

Wine barrel beer aging: product planning, barrel selection, and marketing strategies

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Presented to

Master Brewers Association of the Americas

District Northern California MBAA

& District Southern California MBAA

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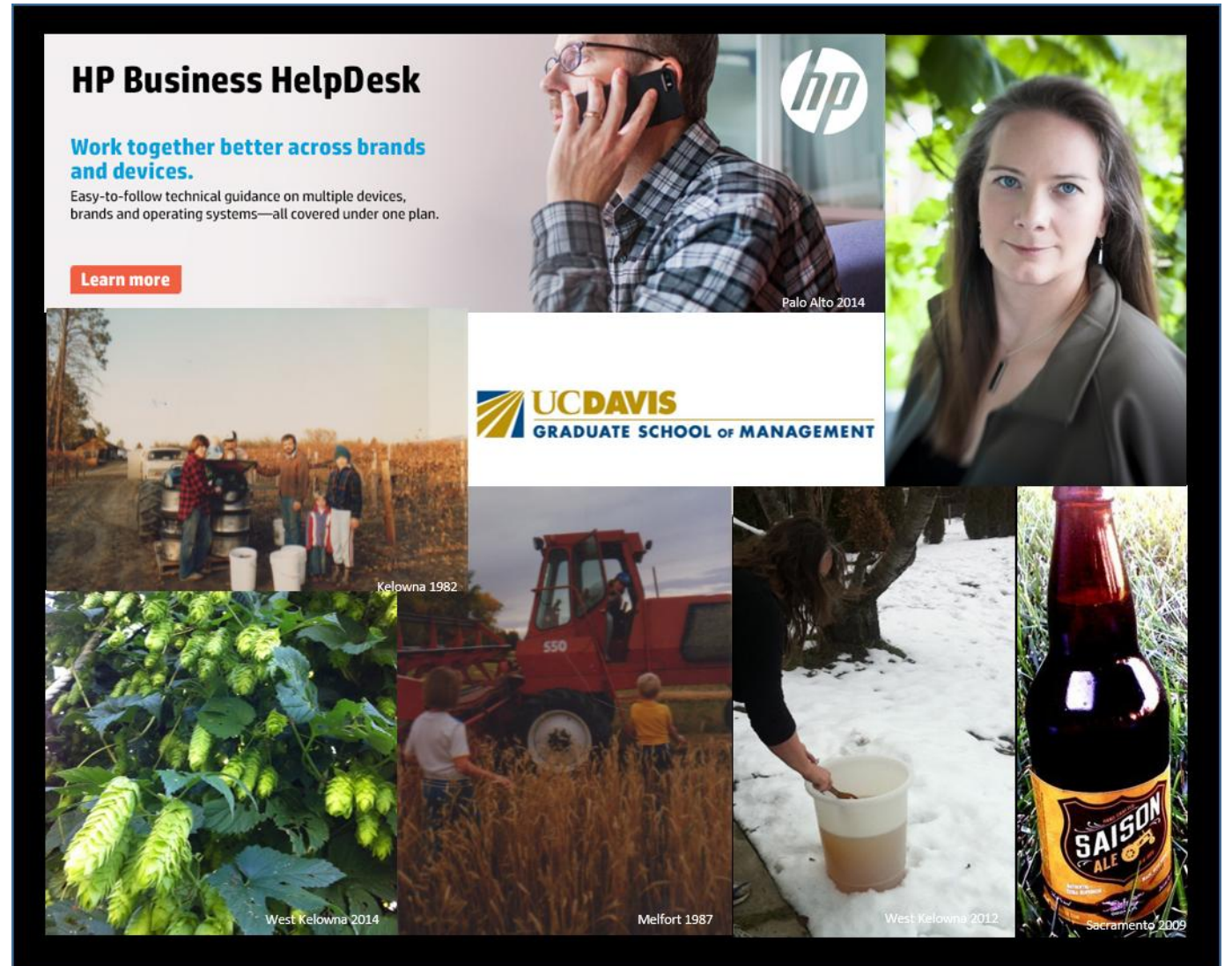


Rustic Ales CA

Who

Tracy Bethune

- Master Product Marketing, NorCal HP
- Business Strategy & Marketing MBA, UC Davis
- Odonata Beer Co, Sacramento
- Agriculture Background, Canada
 - Malting Barley Farm,
 - Northern Saskatchewan
 - Okanagan Orchards & Vineyards
 - British Columbia
- Home Brewer (weren't we all once 😊)



What

Barrel Aging Main Themes:

- Distilled Barrels (i.e. Whiskey, Rum)
 - High Alcohol Treatments



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 - High Alcohol Treatments
- Sour Barrels
 - Neutralizes Barrel
 - Long aspiration for emphasized yeast fermentation characters
 - Colonize with specific (sour)



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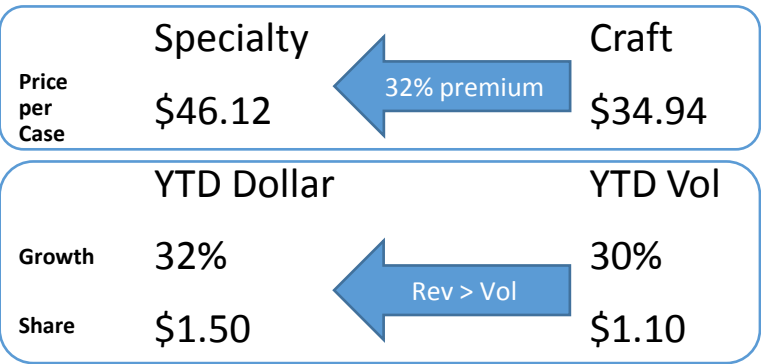
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- Distilled Barrels (ie Whiskey, Rum)
 - High Alcohol Treatments
- Sour Barrels
 - Neutralizes Barrel
 - Long aspiration for emphasized yeast fermentation characters
 - Colonize with specific (sour)
- Wine & Other Barrels
 - Capturing Wine Character Contributions
 - Barrel Planning
 - Marketing

Discussion
Focus



Why



Stats*:

- BA/IRI Group not tracking Barrel Aged
- Specialty YTD only (new Category, includes collaboration beers)
- Multi-Outlet and Convenience Channels only (no direct sales)
 - Seriously under-reports premium direct sales in California
- Conclusion: still small, under invested

* Stats provided by Bart Watson of BA via IRI Group reporting 10/2014 YTD



Santa Cruz CA

Barrel Lifecycle - Who

Plan to align with Operational Realities

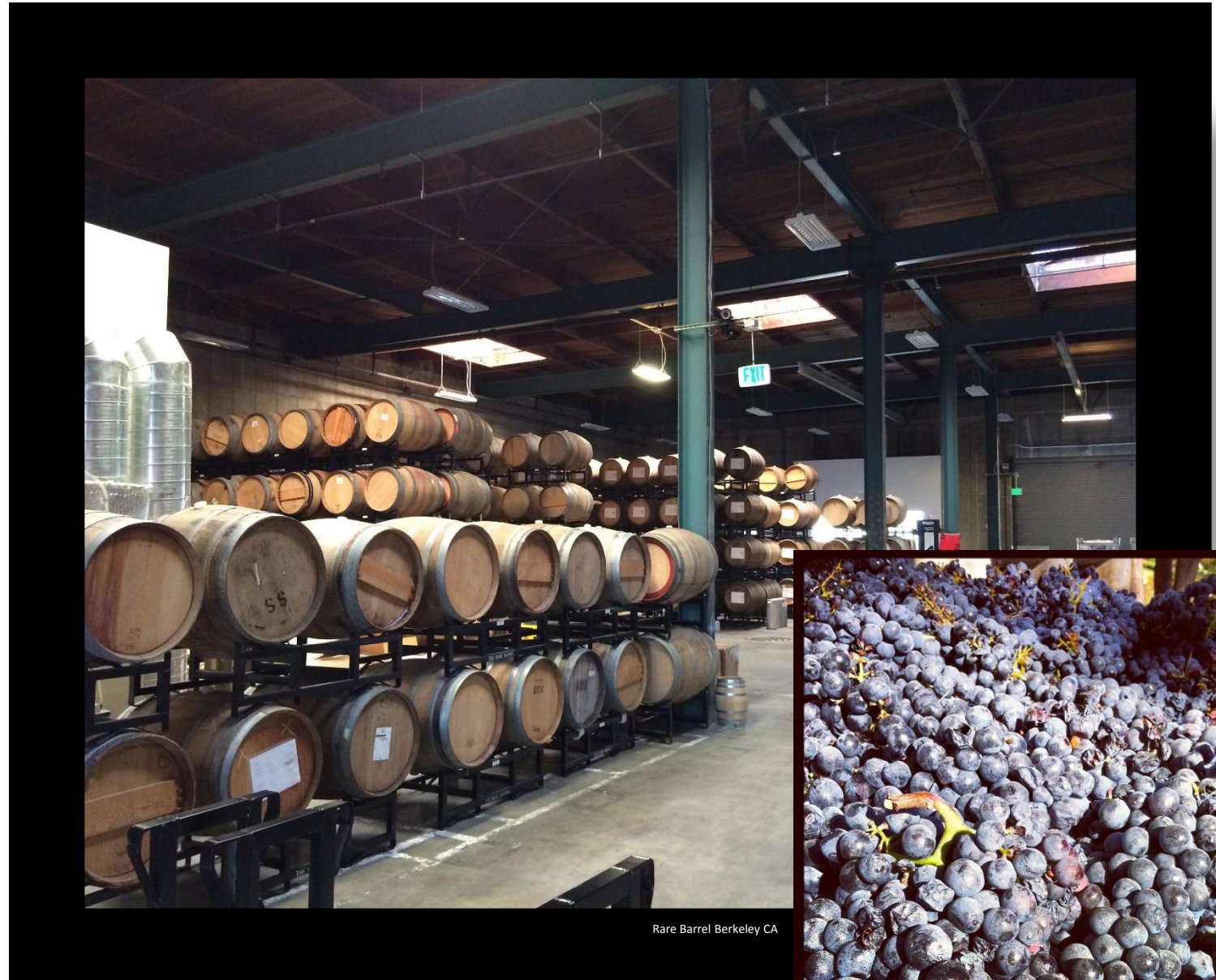
Barrel Lifecycle driven economic + taste:

- Very elite Wineries:
 - barrels 1-3 years (ie, Opus One 1X)
 - High barrel character
- Very Small Wineries:
 - Use Barrels as long as possible (expense)
 - Neutral Barrel, Fresh Barrels maybe wine intense
- Very Large Breweries (ie Gallo)
 - cycle their barrels from elite to economy brands
 - Neutral storage or colony barrels
- Medium Boutique Wineries
 - Best Opportunity for character pull

Excess Barrels just that

- Pick up, reliable scheduling
- Competing with brokers, distillers, Landscaping

MBAA-Paso Robles 2014 California



Planning for Wine Barrel Beer Aging

Talk to the Vintner - When

Leave Vintners alone during harvest/crush ☺

Otherwise be friendly, bring some beer, ask at the tasting room....

Pro Tips:

- June: Barrel Ordering
 - Good time to ask for retiring/neutral barrels
- Aug-Oct: Crush
 - Good time to drop off beer without taking any time
- Nov: Excess barrels, lees
 - In a non-Bumper year, good time to get higher quality barrels
- Nov-Jan: Sampling & Blending Planning
 - Catch Barrel Flaws

<http://www.winebusiness.com/classifieds/usedbarrels>

+ Wine Fermenting Shops



Rare Barrel Berkeley CA



Rustic Ales CA

Listen to the Barrel

Barrel Markings

VA Volatile Acidity, Acedic Acid, Vinegar Taint

ML Malolactic

B Brettanomyces

P Pediococcus

Cork Taint – N/A (post barrel issue)



Santa Cruz CA



Washington DC

Recipe Design

Don't let your eyes fool you....

It's not about light beers for light wine barrels and dark beers for dark wine barrels....

Think about **blending** & **balancing**:

- Acidity
- Tannins
- Barrel Specifics (char, grain, neutrality)



Sacramento CA

Recipe Design

Don't let your eyes fool you....

Think about blending & balancing:

Example: Starting from Wine barrel

- Chardonnay w/lees:
 - Full bodied, creamy texture
 - possible buttery/Malolactic
 - expedited oxidation
- Suggestions:
 - Full Saison,
 - Oatmeal "milk" Stout



Mother Pucker Granite Bay CA

Recipe Design

Don't let your eyes fool you....

Think about blending & balancing:

Example: Starting from Beer

- **Weak Blond:**
 - Blue Frog, Fairfield CA, Nick Campbell
 - Blond finished under 7%, no extra cultures
 - Red wine barrel, 8 months
 - Wine tannins & acidity highlighted:
 - Unique tartness distinctly wine derived
 - not sour (not like Berliner/ brett/ lacto)



Roseville CA

Talk to your Business

Involve & Educate your Business Team

- Take the Vision to Market
- Value the story
- Integrate from barrel to recipe to name to label design
 - Get the right customer interested
 - End to end focus on effective communication
 - Value Capture
- Tasting Room to Bottle



Plymouth CA

Talk to your Business

Product Positioning

- **Conscious Cobranding**
 - (Collaboration, regional highlight)
- **Evocative Branding**
 - (Shared names, names that highlight a unique element)
- **Independent Product Positioning**
 - (distinctive descriptors, i.e. using an unusual varietal like Malbec)



Talk to the Customer

Consumer Education

- Clear expectations make happy customers

Aging Guidelines

- Whiskey and sour barrel aged beers often age well
- Wines often age well
- Wine barrel aged beers are often well oxidized and may not be intended for cellaring

TELL YOUR CUSTOMERS WHAT TO EXPECT

SHOW YOUR CUSTOMERS HOW IT FEELS



Roseville CA

Seize the Terroir

Location Location Location

California Competitive Advantage

- region and appellation
- Leverage the strength of the regional industry



Gold Hill CA

Gold Hill CA

Seize the Territory

- Drive the supply chain opportunity
 - You live here
 - Taste it, feel it, brew it
- Expect Wine Industry Transitions:
 - Good wood is expensive
 - Lock suppliers, expect staves, teabags, spirals, chips)
- Question → Are Used Staves a Future Opportunity for Bright Tank wine and wood treatments????



Conclusion

California Brewers

have a unique

Competitive Advantage

..... use it



Tree Brewing Kelowna BC

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