

Constellation Wines N.A.

Leading wine purveyor enhances staff training and strengthens relationships with growers and winemakers, sales channel, and customers using Adobe® Connect™



Constellation Wines N.A.

www.cwinesus.com

The Academy of Wine

www.academyofwine.com

Industry

Retail: Beverage alcohol

Challenges

- Leverage technology to cost-effectively train employees, partners, and customers worldwide

Solution

- Adobe Connect for eLearning
 - Adobe Connect for Web Meetings
- Constellation Wines N.A. is using a hosted version of Adobe Connect for real-time meetings and training for staff, partners, and customers around the globe.

Results

- Reduced travel costs dramatically
- Reduced time to train staff at large hospitality chains from months to weeks or even days
- Expanded access to training to a wider array of customers over a larger geographic area
- Streamlined administration with fewer specialized staff needed
- Improved quality of training over paper-only presentations

Systems at a glance

- Adobe Connect (hosted version)
- Adobe Creative Suite® 4 Web Premium
- Adobe Creative Suite 4 Master Collection
- Adobe Presenter

Expertise from vineyard to table

As a leading international producer and marketer of more than 250 alcohol brands—including having the distinction of being the world's largest wine producer by dollar amount—Constellation Brands knows firsthand about the challenges and importance of keeping its employees, partners, and consumers informed about its latest products.

Constellation Brands' North American operations—Constellation Wines N.A.—employs approximately 2,870 people in Australia, Italy, California, and Washington and consists of several wine businesses, including Icon Estates, VineOne, and Centerra. Icon Estates is the conglomerate's fine wine division that includes Robert Mondavi Winery, Simi, Estancia, and other wineries.

Constellation Wines N.A. offers ongoing education programs to keep employees abreast of the latest product changes, as well as issues of interest to wine lovers worldwide. Equally important, the company needs to offer its extensive base of distributors and resellers, which include large hotel and restaurant chains, continued access to relevant product training and information.

Today, Constellation Wines N.A. is taking employee and partner training to new levels. The company's education division—The Academy of Wine (www.academyofwine.com)—is using Adobe Connect to build and deploy a global, on-demand training program. "The success we're having with Adobe Connect is prompting a much wider rollout of web-based training across the organization," says Rob Hennigar, director of education at Constellation Wines N.A.

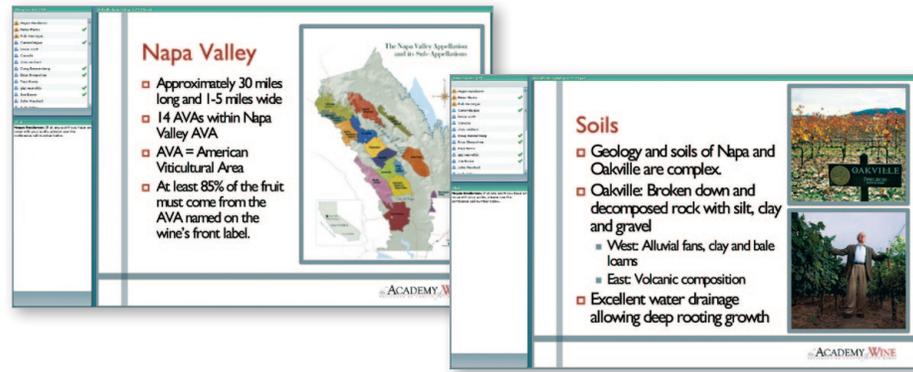
Out of the classroom into cyberspace

Previously, Constellation's training programs were based on a costly, time-consuming, classroom training model. New employees were flown to California's Napa Valley for a week of on-site training, which in large part involved employees sitting in classrooms and viewing lectures with PowerPoint presentations. There was no cost-effective way to share knowledge or provide employees the time to gain greater familiarity with the various wineries, winemakers, and other wine country information.

Wanting to better leverage technology for training, Constellation N.A. looked to revamp its approach to training by adopting more integrated, accessible eLearning programs. This would offer busy employees quicker access to the most current product information, as well as enable the company to extend training to a wider range of partners and customers around the globe. An effective eLearning strategy would also help to lower the company's overall training costs by reducing costs to produce content and minimizing travel requirements.

"Since the wine industry is continually evolving, the ability to easily update and maintain training materials is essential," says Hennigar. "An online solution could also help us create more engaging learning experiences for participants, in a way that static, written materials cannot do." In addition, while many employees at Constellation Wines N.A. are revered in their industry, the company found it difficult to assemble that knowledge into effective education presentations.

Constellation Wines uses Adobe Connect and Adobe Presenter for its global, on-demand training program for employees, distributors, and resellers. With 850 employees and partners actively engaged in online training, the company blends live Adobe Connect presentations with recorded sessions that are made available to staff and partners worldwide.



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Rob Hennigar

Director of education, The Academy of Wine, a division of Constellation Wines N.A.

Flexible learning opportunities

After researching web conferencing solutions, the company decided to adopt a hosted solution of Adobe Connect. "By using Adobe Connect, we can keep our in-house training team small and minimize reliance on IT support," says Hennigar. He adds that the elegant, easy-to-use interface is ideal for non-technical wine experts to develop courses in-house using familiar tools like PowerPoint and then use Adobe Presenter to deliver that content to Adobe Connect. Staff also uses components of Adobe Creative Suite 4 Web Premium and Adobe Creative Suite 4 Master Collection software to create visuals for the online presentations.

The company initially deployed only recorded courses online. Today, with approximately 850 employees and partners actively engaged in online training, the company is blending a series of live Adobe Connect presentations into its learning model. Live sessions with experts are recorded and then made available to people worldwide, helping ensure consistent delivery and wider distribution of expert knowledge inside and outside the company.

Adobe Connect is also used regularly for weekly production meetings, sales team meetings, and brand manager presentations—streamlining administrative workflows and increasing employee productivity. Notably, the company has started to use Adobe Connect to connect its strategic partners with key downstream audiences such as staff at large hotel, restaurant, and retail chains. Previously, it would have taken several trainers six months or longer to travel to 50 or 60 locations to teach customers about the latest wines. The same training can now be accomplished in a couple of weeks or even days, reducing the need for travel.

Deepening relationships

Better access to higher-quality training and reduced costs are only some of the benefits of the company's use of Adobe Connect. Another significant advantage is the ability to create entirely new opportunities for staff, partners, and customers to engage with each other. For example, a brand partner in Italy, Ruffino Wines, produces wine sold by Buca di Beppo restaurants throughout the United States. Constellation Wines N.A. invited different Buca di Beppo locations to participate in a live Adobe Connect online session with Ruffino's managers in Italy. The session was a huge success.

"Restaurant employees enjoyed a level of access and a quality of information they could not have received otherwise," says Hennigar. "Not only was it a strong and cost-effective educational tool, but it also helped strengthen our relationships with an important partner and customer."

Building on its success with Adobe Connect, Constellation Wines N.A. is looking to use the Adobe solution to expand its services directly to consumers, possibly providing wine drinkers and collectors with ready access to online discussions and trainings. "Consumers are familiar with using technology to gather information, and web conferencing is increasingly well understood. Using the technology, we can provide customers with the opportunity to learn from our own company experts—a resource that we are happy to share with them," says Hennigar.

Regardless of the audience, Constellation Wines N.A. is discovering that smart use of online meetings and training is strengthening knowledge about its products and building better relationships with wine lovers worldwide.

For more information

www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect

www.adobe.com/resources/elearning/



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