

# A DROP FOR DRINKING, NOT THINKING

Two  
MEN



MENDOZA  
UCO VALLEY  
MALBEC  
2012

WINE OF ARGENTINA

750ml

Category  
4.0 - Packaging  
Sub Category  
4.2 Branded - drink  
Client  
Dan Sims and Ben Edwards  
Design Consultancy  
Elmwood  
Date  
June 2014



elmwood

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**EXCEEDED  
SALES**  
TARGET BY OVER  
TWO THIRDS



**MORE THAN  
TREBLED**



**THE TARGET  
NUMBER OF  
CUSTOMERS**

**BREAKEVEN  
(PROFIT)  
3 MONTHS  
EARLY**



**Two  
MEN**

[300 words]

**DAN SIMS AND BEN EDWARDS**  
ARE TWO OF AUSTRALIA'S TOP  
WINE EXPERTS. WHEN IT CAME TO  
DRINKING THE GOOD STUFF, THEY'D  
TASTED IT, JUDGED IT, TRAVELLED  
OVERSEAS FOR IT ... **IN FACT, THEY'D  
DONE EVERYTHING EXCEPT MAKE IT.**

With years of industry experience between them, they'd also been privy to the snobbier side of wine. Awash with exclusivity, complexity, elitism ... it just wasn't for them. What they were passionate about was making the overcomplicated world of wine accessible, engaging and fun. So, for the very first time, they decided to walk in the shoes of wine producers themselves, pouring everything they had into a new start-up venture. And that's why they chose us as development partners: to create a wine brand for the people, a drop that stood for 'drinking not thinking'.

As the old saying goes, however, too much wine isn't always a good thing ... especially when it comes to a relatively unknown variety found in the depths of Argentina. Firstly, what on earth did Malbec taste like? And why should customers try it?

Taking their fresh approach to wine and making it sing, we told the story of their South American sojourn smack-bang on the label in order to make it leap into restaurants and off shelves for customers.

Capturing the story both visually and verbally, we created a compelling tale that captured their sheer passion for wine, built awareness of their credibility and expertise, and sent their simple message home - in a bottle! Hence, Two Men was born.

**BY MAKING SENSE OF MALBEC AND DROPPING  
THE REST, IN 9 MONTHS WE HELPED TO DELIVER:**

- **Sales which exceeded their target** by two thirds
- **3x** target number of **customers**
- Breakeven (profit) 3 months early
- Major presence at Melbourne's premier restaurants
- **Presence** throughout Australia and into Asia

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

TO CREATE A WINE IDENTITY THAT ENHANCED THE BOYS' CREDIBILITY AND CAPTURED THEIR UNIQUE POINT OF VIEW: **A WINE FOR DRINKING, NOT THINKING ...**



### OUTLINE OF BRIEF

Dan and Ben asked us to create a brand identity for their beloved drop, one that told their story of expertise and easy everyday drinking. Specifically, this meant launching two new international wine varieties into the Australian market - everything from naming and tone of voice, to brandmark and packaging. And, as a new start-up with a niche offer, they needed it done on a shoestring budget.

### THE KEY OBJECTIVES INCLUDED:

- Build brand awareness and establish the Two Men name
- Sell 600 cases of wine within first 12 months
- To breakeven (profit) within first 12 months

### DESCRIPTION

As its name suggests, Two Men is the brainchild of two men, Ben Edwards and Dan Sims. Between them stacking up just about 40 years in the business and many industry awards, they'd always been guides rather than makers. Journeying independently through some of Australia and Europe's finest eateries and wine establishments, they launched The Wine Guide in 2007 - an online presence for their wine consultancy.

The launch of Two Men marks a new path in their journey. It started on a trip to a sommelier conference in Chile, which saw them breaking their trip home with a pitstop in Mendoza, Argentina. It was there that their love affair with the Argentinian Malbec began as they ate steak from a parilla under the stars. There and then, Ben and Dan realised this was a wine they had to make.

**TWO  
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## PROJECT OVERVIEW



Other Malbecs in the Australian Market

What they soon discovered was that 98% of wines were made for an export market but that the wines they enjoyed the most were the small number made for the domestic market and palate. This was an Argentinian secret that deserved to be told. Teaming up with the Rutini Winery in the Uco Valley, they launched for the first time their own wine, proudly for 'drinking not thinking'. They wanted to tell the story of the people, the place, the history and, of course, the wine maker. It meant developing a new product, a new brand and a label from scratch for two wine varieties, Malbec and Malbec Rosé.

## OVERVIEW OF MARKET

Australia is the world's fourth largest wine exporter, exporting 678 million litres in 2013 (Source: Decanter Magazine), representing 60% of all home-produced wine. In a country famed worldwide for its viticulture, wine-drinking habits had traditionally been less adventurous and were characterised in two ways. First, a cultural trend dictated that, if you were drinking wine in Australia, you should be drinking Australian wine. Only 15.7% of wine sold in Australia was imported in 2013 (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics). And, second, if you were drinking wine, you were much more likely to drink white (50%) than red (30%) (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics). So far, no good for the Two Men and their Argentinian Malbec...

Things however were beginning to change, but it certainly wasn't plain sailing for this new adventure. Yes, wine imports were growing (from 7.1% of sales in 2007 to 15.7% in 2013), but most of these (61%) were from New Zealand (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics). The market for reds was also growing, but it was mainly for the big four: Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir, representing 90% of all reds drunk in Australia (Source: Wine Australia Annual Report 12/13).

While a foray by Australian winemakers into more 'alternative varieties' from Europe had created an appetite for 'new' international reds such as Sangiovese and Tempranillo, this was still a market mostly drinking Australian-produced white wine and selecting from a growing but still limited range of reds.

Within this landscape, the boys faced the extra challenge of projecting a non-Australian red and rosé from a little known grape variety. And, adding to the challenges of Australian wine-drinking habits and traditions, the snobbery inherent in wine-drinking was as potent here in Australia as anywhere else in the world...

## PROJECT LAUNCH DATE

November 2013

## SIZE OF DESIGN BUDGET

\$14,000 AUD



**INTRODUCING  
A LESSER-KNOWN  
VARIETY INTO  
THE MIX**

**TWO  
MEN**

[650 words]

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## OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION



Despite their lofty credentials, Ben and Dan firmly believed in a simpler, less intellectualised appreciation of wine. This was their opportunity to lay down the gauntlet ... to open the door to an easier, carefree enjoyment of wine.

So when it came to our design thinking, it was all about creating a brand that could take on the challenge: one that was interesting enough to say quality, simple enough to say 'Try me', and authentic enough to bring the boys' famous Mendoza moment to life. It had to convince serious and not-so-serious Australian wine-drinkers of its merit in a way that also communicated the boys' fuss-free ethos.

Taking Ben and Dan's 'Does it make wine easy?' motto and making it shine, we created a label that spoke proudly of the wine's origins and quality, while keeping it to-the-point and accessible too. Each label features a simple bottle device (on its side), housing a character illustration of a uniquely Argentinian item - a sheepish-looking bull in the case of the Malbec, and a smoky parilla in the case of the Malbec Rose. Filling the bottle outline to the brim, both illustrations pay homage to the very moment when Malbec made sense for the boys under the stars in Mendoza ... this is their Argentinian moment, bottled.

Eclectic typography with the effect of old type-block printing gives a sense of hand-crafting and authenticity, while our handdrawn illustrations of the sideways bottle and two men silhouettes suggest the human, the quirky - a visual wink that this is something a little different!

On the back label, the Two Men brand finds its voice, telling the story of its origin and ethos. Visually, it's eye-catching - upper case type with a touch of the Rosé pink or Malbec red as an accent colour. Verbally, it's conversational and personal in tone. This is Two Men talking to you from the heart. No pompous tasting notes or serving suggestions here. It's about the unique personality, the "drinking, not thinking" philosophy of the wine, simply told by Two Men in three easy lists: 'Three things we'll never forget', 'Three things to remember about this Malbec/Rose' and 'Three things we need to tell you or risk jail time'.

Two Men is a wine for the people - for the serious and the not-so-serious wine drinkers alike - wherever they may be headed.



**TWO  
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**OUTLINE  
OF DESIGN  
SOLUTION**

Two Men travels the globe looking for those simple "a ha" moments where wine just makes sense.

Within these pacy lists lies the secret - the message in a bottle - that Ben and Dan were so keen to convey. This is a unique wine, a secret for you to discover and simply enjoy. The Ben and Dan silhouettes make an appearance here too, one sitting atop the parilla, the other in mid-run pushing it. The tone, both visually and verbally, is playful and fun, just as they intended.

Like the wine itself, the brand and label goes against category norms to do more than merely 'strike a pose'. We've stripped away the expected, the etiquette and the snobbery both visually and verbally to tell a much more compelling and distinctive story ... the story of Two Men, bottling the very moment when it all began.



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MEN**

[496 words]

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## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

“Originally we only wanted to focus on Victoria, but now we’re being approached by places in Perth, Darwin, Adelaide and Brisbane”.

- Dan Sims, Owner

Since launching in November 2013, Two Men wine has gone from strength to strength, more than tripling the target number of customers and close to doubling the Men’s sales target for the year.

Not only did we meet our key objectives, we exceeded expectations by getting Two Men into more mouths - increasing engagement with their target audience, as well as capturing the interest of customers not only in Victoria as originally intended, but Australia-wide and internationally.

### OUR KEY OBJECTIVES WERE:

Build brand awareness and establish the Two Men name

With the objective to obtain 30 customers in Victoria within the first year, Two Men can now be found in more than 100 restaurants, bars and independent retailers across Australia - meaning the new design has led to Two Men more than tripling the targeted number of customers. With the vino succeeding not only in Victoria, but in establishments Australia-wide, the extra media attention and word of mouth brought about via the new brand has made it much easier when trying to get sales.

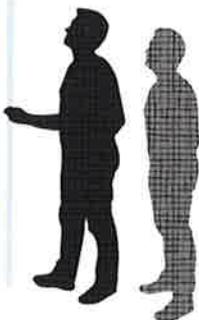
The standout design has grabbed the attention of some of Melbourne’s finest eateries and bars, with many calls to stock it. Two Men now appears on the menu at Cutler & Co, Vue de Monde, Collins Quarter, Trunk - and many more to mention. The buzz around it has carried it over the Victorian border and onto the list at Brisbane’s Esquire and Launceston’s Black Cow, to name a few. It is also stocked in a growing number of boutique retailers around the country, including Prince Wine Store, Gertrude Street Enoteca and McCoppins Beer & Wine in Melbourne, and Ainslie Cellars in the ACT.

From nothing to something, Two Men has also **engaged wholeheartedly with its target audience**. It now has a mailing list of 7000 members, over 550 followers on Twitter, 337 Likes on Facebook and its very own Two Men Wine School on YouTube, which has a combined total of over 850 views

With sales growth increasing in retailers, plus top restaurants from all over Australia chasing Two Men for more malbec, our simply clever and friendly design is helping to move more wine than ever expected...

**3X TARGET  
NUMBER OF  
CUSTOMERS**

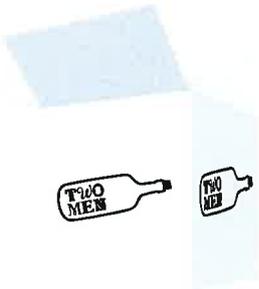
**TWO  
MEN**



**TWO  
MEN**

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

**1000+**  
CASES OF WINE  
SOLD DESPITE  
DELAY TO  
SHELF



**\$250,000**  
TURNOVER IN  
9 MONTHS

“Only Dan could bring together over 300 people to celebrate a relatively obscure grape variety and make it fun and engaging”.

- Sally Humble,  
Head Sommelier of Circa,  
The Prince

“Elmwood managed to clearly communicate what it is we were trying to accomplish with our Two Men project. By taking the difficult subject of wine and making it more about the story it engaged with the audience we were trying to attract. The design of the label immediately creates conversation and intuitively recommends not only what you should eat with it, but the scenario. We were blown away by our experience”.

- Dan Simms, Owner

### Sell 600 cases of wine within first 12 months

Starting with a total of 2000 cases - 1000 cases of Rose and 1000 of Malbec - the aim was to sell 300 of each (30%) in the first year. At an average of \$22 RRP per bottle, and a dozen wines per case, this meant a sales target of \$150,000. In the first 9 months alone, they sold over 1,000 cases for over \$250,000, meaning they exceeded their sales target by two-thirds. All of this despite having one summer to sell the Rose variety (a delay in production meant that it hit the shelves much later than planned). It's predicted that cash growth “will continue to increase at around 20% as we grow into other markets/cities”, says Dan.

### To breakeven (profit) within first 12 months

Already at the breakeven stage after 9 short months, Two Men is three months ahead of schedule when it comes to making a profit. After cost of production, taxes and winery expenses, sales are now going straight into their pockets!

## EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS...

### Increased awareness of Malbec as an everyday drinking wine

Not only have they sold more wine than they anticipated due to the wine and story, there has been an increased interest in the grape variety as a result. Compared to its winemaking competitors, Two Men is better distributed and selling a greater volume with a less snobby price point. “On average for a winery, a good year of sales would be 300 cases, or 3,500 bottles ... most struggle to move that”, says Dan (Two Men sold 1000 cases in 9 months).

It was also awarded the winner of the People's Choice award at World Malbec Day, an event run earlier this year by Dan off the back of increasing interest in the variety from suppliers.

**TWO  
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## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

“We now have distribution in every capital city in Australia, with much interest in Hong Kong as well.”

- Dan Sims, Owner

“Malbec is still a small market but considering the number of venues we’re in, we’re in a very strong position in comparison to our competitors. The wine, the story and our network is very strong”.

- Dan Sims, owner

“If you want to learn about just how good malbec can be by itself, sans cabernet and friends, look to South America ... Two Men In Mendoza 2012 malbec rose and a straight 100 per cent malbec are the result”.

- Jeni Port, Good Food Guide, Fairfax Media

### Exceeding expectations internationally

With the initial focus being on Melbourne, word of mouth and social media has given Two Men the ability to promote it globally. As a result, the boys now have Hong Kong knocking at their door...



**TWO  
MEN**

**OTHER  
INFLUENCING  
FACTORS**

**RESEARCH  
RESOURCES**

Since the launch, there has been no advertising or any other expenditure. Sales have been gained through brand building (work done by us on the brand) and through Dan and Ben simply living that brand - in events, through PR and social media ... all very fitting for two men getting out and about, travelling to bring back the best of what they find! Dan runs wine events each year as part of a bigger business blog called 'Bottle Shop Concepts', including Pinot Palooza, Game of Rhones and World Malbec Day. While Two Men has been featured at these events, these are not designed for the brand - they celebrate the grape variety itself and feature a broad selection of different wines.

All sales figures and stats provided by Two Men Wines. Other research resources include Fairfax Media, Australian Bureau of Statistics, The Wine Guide, Decanter Magazine and Wine Australia Annual Report 12/13.

