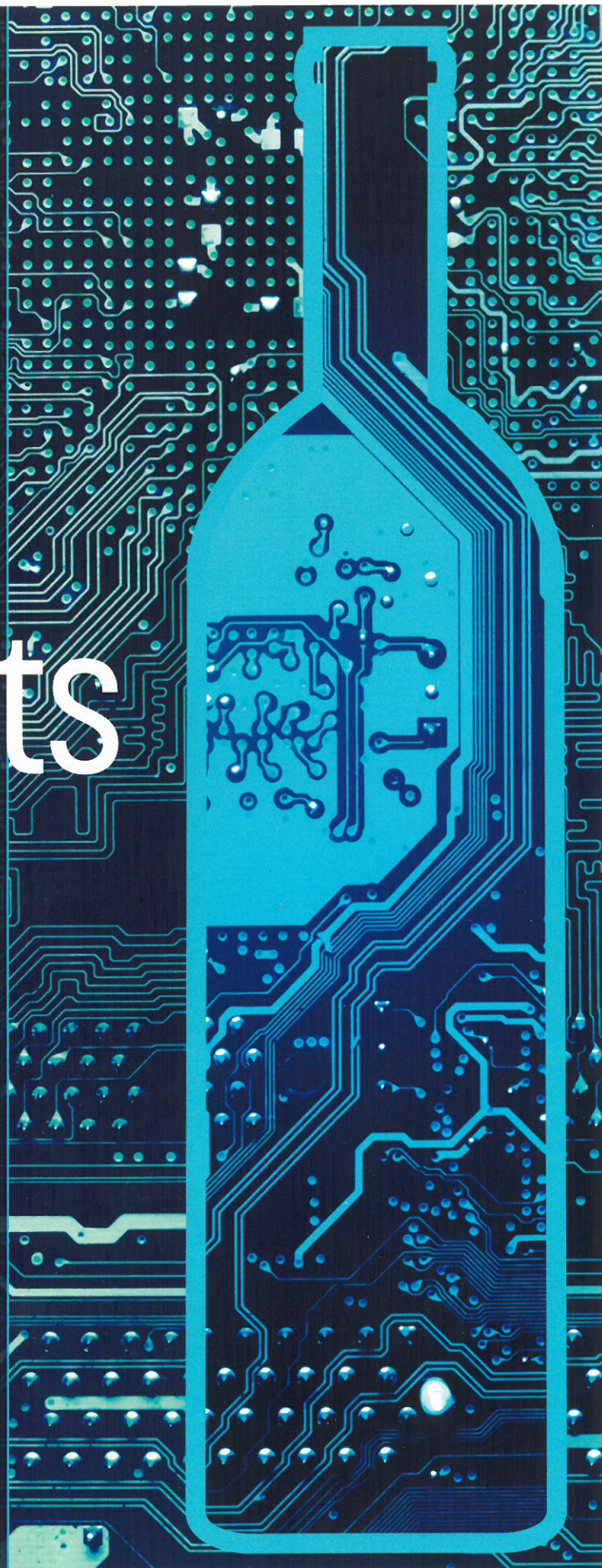


FEATURE  
Smart packaging

# Wine gets clever

With so much attention to detail going into what's inside the bottle, marketing and packaging innovation can sometimes be seen as an afterthought in the wine industry. But as new and more inventive technologies appear on the horizon, companies are now showing that smart packaging can be a vital tool in the ongoing battle of engaging consumers and decoding shopping habits.

**Jo Gilbert** rounds up the leading adopters, looking at how digital tech is being used on shelf to entice, educate and entertain







## AUGMENTED REALITY (AR)

Treasury Wine Estates' (TWE) series of Living Wine labels has certainly become a talking point since its launch in 2016.

Often dismissed as a marketing gimmick, wine nevertheless remains one of the only FMCG products on the market to embrace such tech and TWE's impressive download figures across 90 countries is testament to the power of such technology to make wine stand out, telling its "story" and literally bringing it to life on shelf.

Argentinian winery Finca Decero has similarly brought to life a stunning one-minute animated film on the front of its Owl & the Dust Devil wine label, using AR.

For Peter English, senior brand manager for fine wine at TWE, it's about making an immediate impression. "We're trying to make an impact at the point of purchase, which is where most purchasing decisions are made," he says. "It's changed the way we think about marketing campaigns and we're just scratching the surface of how apps can build a community to connect to the consumer."

TWE reports a peak in downloads on Saturday nights, with Christmas Day 2017 garnering the biggest spike so far and May 12 – the night of the Eurovision Song Contest – coming in second. Proof, says English, that such technology is helping to create moments around wine.

"Those big get-together events where friends and family gather for an occasion are key. It's what wine is all about. Those family members might not be able to talk about wine with any real knowledge, but these AR labels are a way of making wine the centre of consumers' conversations."



## QR CODES

Being "big in Japan" is a well-worn cliché, but this is the case for QR codes, which have fallen out of fashion in technology circles in the West – to the detriment of the Western industries.

"In Japan, people order their weekly shop on the way home by scanning QR codes on the train," says consumer technologies expert Paul Armstrong. "By the time they get home, often the order will be waiting on the doorstep. Free QR code generators are easily downloadable, making it one of the simplest and cheapest pieces of tech out there."

For wine, he imagines a scenario with QR codes on London Underground posters, offering information on different options, for example aromatic rosé, crisp and clear or full bodied.

Or they could be used to sign consumers up to newsletters or specific WhatsApp groups, for example letting them know when a limited shipment is available, thus creating value for distributors and retailers as well as consumers.

"QR codes have become very useful as a utility function and very targetable, while helping to capture lots of data as well. There should be a QR code on every business card in the wine industry," Armstrong says.



## CONNECTED GLASSWARE

Getting the consumer to pick up the bottle is half the battle. But what if packaging could give you feedback about how and when it was drunk? Connected packaging is doing just that.

Pernod Ricard has now rolled out a series of connected

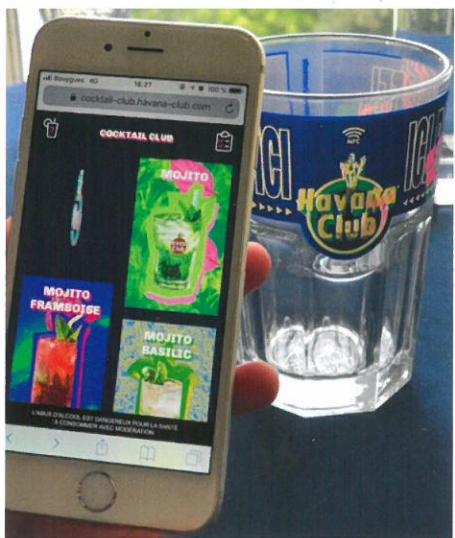
→ **THANKS TO AR TECH, FINCA DECERO'S OWL & THE DUST DEVIL WINE LABEL COMES TO LIFE VIA YOUR SMARTPHONE**



→ **TREASURY WINE ESTATES HAS MADE GOOD USE OF AR TECH THROUGH ITS LIVING WINE LABELS, WHICH INCLUDES THE 19 CRIMES RANGE**



→ **PERNOD RICARD HAS ROLLED OUT A SERIES OF CONNECTED GLASSWARE TO HELP CAPTURE CONSUMER DATA**



"There should be a QR code on every business card in the wine industry"

**Paul Armstrong**





**FEATURE**  
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packaging ranges with the goal of “connecting with consumers across the world, capturing data and creating a new communications channel”.

By embedding near-field communication (NFC) tags into the neck of each bottle, consumers are able to tap the tag with their smartphones and, in the case of Malibu’s connected bottle, play games and collect prizes, thus capturing a variety of different data points.

The latest development in the range has another practical application. The new Havana Club connected glass aims to eliminate barriers to drinks sales in bars and restaurants by digitising the ordering process.

The embedded NFC tag takes consumers to a web app where they can order and pay in three clicks before waiting for their order to arrive at their table.

The group says the technology was developed to cut down the wait time at busy bars, where one in three customers forego a purchase if the wait exceeds 10 minutes. The glass also works at home.

The initiative, which was developed in partnership with tech start-up Black Sheep, is aimed at “creating new habits among consumers to bring cocktails to their homes”, according to Pierre-Yves Calloch, global digital acceleration director at Pernod Ricard.

“In addition to the development possibilities that the connected glass offers, it perfectly meets the group’s digital policy, partnering with start-ups that offer innovative solutions to given problems in order to constantly improve the experience of conviviality,” he says.



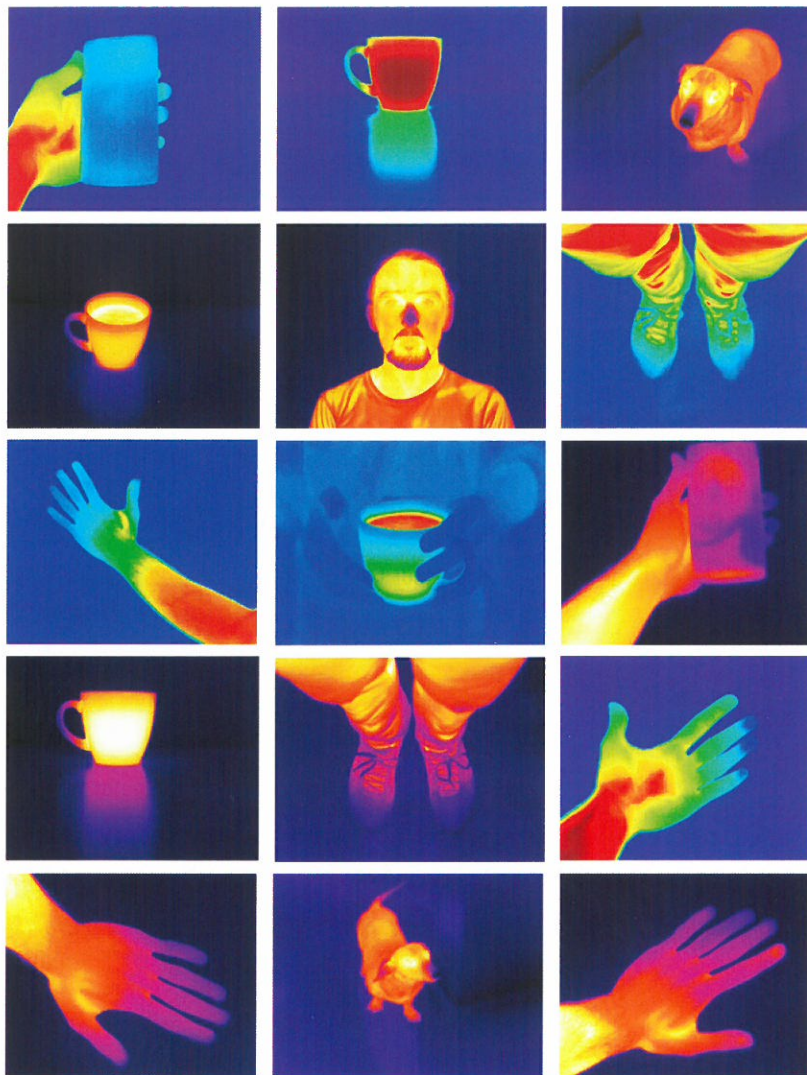
**TEMPERATURE-CONTROLLED LABELS**

Clare Valley producer Taylors Wines broke the mould in 2004, when it became the first major Australian wine company to bottle 100% of its wines under screwcap.

It then followed this up in 2015 with temperature-controlled labels to challenge the perceived wisdom that whites are served from the fridge and reds at room temperature.

These labels, which guide consumers to the “perfect” varietal serving temperature through heat-sensitive stickers, led the brand to claim that consumers were prepared to pay AUD\$4 more per bottle for a wine in the “Goldilocks zone” – not too hot and not too cold, but just right.

Three years later, it’s hard to know how the labels have impacted value sales. But Adrian Atkinson, European market manager for parent company Wakefield Wines, says they have enabled the company to engage with consumers in a different way.



**↑ TAYLORS WINES HAS BEEN USING THERMAL TECH TO CREATE TEMPERATURE-CONTROLLED WINE LABELS**

“The sticker guides consumers to the ideal temperature for each wine, but our intention wasn’t to make consumers too hung up on exact temperatures. People want nuggets of information as social currency. They want a bit of confidence and feelgood factor, which is why we also gave the blanket advice to put reds in the fridge for 15 minutes. It gives us a reason to engage, enabling a wider conversation about wine without getting too deep into the science behind it,” says Atkinson.

So far, a marketing and consumer research campaign has only been rolled out in Australia. One is now scheduled for the UK this summer, although Atkinson believes they will see the same results, given that room temperature is roughly the same in Australia and the UK due to the use of air-conditioning in Oz.

The average is a toasty 23°C – an average of 4°C warmer than it was in the 1970s and roughly 6°C higher than the optimum temperature for Shiraz.

The next step, Atkinson suggests, is integrated infrared technology on smartphones. Currently, heat-sensitivity readings can only be achieved on mobiles via pricey attachments such as the Flir One Pro, although this might change in future. ■

**“People want nuggets of information as social currency”**

**Adrian Atkinson, Wakefield Wines**