

Detail



Wine fit for a Queen

How a premium rebrand captivated a nation

Client **Albury Organic Vineyard**
Industry Sector **Beverages**
Submission Date **October 2019**

DBA
Design Effectiveness Awards
For Publication

“When you add to this heavenly liquid a bottle, cap and label redesign which must be one of the most impressive packaging transformations I have ever seen, this is a wine which is operating at the very highest levels of world rosé production.”

Matthew Jukes, The Vineyard Magazine



Executive Summary

Albury is a small family-run vineyard, situated on the southern slopes of the North Downs in the beautiful Surrey Hills. The vines are the traditional Champagne varietals of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, as well as some Seval and Pinot Gris. Albury is committed to producing organic fruit without the use of chemicals, such as herbicides and fungicides, and to producing English wine of the highest quality; a still rosé and fine sparkling wines.

Nick Wenman has owned the vineyard for 10 years. Hearing him speak at an event, you are immediately struck by his passion for producing the finest English organic wine, the essence of the vineyard and the care that goes into each and every bottle. Before you know it, you'll be reaching into your pocket to buy a bottle or even a case of his wine, wanting to experience and taste the quality. Indeed, in 2012, Albury's Silent Pool Rosé was served to the Queen aboard the Royal Barge at the Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

In 2015, the company released its first sparkling wines and Nick's daughter, Lucy, joined the family business. People were starting to show a real interest in the vineyard, coming by in person to see the wines for themselves. Additionally, wine labelling was creating some confusion, and the website was outdated both in terms of brand message and technical ability. When we were approached by Albury we quickly identified that whilst the wines were fit for a queen, the root of the problems lay in the antiquated branding and disjointed range hierarchy. We could see the potential of the brand, we loved the passion of Nick and Lucy and we wanted to help them bring the genius out of the bottle with a new brand strategy and design.

A key objective was to sell more wine direct to the consumer as opposed to through distributors – thus increasing the profit on each bottle. We needed to take this vineyard to the nation.

We captured the essence of Albury Vineyard and gave it a compelling visual voice. Together with a well considered brand strategy, we set out to effectively engage potential customers at every touchpoint.

Albury soon discovered the effectiveness of the new brand and e-commerce website. When the website launched it took more sales in two months than it did in the entire previous year. Clear brand guidelines and assets have given Lucy the confidence to step up the marketing and social media reach. The business continues to experience significant growth and increased sales. No-one is more surprised than Nick, who never imagined that he could achieve such high sales through the website. The rebrand has completely turned around the profitability of the company.

With only 12 acres there is a limit to the amount of wine the vineyard can produce, however our work with Albury has also opened up other profitable business opportunities, such as vineyard events, tours and wine club membership, providing year-round income and bringing in more than 2,500 visitors per year.

Albury continues to win numerous wine awards, but these days, judges comment not only upon the wine itself, but also on the transformational brand and packaging design which brings to life the heritage, quality and dedication to organic and biodynamic viticulture. Increased brand loyalty has contributed to the company's latest award, voted solely by consumers – *Surrey Life Food & Drink Awards 2018, Drink Product of the Year*.

In the 18 months since the rebrand, results have dramatically exceeded the brief's objectives and elevated the profile of Albury, both in terms of sales and brand awareness. Through a well thought out brand strategy and exceptional design work with fine attention to detail, this fine English wine now looks every bit as good as it tastes.



Context & Overview


About Albury

Albury Vineyard is the result of Nick Wenman's passion for quality wine. Nick planted the vineyard in 2009 having retired from the IT industry to fulfil his dream of producing his own wine. Nick believes that the key to the success of the wines is the vineyard's commitment to organic and biodynamic principles, together with excellent winemakers and his talented vineyard manager, Alex, one of the few female vineyard managers in England. Her expertise is vital to the running of the vineyard. Albury is a family-run vineyard, with Nick's daughter Lucy now part of the growing team and granddaughter Poppy a regular visitor (if only to visit the bee-hives and sneak a taste of the honey!)

Albury is committed to producing organic fruit without the use of chemicals, such as herbicides and fungicides, and produce English wine of the highest quality; a still rosé and quality sparkling wines.

Nick and his company truly believe that organic viticulture produces better quality fruit and, ultimately, better quality wine.



194%  Increase in annual visitors to the vineyard¹



850

2017

2,500

2019

“In the 18 months since the rebrand results have dramatically exceeded the brief’s objectives”

Nick Wenman, Albury Vineyard



Market Context

The wine market is growing rapidly in the UK with new vineyards appearing all the time. In 2017, 5.9 million bottles were produced in the UK and predicted growth is expected to reach 40 million by 2040. (Wine Intelligence Survey for Wine GB).

Albury was established in 2009 as the English Wine industry began to grow in earnest – since then, the area under vine in England has increased by 160% to reach 2,888 hectares.

Albury, however, has to make the most of a small site, as while 60% of the vineyards in England have at least 28 acres to grow on, Albury Vineyard is limited to 12 acres for production. Not content with this level of challenge, Nick is committed to farming organically and biodynamically: in his own words, “This method of cultivation is unusual in England as we are up against the weather. We don’t use any systemic chemicals. We have gone back to the essence of organics, using plant extracts, natural components and compost, and we work with the vines according to the phases of the moon.”

While there has been a marked increase in consumption of English sparkling wine over the past decade in the UK, the predominant preference is for sub-£10 bottles, and this has been the basis for the growth of the prosecco market. Albury’s sparkling wines are positioned at the £30 price point, competing with mid-level champagnes, and in order to make its mark in this notoriously difficult market, Albury needed to overcome the hangover of decades of poor English wines that had struggled to earn their place in the fridges of the nation.

In recent years, consumers have become more interested in provenance and production methods, with organic production becoming more recognised among the general population when making purchase decisions, alongside considerations on sustainability and food miles. With its historic Surrey Hills location and organic, biodynamic viticulture, Albury Vineyard had huge potential to take advantage of these trends.

Outperformed the market average by²

180%▲

Wine tourism in small vineyards average visitors per month

Outline of Project Brief

- Create a new e-commerce website, to make it really easy for visitors to buy wine or get tickets for events.
- Open other business income streams, events, local collaborations.
- Create a stronger, more emotive brand for Albury reflecting its status as a premium, award-winning vineyard.
- Increase local brand awareness and encourage more footfall.
- Increase direct customer sales as opposed to through distributors. Increasing income per bottle.
- Increase overall brand awareness and customer loyalty within the local community.

The Story

The initial brief we received was for a website redesign to address the urgent issue of lost sales due to complicated and archaic functionality. The new website needed to be responsive to work across mobile devices and have a clearly defined customer journey, right through to the point of sale. The team wanted the customer to be able to purchase wine in just two clicks.

It was clear that the website presented a functional problem, but that the real issue ran much deeper. As we dug into the product line-up and the branding for our initial proposal, we quickly realised that we could not create a new website without taking a step back and addressing the brand as a whole.

The key breakthrough came from getting to know Nick and the team at Albury, and seeing the genius and dedication they had put into creating a range of premium wines, under organic conditions, from just 12 acres of Surrey countryside. Cue rounds of research, workshop sessions with the family, SWOT analyses and digging into target customer profiles.

As we worked, it became apparent that the real priority was to create a whole new brand for Albury, with a clear hierarchy for the different products sitting under it so that it could effortlessly reach its target customers.

Together, we crafted a design brief founded on three key drivers to bring the genius out of the bottle, and create a stronger, more emotive brand for Albury that reflected its status as a premium, award-winning vineyard:

1. Even though the wine itself had been deemed fit for the Queen, the brand’s look and feel fell short: it needed a **new, refined, premium brand look and feel**.
2. The attention to detail and commitment to organic viticulture was lost in translation: we needed to **reflect the art and craft of Albury Vineyard through every touchpoint**.
3. The wines had disparate identities and could have been from different vineyards: we needed to create a **sense of cohesion with a unified but flexible design** that captured the essence of Albury.

The Design Solution

In response, our team created a brand design and strategy that truly captures the essence of Albury:

- We created a new brand mark that was recognisable and memorable, derived from the crest of the Duke of Northumberland (the owner of the land on which the vineyard sits), crowned with the leaves of the grapevine and incorporating the initial 'A' of Albury and the positioning statement. A seal of purity, excellence and authority.
- We crafted a unique logotype with balanced, hand-crafted characters, to ensure the logotype does justice to the perfect balance of Albury's award-winning wines.
- Right down to the bespoke illustration of the Surrey Hills on the rosé wine, we designed fine details that give life to the care and attention put into each and every bottle by Nick and his team.

It was only with these intricate design elements in place that we were able to have a cohesive, visual brand and direction to pull through to the other key elements of the brief. Combined with a carefully evaluated customer journey, this resulted in the creation of the new e-commerce website, which mirrors the brand look and feel throughout. The new website is visually appealing, easy to navigate and performs well on all platforms, as evidenced by a 1,600% increase in online sales since its launch.

Our creative work continued across the labelling for the individual wines, packaging and marketing materials. We next turned our attention to bringing the brand look and feel to the estate itself: from signage and event branding to vineyard tours and promotional merchandise. Now, every touchpoint at the Albury Vineyard echoes the passion, integrity, quality and mastery that had previously been trapped inside the bottles.

As a result of this complete redress, Albury Vineyard has been clearly established as a premium wine producer, able to take pride in its status and position in the beautiful Surrey Hills.

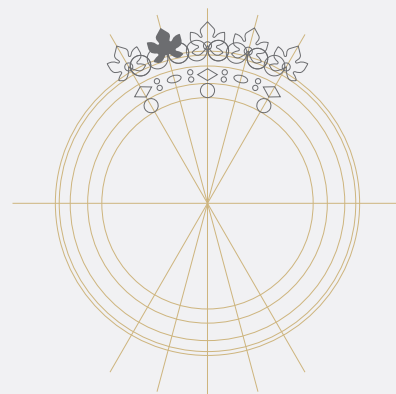
Creating a recognisable and memorable mark, indicating the brand's heritage. A seal of purity, excellence and authenticity.



The mark of the Duke of Northumberland, owner of the Albury Estate, featuring a crown, roundel and crescent



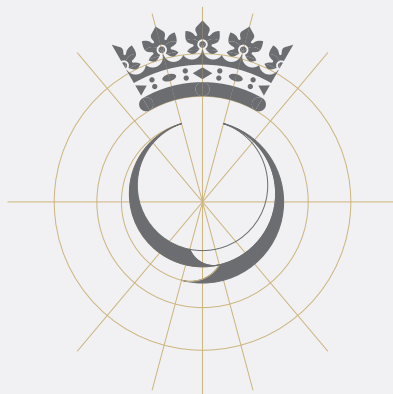
The leaf of the grape vine



Creating a unique crown, incorporating the leaves of a grape vine



Constructing a representation of the Duke's crescent



The core elements of the crown and crescent



Incorporating the initial 'A' of Albury and the positioning statement



1600%▲

Increase in online sales¹

Based on comparison for
12-month period, 2017 vs 2018^{4,5}





“Silent Pool Rosé sold very, very well this year, I think that was largely to do with the new bottling which looked great and much more in line with the quality of the wine which has always been high and also the cost of the product.”

Rob Bagot,
Buon Vino Wines

Results

Achievements

- Increased sales direct to consumers as opposed to distributors - increasing the profit per bottle.
- Following the new brand and website launch, Albury Vineyard is now achieving profitable growth.
- Increased brand awareness and loyalty amongst customers – Voted Winner of 'Surrey Life Food & Drink Awards 2018, Drink Product of the Year', voted by consumers.
- Well respected within the industry, with perception that the vineyard is bigger than it is and the brand standing proudly amongst larger established vineyards.
- Vineyard footfall dramatically increased, resulting in more sales.
- New areas have been opened up for the business, such as events, tours and collaborations. This in turn has resulted in increased loyalty amongst customers, who go on to purchase further products from the website at a later date.

Other Influencing Factors

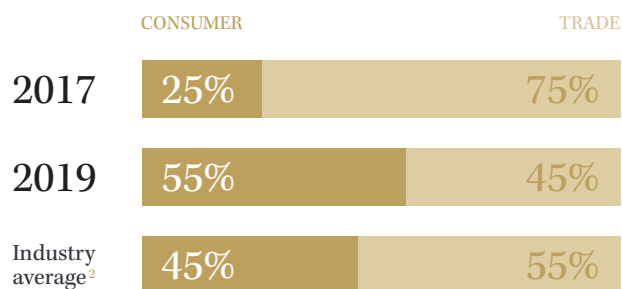
All marketing is carried out by Lucy and her entire effort is built around the website and social media. There have been no additional marketing activities. The results achieved have been on the strength of the new brand evolution and website, together with the continuing commitment of the family.

Summary

Creating the new brand has elevated Albury Vineyard within the industry and it can now confidently stand alongside some of the much larger, established vineyards in the UK. It also completely turned around the profitability of the company.

120%▲

Increase in direct to consumer sales¹ in the 18 months since rebrand, greatly increasing the profit per bottle




Sales are up¹

40%▲

31% is the predicted industry average³



194%  Increase in annual visitors to the vineyard¹



850

2017

2,500

2019

5 New members of staff¹
1 full-time, 4 part-time

2017



2019



1600% 

Increase in online sales¹

Based on comparison for 12-month period, 2017 vs 2018^{4,5}



40%  Increase in wine club members¹
in the 18 months since rebrand



Outperformed the market average by

180% 

73

UK Small Vineyards²

205¹

Albury

Average visitors per month

Sources

1. Albury Vineyard

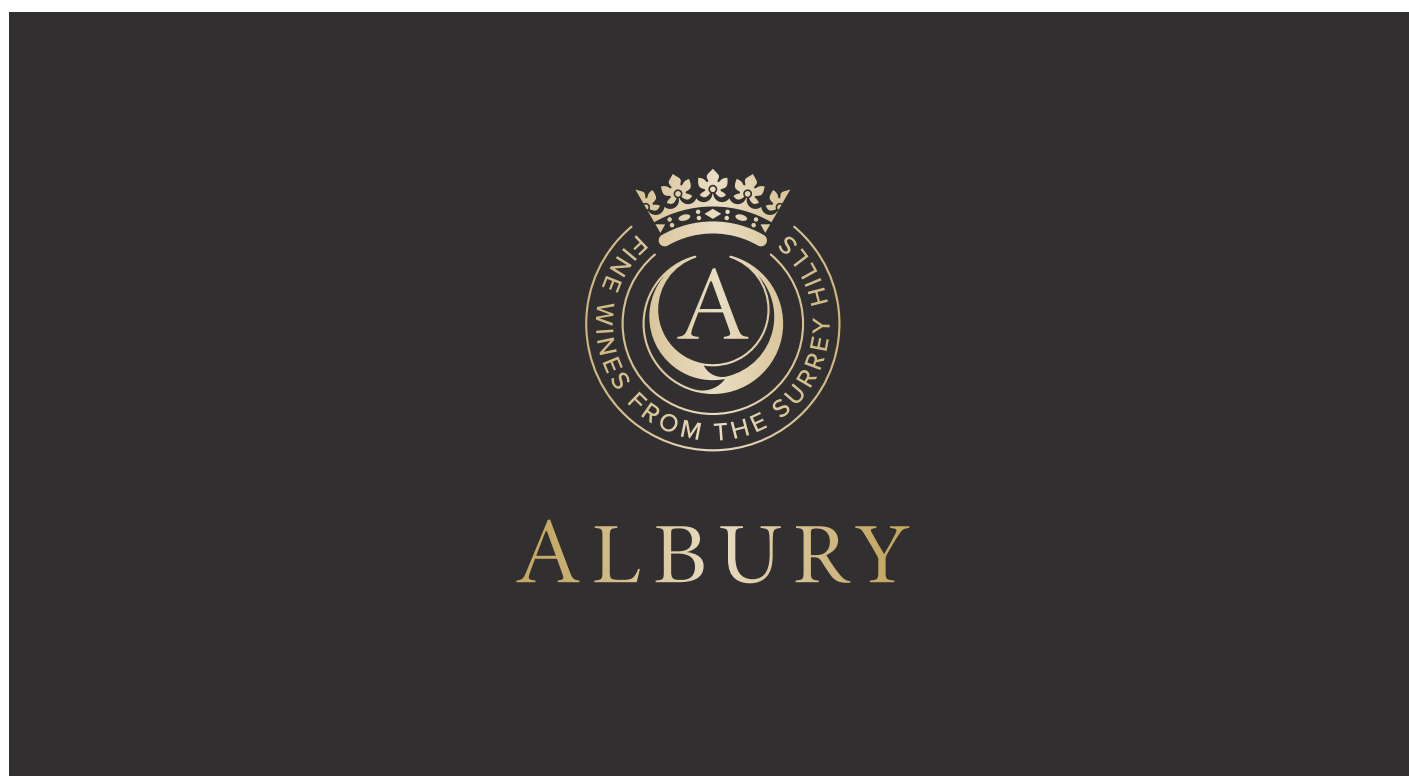
2. Wine Intelligence Survey 2018
commissioned by Wine GB

3. Looking to the Future 2019,
Wine GB

4. Shopify analytics

5. Paypal reporting

6. Vineyard Magazine



Scope of Work Delivered

- Overall brand design and strategy
- Brand guidelines
- Key Facts
 - Launch date: January 2018
 - Value of rebrand: £15,000
- Website design
- Wine labelling, design of shape of bottles, packaging
- Merchandising
- Signage
- Event marketing materials
- Email marketing materials
- Design for collaborative business ventures
- Exhibition and event branding
- Promotional merchandising
- 10th anniversary commemorative packaging
- Vineyard tour design and collateral
- Launch of ancillary products, labelling and packaging:
 - Vermouth*
 - Mead*
 - Brandy*
 - Eau de Vie de Vin*
 - Honey*

