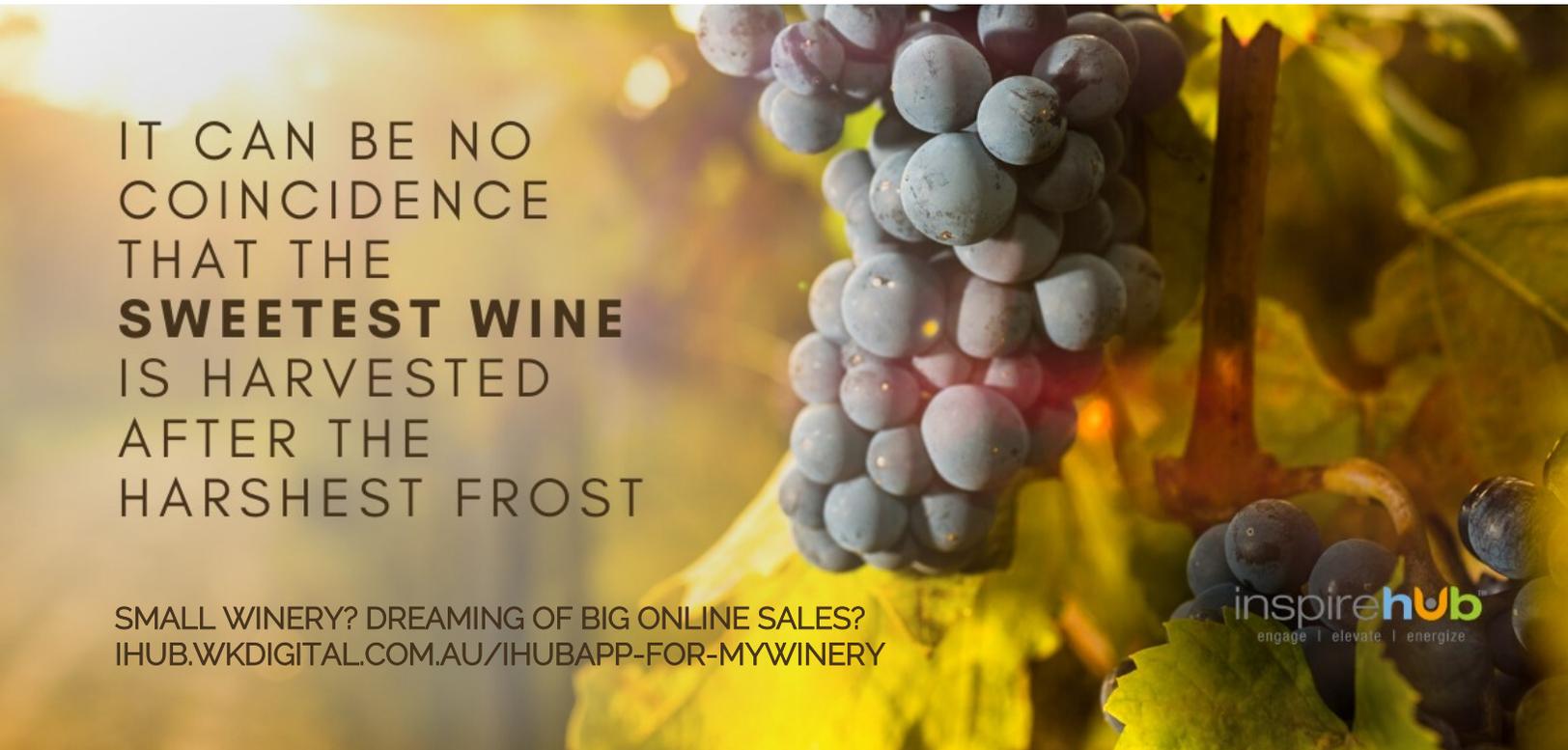
Ultimately, it comes down to the [digital marketing team](#) that you put together. The story you tell about your wine is important but you must have the powerful engine of digital marketing distributing your story. With the challenge facing wineries today and recent trends, you cannot afford to ignore this element.

## Wine Trends Small Wineries Cannot Ignore

- Wineries producing 1,000 to 5,000 cases a year could lose 47.5% of their revenue in 2020 due to tasting room and restaurant closures. Those producing fewer than 1,000 cases could see a 66% plunge. (Source: [USA Today](#))
- According to research firm Nielsen, wine sales for the week ending May 9 were up 267% year over year. (Source: [Nielsen](#))
- Experts are now predicting that it could take up to four years to return to "normal" methods of alcohol sales. (Source: [Forbes](#))
- 55% of wineries do not have someone dedicated (even part-time) whose job it is to answer the most basic questions about that winery's customers - who they are, what they care about, when they buy, what they buy, etc. (Source: [Vinography](#))
- Consumers have established new habits. Your goal is to be on the dinner table. For those consumers who have ordered alcohol to go with their takeout meals, 60% have also purchased red wine, and 50% have also ordered white wine. (Source: [Nielsen](#))

## Mind-Blowing Digital Statistics Every Small Winery Owner Should Know

- 59% of shoppers surveyed say that being able to shop on mobile is important when deciding which brand or retailer to buy from. (Source: [Think with Google](#))
- 61% of mobile searchers are more likely to contact a local business if they have a mobile-friendly site. (Source: [HubSpot Marketing Statistics](#))
- 72% of computer or tablet users and 67% of smartphone users want ads that are customized to their city or zip code. (Source: [Think with Google](#))
- 92% of searchers will pick businesses on the first page of local search results. (Source: [SEO Expert](#))
- 4 in 5 consumers use search engines to find local information. (Source: [Think with Google](#))
- 60% of smartphone users have contacted a business directly using the search results such as the "click to call" option. (Source: [Think with Google](#))



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COINCIDENCE  
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SMALL WINERY? DREAMING OF BIG ONLINE SALES?  
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## Why your small winery needs a website.

Here's what you need to know as a small business owner: if you don't understand digital marketing or the need for a website, you are NOT alone. Before the pandemic, [nearly half of American small businesses did not even have a website](#). For many small business owners, the old-fashioned "word of mouth" referrals was their preferred method of growing business. There are probably a few key reasons you haven't embraced the digital world, including:

- **There hasn't been a real need.**  
You've been "getting by" just fine (thank you very much), and let's face it, running your business is BUSY work. Taking the time to learn an entirely "new thing" when there are orders to fill and personnel issues to resolve meant it just was not a priority.
- **Ugh, technology.**  
Everyone in the world is telling you that you need to be more "technically savvy" and the reality is this: you just are not. It may all feel a little bit intimidating ("Seriously?" you think as you watch a 5-year-old kid expertly swipe on an iPad) and also it's rather annoying. You've watched visitors miss out on the entire "experience" of the winery because their nose was buried in their phone instead of in the glass they apparently came to enjoy.
- **It seems like a waste of resources.**  
Whether it feels like it's just too expensive, or complicated, or time-consuming, the fact is that you've determined there are easier and better places to spend your resources.



Learn how we can help your winery:  
<https://ihub.wkdigital.com.au/ihubapp-for-mywinery>



STUDY REVEALS

**SMALL  
WINERY  
GROWTH**

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There are plenty of amazing resources that explain the power of websites, but we are going to make this REALLY simple for you. Here it goes! Having a website does two main things:

- **It builds trust with potential customers.**

46% of companies say the biggest determinant of whether they trust a company is their website. It's not enough to be on social media, have a Google listing, or be in the Yellow Pages. Building trust is the key to building loyalty, and you understand the power of a loyal consumer. Even if you make the argument that customers who DO know you love you, you're missing something even bigger, and that is this...

- **It helps customers find you.**

When you have a website, it helps you with something called [Search Engine Optimization \(SEO\)](#). Basically, it makes sure that when people are searching for something online, they know you exist. Consider that 72% of consumers that did a local search visited a store within five miles. (Source: [HubSpot Marketing Statistics](#)) and 97% of people learn more about a local company online than anywhere else. (Source: [SEO Tribunal](#))

**To sum up:** If your small winery does not have a website, customers are going to your competition. It's that simple. You're literally losing business and money by not having a web presence.

Let us put this another way. Imagine it's the 90's before the internet arrived, and you decided to go into business, BUT you weren't going to put a sign on your building to tell anyone what you were or why they should come inside. When you don't have a website, you're doing the same thing.

Having a website simply allows people to find you. As the writers at [Vinography](#) so aptly point out:

"Selling online is the new normal and is non-negotiable. You can't build relationships with people you can't talk to, and you can't sell wine to people you can't reach. "

## The power of doing online sales.

U.S. online sales increased 49% in April over the prior year, [according to Adobe Analytics](#). For wineries, online wine sales were already growing and, when COVID arrived, that spiked up to 200% with some online wine sellers reporting a [year-over-year increase of 500 to 800%](#). While making the jump to taking online orders is currently a matter of necessity, it presents an opportunity to expand beyond just selling your wine. Consider including merchandise, accessories, gift baskets, apparel, virtual events, adopt-a-vine programs, and more.

If you're new to wine sales, the first thing you must understand is WHY consumers purchase online (outside of pandemic situations). The two main reasons for small wineries include:

- **Convenience:** Being able to shop 24/7. The peak hours are generally in the evening after you've closed your winery. The prime-time hours for eCommerce is [from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm](#).
- **Saving Time:** The loyal fans of your wine may not be able to make it out to your winery as frequently as they wish due to their schedules and online sales address this issue.

Online sales provide you with the ability to serve your customers better. Here are a few reasons to embrace online sales:

- [Processing direct sales to your wine customers.](#)  
Before the pandemic, direct-to-consumer sales were rising among wine lovers.
- [Lowering costs.](#)  
Digital solutions allow you to streamline, automate, and increase the productivity of your sales.
- [Increasing loyalty with personalization.](#)  
As your customers visit your website and purchase, you can understand their motivations and personalize their engagement with your brand, which has been proven to increase loyalty.

## The affordability of digital marketing.

Setting up an online retail store and purchasing ads to bring people to that store is now more affordable than ever. Companies such as [Formstack.com](https://formstack.com) and [Shopify](https://shopify.com) both provide online order systems for a low monthly fee and come with free training and tutorials that can help to get you started quickly.

When it comes to advertising, the news is even better. Social media platforms allow you to easily create, target and post ads directly into your ideal market that will grab their attention. In today's world, FREE training abounds. We've [assembled a list in Chapter 6 of FREE training](#) that we highly recommend.

## What to look for when you're hiring a digital marketer for your small winery.

It can be quite an act of faith to hire a person or company to help you with your digital marketing. There's nothing more frustrating than investing good money only to receive mediocre results. When you're finally ready to take the next big step, here are some things to look for that will help you avoid costly and time-consuming mistakes:

**ASK ABOUT EXPERIENCE:** Ask about their experience and general knowledge of working in the wine industry.

Your digital marketer does not have to be a sommelier to be effective, but they do need to understand the basics of the wine industry, and more importantly, they need to be able to show you how they will continue to grow their learning. Additionally, you will want to evaluate what sort of creative solutions they would bring to help you sell more wine.

Here are a few questions for you to ask during your interview:

- What wine marketing tactic have you seen that you think was fascinating, and why?
- What creative solutions do you suggest we use to grow our Wine Club subscriptions?
- Which social media platforms do you think are the most popular for wineries and why?
- Talk to us about your process for familiarizing yourself with our wines and engaging our ideal wine drinker?

**INCENTIVIZE FOR SUCCESS: Be sure you're incentivizing for results and not activity.**

Any digital marketer who knows how to drive sales is going to be interested in getting paid handsomely when they help you drive and increase your sales. One of the mistakes that many small businesses make is hiring a marketer based on their "hours" as opposed to results. If you're paying someone an hourly rate to do work for you then (whether you intended to or not) they are confined to hours and even compensated for doing more work instead of creating more success.

The best solution is to negotiate a reasonable flat rate that is fair with bonuses and incentives that see them share in the success. A seasoned digital marketer who is confident in their abilities should be asking for either a commission, a bonus, or milestone rewards for helping you to achieve online sales.

Here are a few items to explore during your hiring process:

- How do you typically like to structure your compensation?
- If you had to choose an option, what would you prefer? a) A higher weekly pay with no compensation that is related to sales, or b) A lower weekly pay with compensation that is tied to sales, knowing that ultimately you would be paid more over the long run. Please explain your choice.
- Please list the types of digital milestones that you believe should be rewarded, and why?

**TEST THEIR ABILITIES: Evaluate their social media knowledge with this simple action.**

The #1 place for all wineries (big and small) to engage in sales is social media. Selecting someone who is savvy across these platforms will be THE biggest difference you will experience in helping to drive sales.

**If we can leave you with one simple piece of advice, it is this:**

Do NOT invest in a person or organization who does not have an active and growing, engaged following on key social media platforms. Remember: If the digital marketer promising you sales cannot do it for themselves, then how will they ever do it for you?

These platforms provide the easiest and most affordable way to target local consumers. Here are a few ways to confirm if they will be able to help you effectively:

- **What is their personal presence on social media?**

Ask for the marketer to provide you with a list of all their personal social media handles. The savviest digital marketers are constantly testing ideas on their own personal accounts.

- **Twitter**

How long have they been on Twitter, and how many followers do they have? Remember, if they have a strong following, they will be able to leverage the power of their network to help you!

- **Facebook**

They should have a public business page if they don't want to present their personal page. Look to see what they are posting. Facebook can have a lot going on behind what you see upfront, so ask them directly what they find to be the most effective in running their ad campaigns and why.

- **LinkedIn**

Yes, LinkedIn, but only if you're interested in attracting professionals to drink your wine. Most importantly, visit their LinkedIn Profile and look for the following:

- **Profile Page:**  
Is it filled out and robust?
- **Recommendations:**  
How many do they have? What do people have to say about their work?
- **Activity & Followers:** Remember that your social media marketer will be (or should be) leveraging their own followers to your benefit, so it's important they have a minimum of 5,000 followers or more to help YOU achieve your results.

## How long can you do nothing?

Are you still having reservations when it comes the promises of digital marketing? To that, we have one simple question: "What if you're wrong?"

We get it. All this change and the need to transform digitally is overwhelming. It is so very tempting to do nothing. To just "wait it out" and hope for the best. The real question for you then becomes this: How long can you wait to do nothing?

Let's imagine a world where you invest in a website and eCommerce. It allows you to exist as a business for now. At the end of the pandemic, let's assume that things DO return to normal; that consumer behavior has not altered all that much. Your investment in digital and the ability to do online sales then provides an extra source of revenue. Even if it declines and you return to the dominant revenue stream being in-store sales, you will still be ahead. Plus, you now have a nice additional stream of revenue.

Now, let's imagine a world where you do nothing. Not only do you risk not having a way to really engage in sales at the height of a pandemic, but you have also now restricted a nice additional tidy stream of revenue in the future.

The question to ask yourself is this: Will you regret not having TRIED if your winery closes? As you lay your head on your pillow at night, will you be filled with regret that you didn't at least TRY, or will you have peace knowing that you did absolutely everything possible given the circumstances that you were provided?

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Learn how we can help your winery:  
<https://ihub.wkdigital.com.au/ihubapp-for-mywinery>



5 THINGS

**WINNING  
WINERIES  
GET RIGHT**

#BIGONSMALL

# Building Wine Clubs and Online Community

## Are you making these mistakes with building your Wine Club?

Wine Clubs have been around since the 1970s, and with 36% of Direct-to-Consumer sales being performed through membership, it's no wonder why wineries want to cash in on this opportunity. However, designing and creating a Wine Club program that sets you apart from the competition requires thoughtful consideration, creative insight, careful planning, and constant monitoring. These mistakes can be decreasing your Wine Club membership success:

- 1. Having no Wine Club strategy and plan.** Your strategy for the creation of your Wine Club needs to have one specific goal, and that is how to make YOUR members a top priority. Your plan will address the following elements:
  - A matrix that outlines what the other wineries in your area are offering as part of their Wine Club experience.
  - An outlined persona of your "ideal Wine Club member" that clearly outlines their interests, hobbies, and motivations for participating in a Wine Club.
  - Outlining quarterly goals for your Wine Club manager to achieve, including relationship development objectives.
  - Identification of various organisations that would be interested in offering complimentary incentives to your members.
  - A defined communications plan that includes personalized newsletters, topics of specific interest to your members, and a strategy for engaging Wine Club members in sharing their own user-generated content between one another.
- 2. Treating your Wine Club membership as a glorified discount club.** Nothing is more frustrating to Wine Club Members than to be told that, by paying a monthly fee, they will receive a "discount" off wine, only to see your winery doing a special promotion that is just as good (or even better) than what they are being offered. If the only thing your Wine Club is really offering is automatically shipping wine at a reduced price, expect to have a high exit rate.
- 3. Not offering exclusive wines ONLY to Wine Club members.** One of the easiest ways to drive Wine Club membership and immediately create lasting value is to make certain wines available exclusively to Wine Club members. Exclusivity and scarcity drive wine membership sales.

4. **Failure to regularly poll your Wine Club members on why they joined and what they would like to see.** Being a member of your Wine Club means that people should have a voice, but many wineries treat their Wine Club memberships as a marketing tactic and not a relationship-building exercise. Nothing will build loyalty and strength quicker than simply running your upcoming programming ideas past your members.
5. **Having no private members-only area for Wine Club members, both offline and online.** One of the benefits of being a member is having access to things and people that the general public does not. Here are some examples of how you can create exclusivity:
  - If you have a restaurant, create a corner of the restaurant that is "Members-Only" and offers certain perks that will make all the other restaurant-goers want to get in on that experience.
  - In your retail store, create an exclusive "Wine Club members weekly tasting package" that includes more wines with specialty pairings.
  - Create a VIP lounge area that is available only to Wine Club members.
  - Provide a private-online community using a tool like the IHUBApp where Wine Club members can socialize, network, and share their fondness for your wine while receiving special offers from other complementary brands.

## Why your Wine Club needs its own private online community.

An online [brand community](#) is a community that is formed based on their shared love of your wine. Brands around the world have invested heavily in leveraging the power of a private online community because of their proven success in building loyalty. Customers are invited to join the community, engage with the platform, and share through likes, comments, posts and more!

Large brands like Nike, Apple, and Sephora have invested money into building online communities because of the benefits they receive. For your winery, it's the perfect avenue to help boost your Wine Club membership. According to the [Marketing Insider Group](#), online branded communities have:

- reduced customer support costs – 49% of businesses with online communities report cost savings of 10% to 25% annually;
- boosted brand exposure and credibility, making it easier to sell without selling;
- empower 67% of businesses to gain insights on new products or services and features;
- heightened engagement and [better customer retention](#); and,
- provided a channel through which to present products and services before the official launch.

## What to include in building your online Wine Club community.

Building an exclusive online-community for your Wine Club members is powerful. Whether you choose to use the [IHUBApp Digital Experience Platform](#) to build your community or another solution, here are some of the items you will want to ensure are included in the experience that you build.



### Wine Club Members Only Area

Members can all safely communicate in a completely secured environment.



### Wine Club Member Profile

Customize to allow members to identify their wine preference, interests, hobbies and more.



### Forums

Members can subscribe to topics of interest and participate in exclusive discussions about your wine.



### Secure Social Network

Instead of trying to figure out which social platform is safe to use, launch and OWN your very own network.



### Wine Club User Generated Content

Allow your members the ability to post and share directly into the community.



### Exclusive Event Sales

Provide exclusive tickets to events, use free and paid tickets, with no additional fees!



Making your wine is complex.  
Growing your wine sales?  
We make that easy.

## Creative ways to build community within your Wine Club!

At InspireHUB, we stay on the lookout for creative ideas to share with our clients. Here are some fun community-building programs that will help to get your creative wine juices flowing!

- **Wine and Dash:** A community started a private Facebook group to put a smile on someone's face. People share their addresses in the album where they live, and other members of the group can leave wine and snacks at their home. [The article](#) explains how the administrators are keeping their members safe and how they help ensure no minors are involved.
- **Wine Fairies and Ninjas:** The premise of wine fairies, or ninjas, is a woman presenting another woman with a gift of wine - and not getting caught. [According to this article](#), fairies and ninjas are actively adding to their numbers across the US.
- **Wine Ding-Dong-Ditch:** [A South Carolinian woman](#) started a nation-wide wine game when she posted to Facebook asking her friends to leave wine at her front door, then she would guess who brought it. The entire experience is caught shared on social media for others to enjoy.
- **No Wine Left Behind:** Hundreds of women are [joining communities](#) that help decrease the loneliness that many are facing during this time. Along the way, it's building new friendships and connections.

Like most things, the way to success is to start small with one specific goal. [Cooper's Hawk Vineyards and Restaurants in Canada](#) turned on the social networking functionality to allow their clients to like and comment on the updates and posts they create that also auto-populate a weekly newsletter.



Learn how we can help your winery:  
<https://ihub.wkdigital.com.au/ihubapp-for-mywinery>



10 WAYS TO  
**GROW YOUR  
WINE CLUB  
MEMBERSHIPS**

#BIGONSMALL

# HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY PAIR YOUR WINERY MARKETING

Before you read the following section, it's important to understand that, according to research, [70% of emotionally engaged customers will spend up to two times or more on brands they are loyal to, compared to less than have \(49%\) of consumers with low emotional engagement](#). One of the most powerful ways for brands to create loyalty is something called "worthy-cause marketing". Simply put, it's aligning your brand with a bigger mission that is typically a charitable cause.

While we wine lovers would never admit it, the reality is that [wine is a commodity](#). This means that it is absolutely critical for you to set your winery apart from the rest. All the methodologies and digital tactics in the world will not mean anything if the consumer sees you as just one of many boutique wineries to try. They may try you once, but the real question is: How to do you KEEP them coming back?

We believe the answer lies in the power of the give-back. The following statistics explain the power of worthy-cause marketing and its effectiveness. In fact, in the Book [The Barefoot Spirit: How Hardship, Hustle, and Heart Built America's #1 Wine Brand](#), they explain [why worthy cause marketing works!](#) At InspireHUB, we believe this is one of the single most important deciding factors in transforming your sales.



IT CAN BE NO  
COINCIDENCE  
THAT THE  
**SWEETEST WINE**  
IS HARVESTED  
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HARSHEST FROST

SMALL WINERY? DREAMING OF BIG ONLINE SALES?  
[IHUB.WKDIGITAL.COM.AU/IHUBAPP-FOR-MYWINERY](http://IHUB.WKDIGITAL.COM.AU/IHUBAPP-FOR-MYWINERY)

inspirehub  
engage | elevate | energize

## Understanding the power of worthy-cause marketing for your small winery.

Even before the global pandemic instilled a rising sentiment that we are "in this together" and a determination to give back, worthy-cause marketing was a rising trend. Consider the following statistics.



### 9 out of 10 Consumers Like to Purchase Purpose-Driven Products

Nearly 9-in-10 consumers (86%) say they're likely to purchase from purpose-driven companies. 2019 Porter Novelli / Cone Purpose Biometrics Study



### Brands with Purpose Outperform Stock

Brands with a purpose set on improving our quality of life outperform the stock market by 120%. Interbrand's Best Global Brands 2017



### 78% of Americans Expect More From Companies Than Just Making Money

78% of Americans believe companies must do more than just make money; they must positively impact society as well. 2018 Cone / Porter Novelli Purpose Study



### Consumers Purchase on a Brand's Give-Back

86% of consumers believe that companies should take a stand for social issues and 64% of those who said it's 'extremely important' for a company to take a stand on a social issue said they were 'very likely' to purchase a product based on that commitment. 2018 Shelton Group's 'Brands & Stands':

**YOU ALREADY GREW SOMETHING  
FROM NOTHING ONCE BEFORE  
NOW IT'S TIME TO GROW YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS**

## Dispelling the myth you can't afford to give back!

When you can barely pay your business' bills or keep the lights on, the idea of giving a portion of your limited proceeds away may seem illogical. Worthy-Cause marketing *does* feel good to both your business and the consumer, but it's also a sound business strategy. Setting aside the "worthiness" of this effort and even the "emotions," here are the pieces of information you're missing.

- **It sets you apart and provides your product with a KEY differentiator.**  
Product differentiation provides your business with superior value and is proven to help you win against your competition.
- **It has a tangible multiplying effect on your marketing messages.**  
Think of your local news station looking to cover a "story." They have a choice to do one on a small business who is selling a product (yawn) or a story about a small business who is donating to a local charity. Guess which one wins? Remember: everyone loves a feel-good story. The more good you do, the more your business does good!
- **It protects you in surprising ways.**  
Humans can be vicious behind their keyboards online about your product, your service, and more. Businesses who give back as part of their strategy tend to receive more respect and enjoy a better reputation than those who do nothing.
- **It improves employee morale.**  
Research has proven that employees respect leaders who do good. Making your company a positive force within your local community makes a difference in the confidence levels of your staff and that, in turn, creates a positive ripple effect out to the world.
- **It will significantly increase your connections and networking opportunities.**  
The moment you start supporting a local charity or non-profit, you immediately gain the attention of their entire network, and that increases your awareness.
- **Ultimately, it gives you more marketing, more awareness, and sales for a fraction of the cost.**  
When you compare the tangible ROI from giving a portion of your proceeds to a local charity to the actual cost of what you would have had to spend in marketing dollars for the same success, you'll find the return on investment to be far greater to your bottom line.

## Finding the right charity pairing for your small winery.

Alrighty! You're excited and ready to help support a charity with your products and find ways of winning together. It's important to get the selection of whom you support right. Here are a few tips:

- **If at all possible, make it personal.**  
Customers are going to be delighted to know you're giving back and they are going to want to know why. Telling them 'we just want more sales' is the surest way to lose that sale. Making it personal to you and your company will also just feel great.
- **Find a charity that aligns with your brand values.**  
Ensuring that your brand aligns with that of the charity you select is critical to building trust with your customers. For example, we recently connected a vegan wine that is PETA-certified with a charity that helps to rescue farm animals as they share the same core values. There are many non-profits and charities in the world, embracing many different belief systems. It's important to realize that your product will be associated with the charity you are supporting, so you will want to ensure that it is something that your company truly does support.
- **Select a reputable charity with a good record of transparent reporting.**  
Understanding the reputation of the charity you are supporting is critical as it can reflect upon you. If you're genuinely nervous about this, then decide to select a public service to support. Hospitals, fire services, EMS, and police services all participate in fundraising and are usually open to receiving additional support.



Learn how we can help your winery:  
<https://ihub.wkdigital.com.au/ihubapp-for-mywinery>



### SUDDENLY REMOTE

5 CRITICAL TIPS  
FOR COMPANIES  
STRUGGLING WITH  
THE CORONAVIRUS  
QUARANTINE

#BIGONSMALL

# SELECTING A SAFE PLATFORM

The world became more digital overnight, not less. This reality is *forcing* you to move your small business online. There's a number of choices to consider as you build. Cost and ease of use are usually the main drivers, but there's something equally important. Building something that is safe for your brand and your customers. Consider the following:

## 60% of small companies close within 6 months of being hacked!

Imagine, going through all this effort to survive through this time and put your business online, only to have a cyberattack be the action that forces you to close your doors. Consider these following statistics:

- [Small businesses are a preferred target](#) by high-tech villains seeking an "easy" payday.
- Most [small to mid-sized businesses lack the resources to defend against a cyberattack](#), and they pay more in the aftermath.
- 52% of small to mid-sized businesses say they don't have an in-house IT professional, according to Untangle's [2019 SMB IT Security Report](#).
- Small businesses shoulder a heavier cost (relative to their small size) compared to larger organizations, [per IBM's Cost of a Data Breach Report](#). The total cost for organizations with more than 25,000 employees averaged \$204 per employee, whereas organizations with between 500 and 1,000 employees had an average cost of \$3,533 per employee.
- Your business can be held liable for a breach. Recent rulings have resulted in [penalties and fines to organizations](#) who failed to secure their business.

That's why it's critical for all businesses to actively consider the platform they build upon.

## Understanding the types of platforms to build your digital experiences on.

When it comes to creating your digital experience online (whatever it is), there are two ways that technologies get built: [open-source](#) and [closed-source](#).

### The Risk of Open-Source for Small Businesses

Open-source platforms are very affordable (even free) and one of the main reasons why so many small businesses decide to use them. Unfortunately, they are also the primary target for hackers.

*For more information, read:*

[Known Open Source Vulnerabilities In Reusable Software Components: The Golden Goose For Hackers That Keeps On Giving](#)

### The Challenge of Closed-Source

Closed-source software isn't shared with the public for anyone to look at or change and typically [costs more](#) with [less flexibility](#) and longer wait times for resolutions to issues.

*For more information, read:*

[19 Pros and Cons of Closed Source Software](#)

## What can you do? Closed-Circuit is here!

At InspireHUB, we created something we call "Closed-Circuit" when building our IHUBApp Digital Experience Platform. Basically, it means that InspireHUB Verified Developers like WK DIGITAL agree to certain rules we've outlined and they also allow their work to be checked by Cybersecurity consultants.



## Understanding data brokering and cybersecurity.

### What is data brokering?

Data brokering is a \$200 billion unregulated industry that involves companies who collect, buy and sell data for a variety of purposes. Companies that engage in data brokering usually aggregate the data they have obtained and then resell the most valuable pieces to third parties.

While data brokering is a legal industry, there is a growing concern around privacy, security, and how data is used. While reputable companies would never sell personally identifiable information they, still will aggregate their data and sell it to other companies to create an additional source of revenue.

Sometimes, brands are very comfortable with this arrangement (and you might be also). However, you will want to make sure you know the company's stance on this before entering into a relationship.

Questions to ask:

- Does your company participate in data brokering?
- What type of data brokering do you do?
- Will my client's data be personally identifiable?
- Where do you outline this assurance in your terms?



*InspireHUB has adopted a policy that we will not participate in data brokering. Per our terms and conditions, our clients fully own their data and have the right to do what they wish, but we have decided not to participate.*

### Cybersecurity: Ensuring you have a plan for privacy and security.

The landscape around what is considered acceptable for privacy and security is significantly shifting. Every country has its own rules around what you are allowed to do with the information you collect and hold digitally regarding your business. In 2018, the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#) was implemented for the European Union and had a significant impact worldwide, raising the standard for what is acceptable online.

Questions to ask:

- Are you GDPR compliant?
- Where will my data be stored? What country is it stored in?
- How do you work to secure my client's data and privacy?
- What cybersecurity services do you provide to your clients?

*InspireHUB has partnered with [Cyber SC \(a leading cybersecurity firm\)](#) to ensure that our technology and our business operations are helping to create a more secure future for each and every one of our clients.*



*We offer **FREE security awareness training** to all InspireHUB clients as part of our commitment to helping them successfully navigate an ever-changing digital landscape.*

THE WHOLE POINT OF A  
WINERY IS PROVING THAT  
**IMPOSSIBLE MAGIC**  
CAN BE GROWN OUT OF THE  
HARSHEST CONDITIONS

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## Ask for IRL (In Real Life) direct client referrals.

Watching customer testimonials can help you to understand the capabilities of the product and service you are thinking of using. Additionally, there are many third-party referral sites that can help you compare the features of a product and see how others have weighed in on it.

The *challenge* with each of these elements is that it is not the same as having a direct conversation with someone and being able to ask YOUR questions.

Here are a few ideas about how to speak directly with someone before you make your decision:

- 1. ASK the company if they can provide you with a client who is willing to talk with you directly.**  
While this is not always possible for a variety of reasons that may include confidentiality or other situations, it doesn't hurt to ask.
- 2. Make a post requesting a referral on social media.**  
Be very specific when you do this, or you will have every vendor under the sun hitting you up to "sell" you on their product. Do your homework and then put up a post with something like "Looking to speak with someone who has used VENDOR name about your experience."

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Learn how we can help your winery:  
<https://ihub.wkdigital.com.au/ihubapp-for-mywinery>



APP PAIRING

**MAKING AN  
APP FOR YOUR  
WINERY**

#BIGONSMALL

# FREE DIGITAL TRAINING

## Digital Marketing Training

Our top three picks for your team to train themselves on how to drive sales (besides this guide) are:

1. [Crushing It by Gary Vaynerchuk](#)

Gary was one of the first entrepreneurs to begin selling wine online and grew his father's company from \$3-60MM in sales during his time at Wine Library. His direct talk, insights into wine sales, and how to engage and grow winery sales is a must-read for anyone serious about growing their winery. If we were to describe Gary as a wine, we would use terms such as angular, robust, crisp, earthy, intellectually satisfying with a high-acidity. On that "note" (pun intended) be warned that Gary's brand of advice includes a lacing of curse words whenever the situation deems it, which is usually every situation. That said, he truly cares, and the fact that he doesn't make his readers feel 'silly' for not knowing certain things means that we highly recommend his advice.

2. [Inbound Marketing Free Certification from HubSpot](#)

In full transparency, our team here at InspireHUB absolutely loves HubSpot's CRM and training. They offer a FREE Inbound Marketing program that comes complete with a certification. This course will help you understand the power of inbound marketing and provide you with plenty of ideas on how you can begin doing some of these tactics for your own winery.

3. [Google Digital Garage](#)

May as well learn from the people that can instantly sway and impact digital marketers around the globe. Google's Digital Garage offers a range of free learning content designed to help you in your business or your career. You can even earn certifications that will help you grow your business and add to your resume!



A trusted and verified InspireHUB partner, the team at Cyber.SC is works with InspireHUB to provide a suite of secure solutions that is made exclusively available to InspireHUB clients. Ask us today about how we are transforming how companies incorporate cyber security.

## Social Media Training

Considering that 90% of wine drinkers are on social media, there's really no excuse for you not to become familiar with the platforms and how you can be leveraging them to help gain more sales. We've provided a list, links, and some pointers to help you get started below!

- **Facebook** (If you do NOTHING else do this!)  
<https://www.facebook.com/business/learn>  
If you can only choose one platform in which to engage and advertise, our recommendation is Facebook. They offer FREE courses to help you on everything from setting up a Facebook page to the basics of running an ad.
- **Instagram**  
<https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/lessons/choosing-the-right-instagram-ads-for-your-business>  
Instagram is owned by Facebook, and that may explain what it's so powerful in helping to drive engagement and sales. This course explains how Instagram ads can help your business.
- **Twitter**  
<https://business.twitter.com/en/campaign/welcome-to-twitter-ads.html>  
Twitter is the #1 platform for discovery, and for small wineries, this is CRITICAL to growing your business. This course will teach you how to create a campaign to connect with your ideal targets, but you can also just do it manually yourself!
- **Pinterest**  
<https://business.pinterest.com/en>  
367 million people are on Pinterest, and it is perfectly suited to helping to showcase your winery and drive interest. People go to Pinterest to get inspired and try new things. Think about using Pinterest to post beautiful images and how-to articles that include recipes, wine courses, and more!
- **LinkedIn**  
<https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/how-to-market-on-linkedin>  
LinkedIn has evolved dramatically in the last five years and has become THE marketplace for professionals. At a minimum, your brand needs to be represented here with a business page. Far more than this, it's the perfect way to easily network with professionals in your local area and have them connect with and understand your brand.

## FREE SECURITY AWARENESS TRAINING

Wizer offers **FREE SECURITY AWARENESS TRAINING** ([wizer-training.com](http://wizer-training.com)), and we strongly encourage you to stop everything and make sure your entire team takes it. Ensuring that all your employees have the basic foundations of being safe digitally is the first step in prevention. For example: do all your employees know to never click on links or download unsolicited attachments? Now's the time!

# CHECKLISTS

## PLATFORM SELECTION FOR YOUR SMALL WINERY

- **Self-Assessment**  
Assess your current mindset in the midst of the crisis.
- **Business Assessment**  
Assess what parts of your business can be put online.
- **Platform Assessment**  
Assess what sort of platform your company is comfortable with (open-source, closed-source, closed-circuit).
- **Feature Assessment**  
Create a list of feature wish list to ask questions about as you engage with potential vendors.
- **Security Assessment**  
Assess how the provider of your technology manages data brokering, privacy, and cyber-security.
- **Client Satisfaction Assessment**  
Review client testimonials and request an in real life customer testimonial.
- **Company Assessment**  
Determine your level of comfort and trust in the team you select to work with you on your small business.

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NOTES:

## BUILDING AN ONLINE BRAND COMMUNITY

### □ **Research Online Brand Communities**

Research and review what the experts are saying about the importance of online brand communities.

### □ **Select Community Type**

Select the type of online community that makes sense to support your brand. Private clubs, forums, social networks, or portal.

### □ **Select Platform**

Complete the Platform Selection Checklist to determine which platform best fits your small business.

### □ **Build Your Community**

Design and build the online community on the platform you have selected.

### □ **Create Your Outreach Plans**

Create a plan for how you will promote the community you have built and let people know about how they can engage.

### □ **Community Launch**

Launch your work and watch your community begin to grow.

### NOTES:

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## SECURITY CHECKLIST FOR YOUR SMALL WINERY

### □ Complete Security Training

Have your entire team take this [FREE Security Awareness Training](https://wizer-training.com/) from <https://wizer-training.com/> as quickly as possible. (It's worth it!)

### □ Download LastPass to Protect Passwords

Download and install LastPass <https://lastpass.com/> to help your team manage passwords in a secure environment. LastPass remembers all your passwords across every device for FREE and it also helps you generate secure ones.

### □ Enable Two-Factor Authentication

[Two-factor authentication](#) is something that most product offers. It's the "thing" you turn on that will do actions like sending you a text to confirm it's actually you before you change your password. While it may seem annoying, security experts agree it's one of the best ways to help save you from hackers.

### □ Setup a VPN:

A VPN (Virtual Private Network) allows your team to work in a public environment with a secure tunnel. Once you have it installed, you turn it on to work from inside it to keep the work that you are doing private from prying eyes and it helps to protect your business.

- [How to set up a VPN in Windows](#)
- [How to set up a VPN on Mac](#)
- [How to set up an iPhone VPN Connection](#)
- [How to set up an Android VPN Connection](#)

### □ Share this Checklist to Staff

Share this checklist and links out to your staff and have them confirm when it completed.

### NOTES:

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...because there's nothing 'small' about running a small business.

## Hi There!

Do you remember where you were when you first had the dream of building your winery? How the mere thought of it sparked an excitement and a future filled with hope? Where were you the first time you sat down and began to take the action to implement your dream?

The journey to launching your own business is unique to every business owner but we share so much in common. In the early days of creating your business everything feels fresh and exciting, regardless of whether your network of friends and family are supportive and telling you that you are absolutely 'crazy'. Deep down, you knew one thing for sure. There was a moment you stepped out in faith and realized there was no going back.

The reality is that there is nothing easy about the process of creating and launching a small business. At InspireHUB, we know that 90% of businesses are small and helping YOU become successful has a direct impact to creating a healthy community, town, city, country and economy!

That's why we created the Big on Small Podcast. The official small business podcast that is fully focused on the running of small organizations. Join us and learn more at: [bigonsmall.biz](http://bigonsmall.biz)





The award-winning IHUBApp™ lets you launch your digital experience within days, not months!

We are on a mission to help you deliver the digital transformation you have been dreaming about. Our **award-winning Digital Experience Platform** is all about making it really easy to build the solution you need. It also provides tools that help you target messaging in a way that *actually* engages people, elevates communications, and energizes *your* tribe.

The IHUBApp reduces the risk of **critical information being missed**. Whether you are building a website, app, hub, portal, intranet, or extranet, our proprietary suite of tools will elevate your digital experience above the noise.

Our cloud-based Progressive Web App Technology can be accessed from anywhere, at any time, on any device without having to 'install' anything.



**ABOUT KAROLYN HART  
Founder and President  
InspireHUB**

Karolyn has spent two decades building a unique skill set around engagement including as a technologist with experience implementing large scale projects in financial services,

automotive and healthcare; an entrepreneur launching a national television show; an award-winning economic developer working in community engagement; and a startup co-founder designing the latest in app technology. Karolyn knows what it takes to building a winning business.

Karolyn has been covered in The Wall Street Journal, Reader's Digest, The Globe and Mail, CBC, The Chicago Tribune, GCN and SD Times. She was recognized as one of 99 Limit Breaking Female Founders by Arianna Huffington's Thrive Global.

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