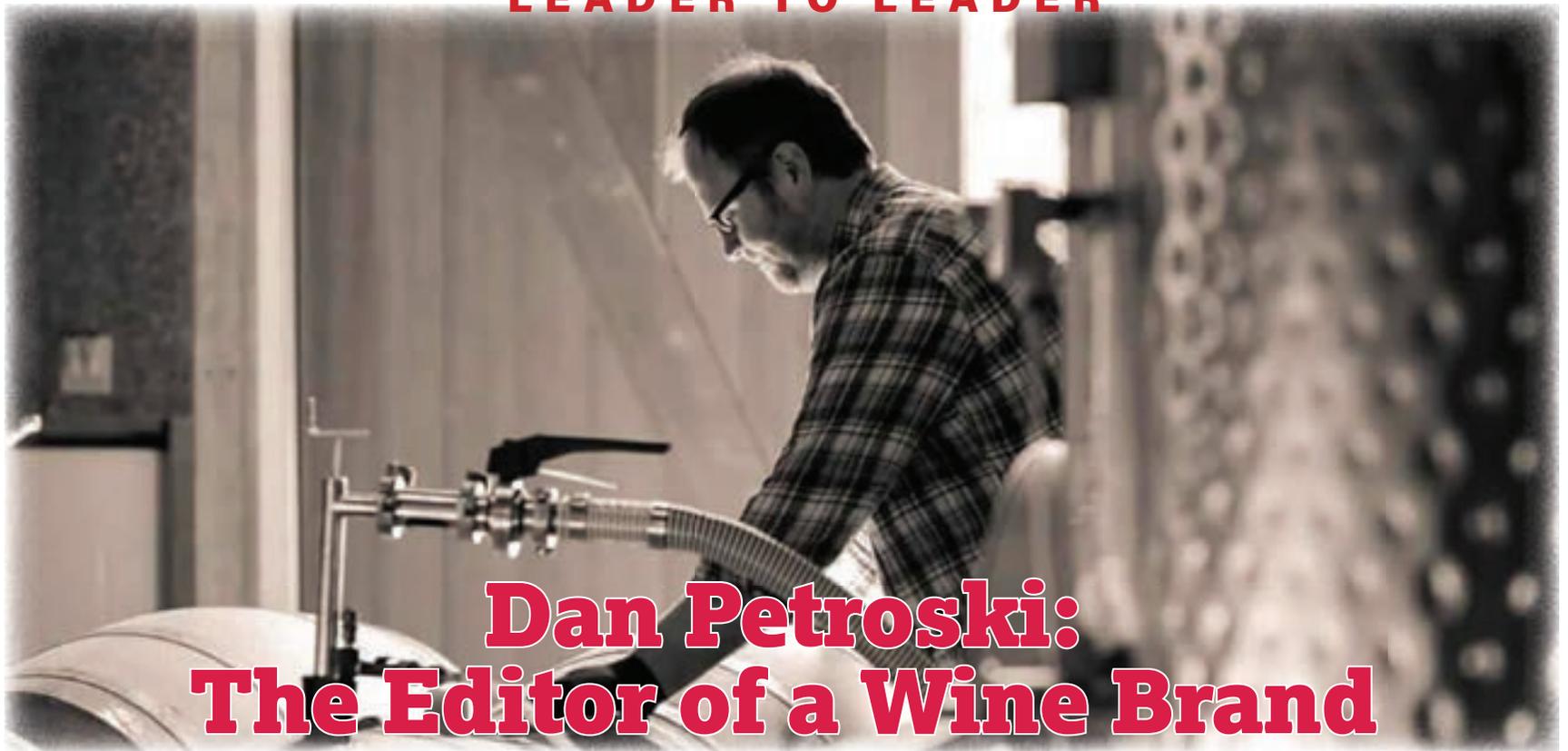


LEADER TO LEADER



Regine T. Rousseau



Meet the Author: Regine T. Rousseau is the founder and CEO of Shall We Wine, a strategic marketing company. Rousseau is a wine and spirits entrepreneur, writer, presenter and media personality, focusing on making wine knowledge accessible to people at all levels of proficiency. She is recognized as a 2022 "Leader in the Wine Industry" by *WineBusiness Monthly*, a nominee for the 2020 *Wine Enthusiast* "Wine Star Awards," "Wine Educator of the Year," a WSET Level 3 with Merit, an International Sommelier Guild Level II and an Executive Bourbon Steward, Stave and Thief. She has authored and/or been featured in articles in *The Drop*, *New Yorker*, *Wine Enthusiast*, *Black Enterprise*, *Black Food and Beverage*, *Wine Spectator*, *Forbes* and *Chicago Tribune*.

IN A RECENT INTERVIEW, wine industry visionary and 2022 WineBusiness Monthly Leader Dan Petroski discussed his remarkable journey and the recent sale of his winery, Massican, to E. & J. Gallo. The conversation, moderated by Regine T. Rousseau, provided insights into Dan's unique approach to building a wine brand, his embrace of technology, and the significance of the sale for both himself and the wine industry.

Dan Petroski's introduction as a winemaker often leaves him feeling confused. "I never really call myself a winemaker. And I'm not sure if it's really the profession that pays the bills." He identifies as an editor for a brand. This distinction is essential because Dan views his role as a storyteller, shaping narratives around his wines and creating a unique style. His journey into the wine world was fueled by a passion for the stories, places and people connected to the industry, making storytelling a central theme in his business strategy.

Breaking the Mold: A Different Path in Winemaking

One of the standout qualities that set Dan Petroski apart is his willingness to break from tradition and pursue unconventional paths; he utilized this curiosity to move Massican Wines forward. In an industry often characterized

by adherence to established practices, Dan's approach has been anything but ordinary. Rather than conforming to the norms of brand building, he embarked on a journey of innovation, challenging the status quo.

His inclination to venture off the beaten path was evident even in the early stages of his career when he founded Massican Winery in 2009. Specializing in white Italian varietals in Napa was a pioneering move. Dan's willingness to experiment, to see wine as more than a product, has been a driving force behind his success.

The Historic Sale of Massican: A Win-Win for Dan and Gallo

One of the most significant recent developments in Dan's journey was the sale of Massican to E. & J. Gallo Winery, a family-owned wine giant with a rich history of supporting and partnering with family brands. The sale marked a pivotal moment in Dan's career, offering him the resources and stability to continue his vision.

What stands out in this sale is the partnership approach that Gallo adopted. "When Joe Gallo said to me, 'How can I help you?' he meant it. It wasn't like, 'We're going to gobble you up and spit you out into this.'" Rather than merely acting as an investor, Gallo's role was a partner versus an investor, seeking ways to align their goals and visions. This collaborative approach resonated with Dan, who had been seeking a suitable partner to ensure the future of Massican.

Dan was particularly drawn to Gallo's commitment to providing creative control and winemaking autonomy. The partnership promises not only financial stability but also a network expansion that will unfold organically over several years. It's a far cry from the typical corporate takeover, and Dan's enthusiasm for this journey is evident.



Embracing Technology in the Wine Industry

In an industry steeped in tradition and often hesitant to embrace technology, Dan Petroski has been a pioneer. He understands the importance of using technology to connect with a wider audience and create a more seamless customer experience. Dan discusses ways of adopting and evolving.

He emphasizes the need for wineries to leverage e-commerce platforms, engage in email marketing and embrace social media to reach new audiences effectively. Dan's philosophy is rooted in meeting customers where they are, whether it's through a wine app, email communication or social media engagement. By actively targeting and communicating with customers through diverse channels, wineries can create meaningful connections and remain relevant.

Lesson From a Leader: Dan Petroski's Unique Approach To Winemaking and Innovation

Dan Petroski's journey in the wine industry is a testament to his unique approach to wine marketing. His willingness to challenge the norms, tell compelling stories and embrace technology has set him apart as a leader in the industry.

The historic sale of Massican to E. & J. Gallo Winery represents a significant milestone in Dan's career, providing him with the resources and support to continue his visionary winemaking journey. The partnership with Gallo exemplifies the power of collaboration and a shared commitment to excellence.

Dan's story serves as an inspiration for entrepreneurs and leaders in the wine industry, reminding them that breaking away from tradition and embracing innovation can lead to remarkable success. His philosophy of meeting customers where they are, through technology, is a valuable lesson for the entire wine industry as it navigates the evolving landscape of wine consumption.

As Dan Petroski continues to shape the future of winemaking, his dedication to storytelling, innovation and partnership will undoubtedly leave an indelible mark on the wine world. **WBM**

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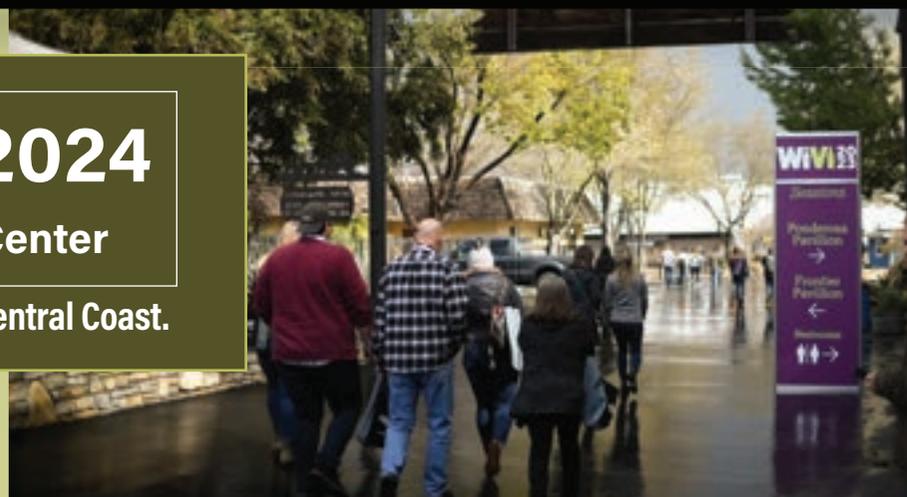
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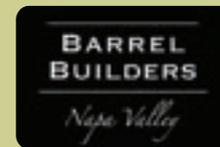


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