

## TITLE PAGE

The Tipping Point: Why 2025 Is the Year Even Holdout Wineries Are Reconsidering Wine Clubs

*The Data-Backed Case for Turning Customers Into Committed, Recurring Revenue*

### INTRODUCTION: The Club Hesitation

If your winery has made it this far without a wine club, you're not alone. Many producers, especially small and boutique operations, have opted out. They've relied on tasting rooms, events, and one-time online orders to fuel growth. And for years, that worked.

But 2025 has brought a shift too big to ignore.

Consumer buying habits have changed. Tasting room traffic is less predictable. Costs are rising across the board, from shipping and compliance to staffing. While the rest of the industry evolves, one trend stands out. Wineries that offer wine clubs are seeing more stable revenue, deeper customer loyalty, and stronger performance year-round.

Wine clubs are no longer just perks. They are strategy. And the data proves it.

In this whitepaper, we'll break down:

- Why wine clubs now account for 39% of total DTC revenue, rivaling tasting room sales
- What changed in the past three years to make clubs the most reliable DTC channel
- The common myths that hold wineries back, and the realities that debunk them
- Real revenue models showing how even 50 members can reshape your bottom line
- Modern club structures that don't require more wine, more staff, or more complexity

You don't need to be big. You don't need to reinvent your brand. You just need a plan.

Let's explore why this is the year to take a second look.

**Download the Guide**

## **WHAT CHANGED: WHY 2025 IS THE TIPPING POINT**

If you've been in this industry long enough, you've seen the tides shift. The old playbook, host events, pour great wine, send a follow-up email, still works. But it doesn't go as far as it used to.

2025 has made that more obvious than ever.

Tasting room traffic isn't as predictable. Costs keep creeping upward. And the digital customer, the one who buys from their phone at 9 p.m., expects more than a nice wine. They expect a relationship. They expect ease. And they expect consistency.

Wine clubs are no longer just a sales channel. They have become the way wineries build loyal buyers, stabilize revenue, and stay top of mind when customers leave the tasting room.

Here's what has changed, and why even holdout wineries are taking a second look.

### **1. Wine Clubs Have Become the DTC Lifeline**

At the end of 2023, wine clubs accounted for 39% of total DTC revenue, equal to tasting room sales. That is a major shift. Just a few years ago, tasting rooms were still the clear frontrunner. Now, clubs are keeping pace and, in many cases, outpacing them.

For wineries that rely on foot traffic, that stat alone should give pause.

### **2. Your Customers Crave Consistency**

Whether it is a favorite Chardonnay or the holiday magnum they always send to their in-laws, today's buyers want a way to stay connected without having to remember. They are used to monthly subscriptions and curated deliveries. If your winery does not offer that kind of experience, someone else will.

### **3. You Can't Build a Business on Busy Saturdays Alone**

We have all felt it, that slow season and the tasting room is quiet. Wine clubs create a buffer. They smooth out the dips. They help you plan with confidence instead of scrambling to hit numbers. And they take the pressure off every single weekend needing to be a home run.

### **4. The Longer You Wait, the More You Miss**

If you have repeat buyers, you already have the foundation for a club. Every month without one is revenue left on the table and customers who might not come back until next season. Your peers are building stable income and brand loyalty. You deserve to see what that could look like for your business too.

## **5. Modern Clubs Don't Look Like They Used To**

Today's clubs are flexible. Some ship quarterly. Some ship monthly. Some let members pick every bottle. Some are built around pick-up parties and exclusive perks. You do not have to fit a mold. You can build a club that supports the brand you have worked hard to create.

This is not about doing what everyone else is doing.

It is about building something that helps your winery grow on your terms, with the customers who already loves what you do.

## **MYTHS VS. MODERN REALITY**

If you've ever said, "We're too small for a club," or "Our customers don't want that," you're not alone. These are the kinds of concerns we hear from wineries every week. The hesitation is valid, but often rooted in outdated assumptions.

Here are the most common myths we hear, and the modern reality behind each one.

### **MYTH 1: We Don't Have Enough Wine to Support a Club**

**REALITY:** Most clubs today are built around 3 to 6 bottle shipments, just a few times a year. Some wineries run highly successful programs with fewer than 100 members and fewer than 1,000 total club bottles per year. You do not need a massive inventory. You need a clear offering, a defined cadence, and wines people are already asking for.

### **MYTH 2: Our Customers Don't Want to Be Locked Into Anything**

**REALITY:** Today's wine buyers are already comfortable with subscriptions. In fact, the average U.S. consumer now holds **six active subscriptions**, ranging from streaming services to pet food and personal care. Wine is a natural fit for that model. Most modern clubs offer customizable shipments, skip-a-shipment options, and different levels of commitment. When done right, a club does not feel restrictive. It feels like a benefit. A well-run club gives your best customers a simple way to stay connected, and a reason to keep coming back.

### **MYTH 3: We Don't Have the Staff to Manage a Club**

**REALITY:** If your team can pour wine and check email, you are already halfway there. With the right tools, clubs can be automated and manageable, even with a small staff. From emails and renewals to packing lists and payment processing, today's systems are designed to reduce manual work and eliminate confusion.

### **MYTH 4: We're Not Big Enough for That Kind of Program**

**REALITY:** Wine clubs are not just for Napa giants or wineries with thousands of visitors. In fact, they are often more impactful for small producers. A well-run club can generate six figures in recurring revenue from just a few hundred members. That kind of predictability is powerful, especially for owner-operated or boutique brands.

### **MYTH 5: It's Too Late to Start One Now**

**REALITY:** The best time to launch a club was when your first customer came back and asked to buy again. The second-best time is now. Starting small allows you to test what works for your audience without overcommitting. You do not have to launch a perfect

program overnight. You just need to start building something your customers can grow into.

The truth is, wine clubs today are more flexible, manageable, and profitable than most wineries realize.

With the right structure, you are not adding more work. You are building a better business foundation, one member at a time.

## **THE WINE CLUB REVENUE MODEL**

You do not need thousands of members to see the financial impact of a club. Even a small, well run program can create meaningful, recurring revenue. In today's climate, that kind of stability matters more than ever.

The math is simple. And powerful.

### **What 100 Members Could Mean for Your Winery**

Let's say your average club member receives four shipments a year at \$150 per shipment.

100 members

\$150 per shipment

4 shipments per year

= \$60,000 in recurring revenue

That is \$60,000 a year from people who already love your wine. And that is before considering reorders, event attendance, referrals, or gift memberships. This is just the base value of membership.

Now increase that to 250 members, and you are looking at \$150,000 in predictable income.

### **What Would You Do With Predictable Revenue?**

Think about it.

If you had \$60,000 or more in recurring revenue each year, what would you reinvest in?

- Hire another part-time tasting room associate
- Upgrade your production equipment
- Launch that reserve tier you have been dreaming about
- Finally redesign your website
- Sleep better during slow season

Recurring revenue gives you room to breathe. It gives you the freedom to plan. And it allows you to build a business with less guesswork and more momentum.

## Why Recurring Revenue Matters

Improves cash flow stability: Helps you plan and operate without relying on unpredictable tasting room sales

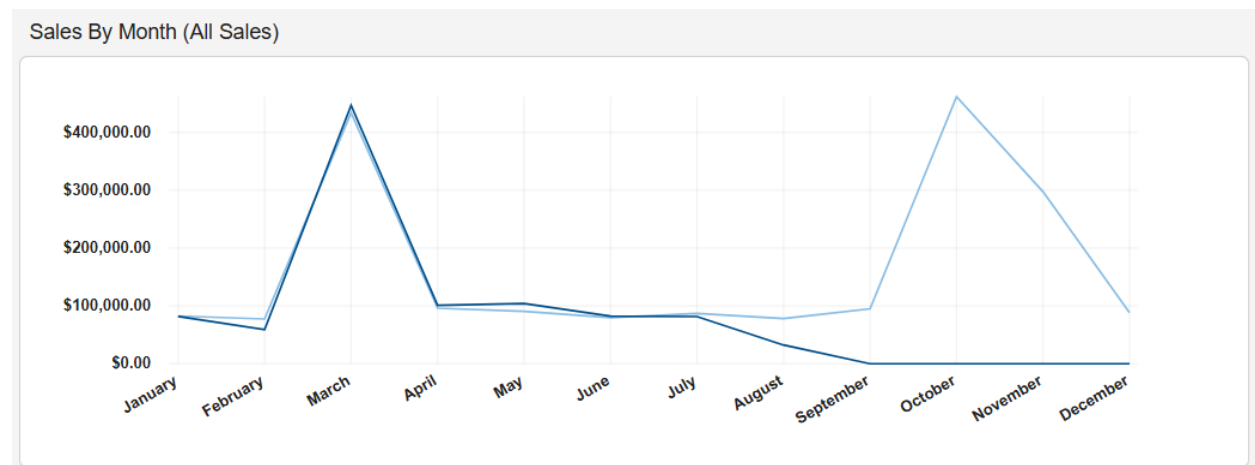
Increases customer lifetime value: Club members tend to reorder more often, buy across more categories, and stay connected longer

Lowers acquisition pressure: Retaining a member costs less than constantly chasing new customers

Builds over time: The longer members stay, the more value your club creates

## Real-World Results

Top-performing wineries generate between 40 and 60 percent of their DTC revenue through wine clubs. For many small producers, clubs outperform tasting rooms in total sales, especially during slower seasons.



You do not need to scale overnight. But you do need a starting point.

## MODERN CLUB MODELS THAT ACTUALLY WORK

You know your wine. You know your buyers. So why settle for a one-size-fits-all club?

The most successful wineries are not running someone else's playbook. They are building club models that reflect their goals, their resources, and their customers. The key is choosing a structure that fits how you operate, whether you want full control, ultimate flexibility, or something in between.

This is your opportunity to create a club that works for your business. One that feels right for your wine, your team, and the way your customers already buy.

Let's explore the models wineries are using today, and the one you might already be halfway to building.

### The Originals: Still Going Strong

#### *Standard Club (Winemaker Select)*

The foundation. You select the wines, set the schedule, and ship on your terms. This is a great model for moving inventory efficiently while delivering a curated experience.

Best for wineries that want control and consistency. Works especially well when new releases or seasonal sets drive sales.

#### *Customer Choice Club (Custom Club)*

The evolution of the standard club. Let members choose from a curated list of wines before each shipment. You stay in control of what's offered. They choose what they receive.

#### Selected Default Products

Product Name	Min Qty	Max Qty	Default Qty	
2015 "Very Fine" Petit Verdot *	3	12	3	Default
2020 Duvarita Syrah	1	6	3	Default
2022 Duvarita Syrah	1	12	0	Optional
2022 La Rinconada Pinot Noir	1	12	0	Optional
2023 Carbonic Pinot Noir	1	12	0	Optional
2023 Carbonic Gamay Noir	1	12	0	Optional
2022 Kimsey Syrah	1	12	0	Optional
2021 Cabernet Franc	1	12	0	Optional
2021 Rutherford Cabernet Sauvignon	1	12	0	Optional

Default Products

Optional Products

Products for Customer Preferences

Basket Minimum and Maximums

Q

Search Term

Search

	Min Qty*	Max Qty	Default Qty	Required	Product	Price
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	12	3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2015 "Very Fine" Petit Verdot SKU: 88883333-0171	\$38
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	6	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	2020 Duvarita Syrah SKU: 88883333-0459	\$56

Best for wineries with engaged customers who like having a say in what they drink. Helps reduce cancellations, complaints, and swaps.



## **The Exclusive and Intentional**

### *Allocation Club*

Set a window. Offer your most sought-after wines. Let members build their shipment within your parameters. Great for scarcity, prestige, and building buzz.

Best for high-demand wineries with limited production or a collector-driven audience.

## **The Hands-Off Revenue Builders**

### *Case Club*

The simplest model to manage. When a customer buys a case in the tasting room, they're automatically enrolled. There are no scheduled releases, just a year of wine discounts and a simple renewal when they buy another case over the course of the year. OrderPort tracks purchases, triggers renewal when a new case is reached, and alerts both you and the customer before their membership expires. No formal signup or card on file required, just a name and email at checkout.

## Receipt

Would you like a receipt?

Email

Text

Print

Air Print

No Receipt



Join case club

Best for loyal fans who buy in volume and want convenience. Also great for locals who want to stock up once or twice a year.

### *Tiered Case Club*

The case club but tiered for more benefits for more purchases.

Best for wineries with strong tasting room traffic or large average order values. Also ideal for building loyalty and brand ambassadorship.

### **The Recurring Business Generator**

### *Subscription Club*

Give members full control over what they buy and when. Customers are charged a fixed amount monthly, stored in their account for use online or in the tasting room.

Featured by Forbes as a wine club model reinvented for Millennial and Gen Z buyers, it's built for flexibility and freedom.

### Add Subscription Options

Renewal Frequency:	<div>Monthly ▾</div> <div>Monthly Quarterly Semiannually Yearly Anniversary</div>		
Select Bill Day	<div>5 ▾</div>		
Renewal Amount:	<div>55</div>	Don't Charge at Signup: <input type="checkbox"/>	Place Members OnHold if payment fails: <input type="checkbox"/>

Best for wineries looking for reliable recurring revenue with minimal administrative work and complete customer flexibility.

### **So.... What's Your Club?**

You do not need to copy what the winery down the road is doing.

You need to build a club that matches your wines, your people, and your way of doing business.

Start imagining:

- Do you have seasonal releases that could anchor a Winemaker Select model?
- Are your best customers already asking to pick their own wines?
- Do you sell out fast and want to create exclusivity around that?
- Would a low-lift case club let you reward loyal locals?
- Could a subscription model bring in younger buyers who value flexibility?

There is no right answer. Only the right fit.

This is your moment to design a wine club that feels like a natural extension of your brand and one your customers will be excited to join.

**Interested in a step by step guide to launch your club download here:**

## **THE CLUB IS NOT A TREND. IT'S A STRATEGY.**

Wine clubs are not just another marketing idea. They are the single most dependable way to turn casual buyers into committed customers. In 2025, they have become the backbone of successful DTC operations, especially for wineries that want more control over their future.

This is not about chasing every new tool or trend. This is about building the kind of business that can grow without guesswork.

If you have loyal customers, you already have the foundation for a club.

If you're tired of unpredictable traffic and seasonal dips, recurring revenue can give you room to breathe.

If you want to spend more time connecting with your customers and less time worrying about how to reach them, a well-built club will do the work for you.

You do not need to be big. You do not need to have it all figured out.

You just need to start.

### **Your next step?**

Let us show you what a wine club could look like for your winery.

We'll walk you through real numbers, modern models, and how wineries like yours are building lasting revenue through clubs that reflect their brand.

**[Request a consultation with a regional specialist]**

**[Download the club revenue calculator]**

**[Explore OrderPort wine club tools]**