

STRATEGIC GUIDE — 2026

The Wine & Club *Playbook*

How private clubs and premium wineries can drive membership growth together.

ZACK BATES · PRIVATE CLUB MARKETING

THE OPPORTUNITY

Two Industries, One Member

Wine club members and private club members are statistically the same person — affluent, experience-driven, loyal when engaged. Yet the two industries rarely collaborate. That gap is worth billions.

\$3.9B

US DTC WINE SALES

1,700

AVG. MEMBERS PER CLUB

\$57

AVG. BOTTLE PRICE (DTC)

76%

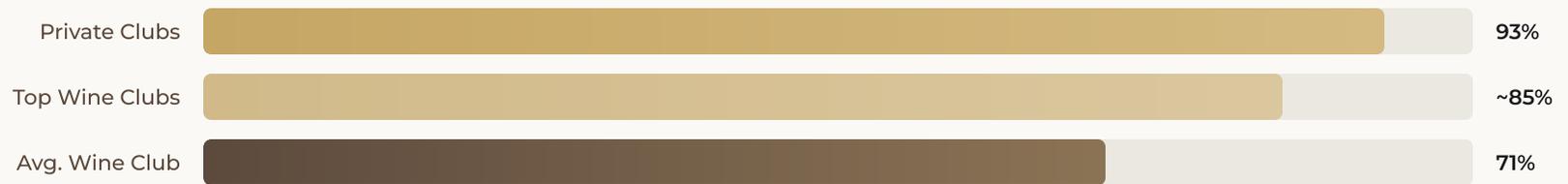
BELONG TO 2+ CLUBS

Sources: SVB 2026 State of the Wine Industry; Sovos ShipCompliant 2026 DTC Report; Wine Market Council 2024

THE CHALLENGE

The Retention Gap

Private clubs retain members at nearly 3x the rate of wine clubs. The wineries closing that gap are borrowing directly from the private club playbook.



Key insight: Average wine club tenure has dropped from 36 months to 30 months. 48% of departing members cite “better deals elsewhere.” 40% of wineries don’t track churn at all.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC

The Same Member, Different Doors

The overlap between wine club and private club demographics is near-total — making cross-channel partnerships uniquely efficient.

Wine Club Members

- 01** Mean age: 59. 75%+ are over 50.

- 02** ~50% earn \$200K+. ~33% earn \$400K+.

- 03** 76% belong to 2+ clubs. 18% belong to 5+.

- 04** 90% drink wine weekly. High engagement cohort.

Private Club Members

- 01** Median age: 56. Trending younger post-COVID.

- 02** Median HHI: \$250K+. Initiation: \$56K median.

- 03** 46% of clubs have waitlists. Avg. 70 prospects.

- 04** 92-94% annual retention. 3-4% attrition post-boom.

THE DATA

What Drives Retention

The SVB 2025 DTC Report quantified the strategies that separate high-retention wine clubs from the rest. Every lever maps directly to private club capabilities.

+18%

PREFERENCE-BASED
OPTIONS

-34%

1ST-YEAR CHURN W/
CUSTOMIZATION

+22%

3+ NON-PRODUCT
BENEFITS

+16%

3+ SEGMENTATION
STRATEGIES

The takeaway: Personalization, experiences, and segmented communication — the same tools private clubs use to retain members — are the proven drivers of wine club retention. Clubs already have this infrastructure.

Partnership Models That Work

For Private Clubs

- 01 Winemaker Dinner Series** — Quarterly events featuring a partner winery. Members meet the winemaker, taste library wines, and access allocation-only bottles.

- 02 Club Wine Program** — Curated wine selections for the club's F&B program, co-branded with the partner winery. Member exclusives at the bar and restaurant.

- 03 Harvest Experience Trips** — Annual member trip to partner vineyards. Behind-the-scenes access, barrel tastings, private dinners in the vineyard.

- 04 Allocation Access** — Secure member-only access to waitlisted wines. Creates a membership benefit competitors can't match.

For Wineries

- 01 Club Channel Distribution** — Place wines on private club wine lists and in member retail programs. Pre-qualified affluent audience.

- 02 Event-Based Acquisition** — Host tastings at partner clubs. Convert attendees to wine club memberships through exclusive sign-up offers.

- 03 Co-Branded Membership Tier** — Create a joint membership that includes club access + wine allocation. Shared acquisition cost, shared retention benefit.

- 04 Concierge Referral Program** — Equip club concierge teams with winery materials and referral incentives for tasting room visits.

THE MATH

Revenue Impact Model

Conservative estimates for a 300-member private club partnering with a premium winery:

Annual Partnership Revenue

- 01 Winemaker Dinners (4/yr) — 40 covers @ \$275pp = \$44,000
- 02 Wine Program Markup — 200 btls/mo @ \$18 margin = \$43,200
- 03 Harvest Trip Revenue — 20 members @ \$2,500 = \$50,000
- 04 Allocation Commissions — 60 allocations @ \$50 = \$3,000

\$140,200
ANNUAL REVENUE

Membership Growth Impact

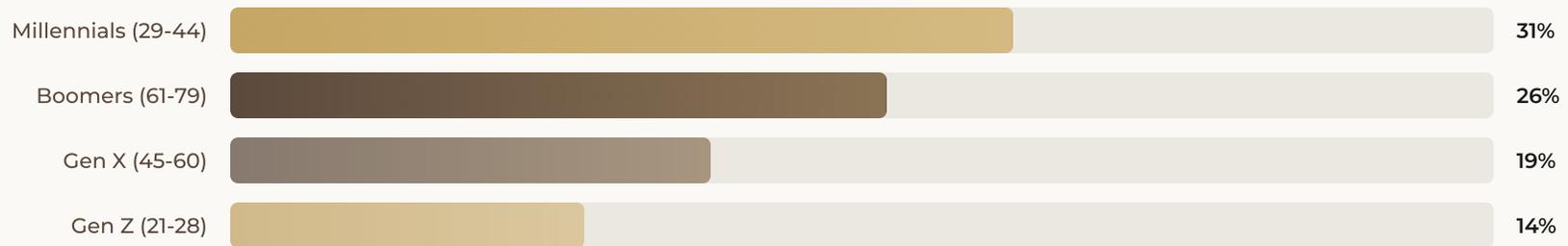
- 01 New wine club signups via events: 40/year at avg. LTV of \$3,500 = \$140,000 lifetime
- 02 Club member retention uplift: 2-3% improvement = 6-9 members retained @ \$8K avg. dues = \$48-72K
- 03 Referral generation: Wine events create 2x the referral rate of golf events at surveyed clubs

Total first-year impact: \$140K direct revenue + \$140K winery LTV + \$48-72K retained dues = \$328-352K in combined value.

THE FUTURE

The Generational Shift

Millennials have overtaken Boomers as the largest wine-drinking cohort. But they engage differently — and the clubs and wineries that adapt will capture the next generation of members.



The Challenge

65% of young wine drinkers say wine “feels complicated.” 71% of Gen Z cite health/wellness concerns. The current wine club model was built for connoisseurs — the next generation wants experience and community.

The Opportunity

Millennials already account for 36% of new private club members. They’re joining for community, not credentials. Wine programming that emphasizes experience over expertise will convert this demographic at both the club and the tasting room.

Implementation Roadmap

Month 1-2: Foundation

- 01 Identify 3-5 target wineries aligned with member demographics and club positioning

- 02 Audit current wine program — F&B spend, member preferences, event calendar gaps

- 03 Develop partnership proposal with clear value exchange for both parties

Month 3-4: Launch

- 01 Host inaugural winemaker dinner with founding partner winery

- 02 Launch member wine allocation program with dedicated ordering channel

- 03 Begin co-marketing: club features winery in newsletter; winery promotes club to mailing list

Month 5-8: Scale

- 01 Expand to quarterly winemaker dinner series with rotating partners

- 02 Plan harvest season member trip for Year 1

- 03 Integrate wine programming into new-member onboarding experience

Month 9-12: Optimize

- 01 Measure: event attendance, wine sales, member satisfaction, retention delta

- 02 Survey members on wine preferences for Year 2 personalization

- 03 Formalize annual partnership agreements with revenue-share terms

LET'S BUILD THIS TOGETHER

Ready to *start?*

Private Club Marketing works with both private clubs and premium wineries to build partnership programs that drive membership growth, deepen engagement, and create lasting brand loyalty.

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