

WINES & VINES

Feature Article from the May 2009 Magazine Issue

Innovations in Packaging

Is wine catching up to other beverages?

by Jim Gordon



- Technicote and Labeltronix developed ways for wine labels to resist slippage, even when bottles are chilled or submerged in ice buckets.

Recession, global warming and a new consumer willingness to experiment seem to be conspiring to make wine packages more varied, less expensive, lighter weight and higher tech than ever before. In this regard, wine packaging lags behind packaging for other beverage and food industries. Plastic twist-caps, synthetic labels and drink pouches, for instance, already are familiar to consumers of mineral water, soda and apple juice, but now they're coming to a winery near you. These and a sampling of other packaging innovations are introduced here in snapshot format.

WATERPROOF LABELS

Technicote: New adhesive lets labels stick in ice and water

Beginning in late 2006, Technicote of Miamisburg, Ohio, and other suppliers of pressure-sensitive labels began getting complaints from customers that their labels were loosening or slipping off bottles submerged in ice buckets and chilled bottles that were wet with condensation. This was a new and puzzling phenomenon for pressure-sensitive

labels, though an old one for traditional paper-and-glue labels.

The wineries having trouble finally acknowledged that they had switched glass suppliers to save money, said Anthony Trimble, marketing product manager for Technicote (technicote.com, (800) 358-4448), whose research people then determined that the actual cause of the slippage was a change in the release agents used in bottle manufacturing. Release agents help the newly formed bottles come free from the molds, and they were being applied sporadically or not at all on some of the glass that the wineries had begun sourcing from countries like Mexico and China.



These Quady Winery bottles carry Technicote's IP400 adhesive labels, which are designed to be waterproof and extreme-weather resistant.

Technicote's solution was to develop a new adhesive, IP400, which resisted slippage from water, to offer as an alternative to its standard adhesive at a 5% increase in cost. The permanent acrylic adhesive is rated for temperatures of minus-65°F to 200°F and has a 3.2 pound-per-inch strength on glass for a 180°peel.

Labeltronix: Introduces a synthetic, waterproof label

Labeltronix took a different tack to address the ice bucket problem for wine labels. The Orange, Calif.-based supplier of labels, labeling systems and supplies adopted a synthetic label material and proprietary printing processes to produce high-quality wine labels that don't deteriorate or slip off in water.

"Paper-based labels covered in varnish tend to vanish," said company co-founder Eric Shepard in a news release. The trademarked Ice Bucket Label mimics the look of and costs the same as a paper label, but it is made with 2- to 3-mil polypropylene base material. A special adhesive and varnish help give the label material an advantage. The polypropylene is reverse-printed flexographically (**see page 46 for more details**) and can take foil-stamp decoration.

Winemaker Jon McPherson of South Coast Winery in California chose the Ice Bucket Label for his sparkling wines (which are often immersed in ice buckets). "The labels have great tack, and they don't bubble like other plastic labels," he told Labeltronix (labeltronix.com, (800) 429-4321). He found that the labels run at the same rates as before on his labelers, about 45 per minute. His testimonial can be viewed at a special website for this product: icebucketlabel.com.

WINES & VINES

415.453.9700 | Fax: 415.453.2517

info@winesandvines.com