

# Vineyard & Winery Management

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MARKET WATCH  
TIM TEICHGRAEBER



## SURVEY SAYS

Gallo's wine consumer polling has some asking, "What tha?"

In December 2014, E. & J. Gallo announced the results of its first consumer wine trends survey (see them at GalloWineTrends.com). It's hard to believe that it's the first such survey commissioned by the world's largest family winery, so it may well be the first time the results of a survey. None of the results were released, but Gallo did issue a press release with a few key findings – some of which surprised and others some industry insiders I spoke with, based on their own recent experience.

According to Gallo director of public relations Tina Kelley, Gallo commissioned Liberty Consulting to conduct a 25-minute survey of 1,001 wine drinkers between the ages of 18 and 64, all of whom drink at least one serving of wine per month. Respondents were split between male and female. They were asked about their wine behavior, wine knowledge, sources of information, and how they use social media.

Gallo's takeaway from the findings:

### "EVERYONE IS NOW A WINE CRITIC"

Gallo reported that wine drinkers are increasingly turning to social media to remark on and discover new wines, and sharing photos of wines. About half of respondents (49%) reported that they "respect bloggers' opinions." Of course, this also means that a slim majority (51%) don't give bloggers much credence. Given that some bloggers are begged, bribed and cajoled into mentioning wines on social media, their moderate impact probably shouldn't come as much of a surprise.

Of the idea that Millennials trust bloggers, Kimberly Charles of Charles Communications Associates in San Francisco said, "I would say that needs to be taken with a grain of salt. I'm all for new people coming to wine and sharing their thoughts/impressions/recommendations with those who read their musings. However, many people call themselves wine bloggers without a) much of an audience and b) credentials or certification for wine knowledge."



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### AT A GLANCE

- + It's not news that young consumers like sweet, fruity wines.
- + If everyone is a critic, how long will it be before the industry clamors for the resurgence of Robert Parker?
- + When one considers all the survey respondents, established varieties still seem to lead the way.
- + Lumping together boxes, screwcaps and single-serve wine packages as "convenient" avoids the different rationales for these packaging categories.

