

Off The Vine: Competitive Analysis

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Summary

Overall, most of the competing winery websites have very similar feel and layout. They use very heavy imagery to show their fruit, wine, and location and let the information flow on top or in between. I think the imagery works well and shows the customer what to expect when buying from or visiting the vineyard. I did not think that some of the sites had a lot of information, which is truly preference, but may hurt them if people are wanting to know more before visiting or buying. Also, almost every website had a scroll feature on their homepage, which gave you their most valuable information. I don't think this is neither a good or bad thing, but I do think it is overused.

Competitors Evaluated

1. **Kenwood Vineyards** - <https://kenwoodvineyards.com>
This is one of the top vineyard sites that exists today and shows it by its clean and simple design. Throughout the site there is very welcoming photography and peaceful scenes of their location.
2. **Benziger Family Winery** - <https://www.benziger.com>
This family oriented winery has a nice website that shows how they interact with the community and locals. Their site has very nice imagery throughout and the layout is easy to follow.
3. **Stratus Vineyards** - <https://www.stratuswines.com>
Stratus Vineyards has one of the most modern looking sites out of all the competitors I viewed. It has a very clean feel and uses color minimally. Their layout is very similar to the others, but doesn't use photography in the same way.
4. **Alexeli Vineyard + Winery** - <https://www.alexeli.com>
While their main page looks very vintage and aesthetically pleasing, there is not much content to their website. Their main goal of the site was to show their pride in their homegrown fruit, but their site is scarce when it comes to the amount of information.
5. **Quailhurst Vineyard Estate** - <http://quailhurstwines.com>
Although this site has more of a focus on the estate than the wine itself, it gives it a sophisticated feel. Also the cart feature is nice that you can buy their wine directly from the website.

Navigation and Labeling

1. Most of the navigation included menu bars at the top of the screen with terms such as
 - a. Our story/About
 - b. Contact
 - c. Visit - to learn more about the location or to schedule a visit
 - d. Wine - about the different types of wines they make and offer
 2. Also a common navigation feature included a scroll that continued down the entire home page and showed key information about the winery
 3. There were a lot of arrow based buttons that served as a call to action to wherever that arrow was taking you on the site
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Content and Features

What features and types of functionality do competitors offer their users.

Most of the sites are pretty basic and just show their information in different ways. One of the extra features that some of them do offer is a shopping cart where you can directly buy the wine of your choice. Another feature that some of them offered was a profile or membership, in which you can buy their wines and be updated on whatever news they post to their websites.

What types of content is available on the sites.

As stated in the navigation, the information that lived within the sites was pretty consistent across all the competitors. They all had some type of about page or 'our story' page, a way to contact them either by email or phone number, a page about visiting their winery, and a page about their wine.

What content is missing on the sites that would be helpful.

I don't feel that any of them was missing information on their websites, but some of them lacked information and the way they were laid out made them feel empty. Also, most of them had a pop up that made you verify that you were of age before you could continue to their site. I never understood this feature unless it required by law, because it can easily be worked around if you are not over the age of 21. It becomes annoying having pop ups distract you from the content of the page and I don't think it is providing any kind of security from people that are underage.

Voice and Tone

What is the common “voice” of the competitors (friendly, serious, helpful, excited, boring)

The common voice of the competitors is has a calming, but professional tone. It describes the wines and visits are very peaceful and makes the locations sounds extravagant. They also sound friendly to where they want you to come visit and see how they run their pride and joy, which sometimes happen to be family run vineyards.

Is there consistency in voice and tone across the sites?

Most of the sites had the same tone about them and didn't differ too much. They also speak in a very descriptive manner, which is helpful with picturing how their wineries feel and look. The imagery helps with that as well, but the descriptive words they use appeal to the reader as savory and scenic.

Design Aesthetics and Layout

What are common design choices across the sites (colors, typography, layout)

There are major similarities across most of the competitor websites including color and typeface. As far as color goes, you can probably assume that most of them had wine based color schemes, which is correct. Aside from the nature based imagery, most websites had a consistent color palette which included reds, purples, blues and light yellows. There were one or two sites that broke away from that norm and took a more modern approach utilizing more of a black and stark white palette. Also regarding typography, I would say there were sites that used streamline sans serifs more often than serif typefaces. I think both worked well and is a matter of preference and the feel of the rest of the website.

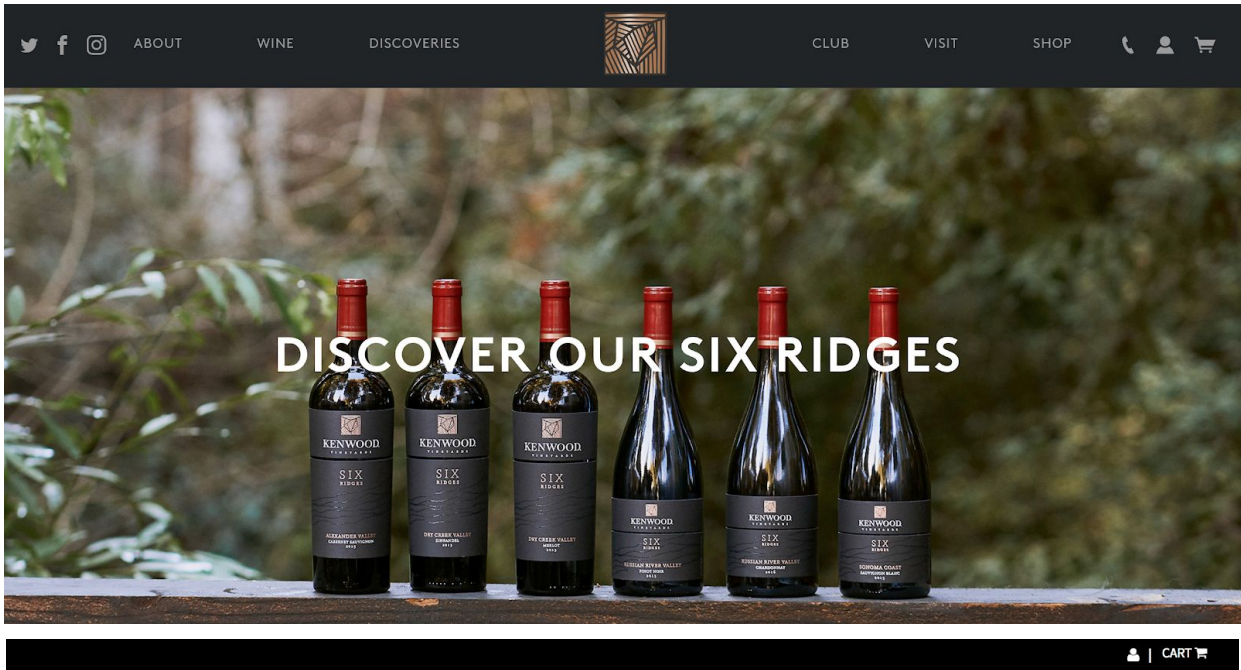
How does the design contribute to the usability of the site on various devices?

The design across all of the sites is very functional and they are all laid out very nicely. They are easy to navigate and there is a lot of attention to typography and detail. I did notice that with most of the mobile versions, they did not display as well as the website version. They were all responsive, but their imagery and layouts did not translate as elegantly as their desktop layout.

Which design pieces (patterns) could be utilized on our website?

I do think that the imagery used on all the sites adds a nice visual and shows the viewer right off the bat what their location and products look like. I also think the family style feel gives it a nice personal touch.

Show side-by-side screenshots of each website evaluated.



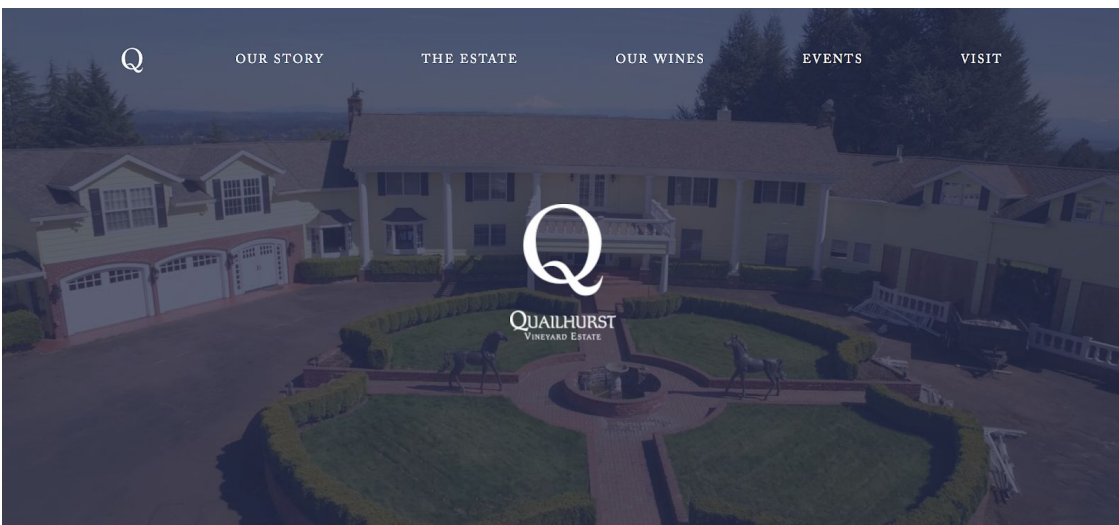
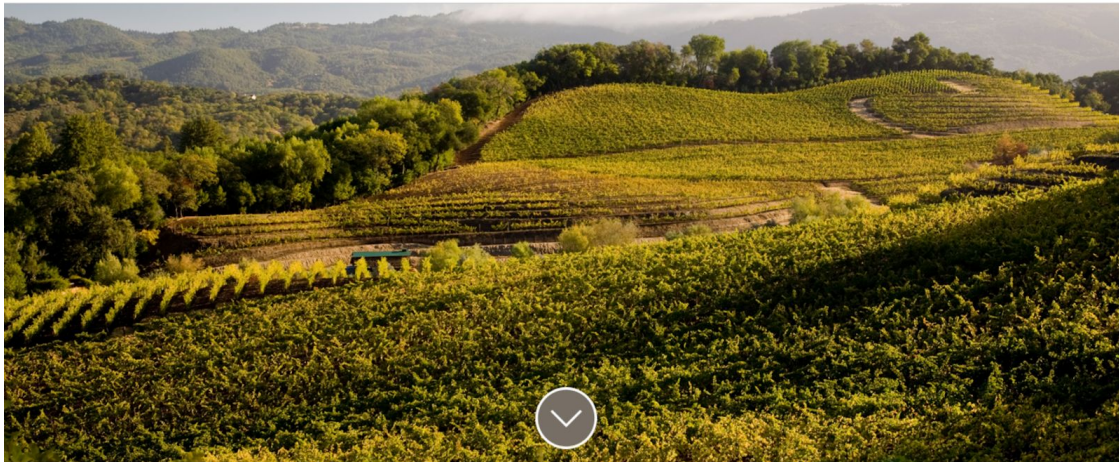
stratus

[ABOUT](#) [STORE](#) [VISIT](#) [WINE CLUB](#)

Together our vineyard and winery create experiences that, like our wines, can be enjoyed in the moment and warmly recalled over time.

[SHOP NOW](#)

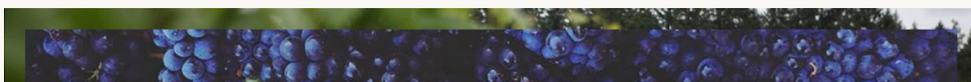




alexeli

HOME ABOUT EVENTS VISIT WINE CLUB FARM JOURNAL STORE

We take pride in raising healthy fruit for handcrafted estate wines. We hope that our wines encourage the simple act of bringing people together.



Recommendations and Strategy

Based on the findings above, what top recommendations do you have for your client's website, based on the top goals that they've shared already.

Do not include design solutions at this point, just recommendations.

I recommend :

1. Online shopping feature - customers can buy wine right from the website
2. Subscription or email alerts - let people know when there are upcoming events
3. Social media feature - easy to connect over social media and maybe an instagram feed within the website
4. Calm and modern colors but used in a different way than the other competing sites
5. Imagery used but not overused - when necessary