**Background**

Clos Du Val – French for “a small vineyard in a small valley” – was founded with the intention of using old-fashioned European techniques to create a new wine with Napa Valley grapes. Instead of maximizing profits, the owners sought to offer an affordable wine that appealed to the traditional daily drinker. As a result, the high quality of the wine has been contradicted by its perception among consumers as an affordable alternative to its competitors. Yet despite the inconsistent brand recognition, Close Du Val has maintained a devoted and faithful contingent of customers over the years.

In addition to a flawed business model, Clos Du Val’s sales have suffered from poor marketing and advertising. The wine’s perception as an “old-fashioned” brand has only been reinforced by the winery itself, which has not had a significant renovation since it was built in the 1970s. Even with these flaws, Clos Du Val has remained a dependable and consistent force in the market and has a unique opportunity to build on that stability moving forward. As a French winery in Napa Valley, it can use its history and elegance to distinguish itself from other competitors. Although modernization is a necessary step to maintain relevance in the industry, Clos Du Val can re-establish itself as a leading brand by placing explicit emphasis on these unique qualities.

To take advantage of this opportunity, we have identified several target audiences with the potential to reinforce and carry our key messages. Our primary audience consists of wine enthusiasts, a public that directly affects sales and has the power to influence brand perception among peers. To reach this public, we have also identified several publications – both traditional and social media – that have the ability to influence public opinion of our products. By crafting key messages specific to each audience, Clos Du Val can establish itself as an elegant and reliable brand of French-made wine in Napa Valley.
**Situation Analysis**

Based on the research Brooke Correll conducted in August, Clos Du Val has gained an understanding of how consumers are viewing its brand. “The focus groups confirmed that those who had experienced Clos Du Val—the wine or the winery itself—loved it.”  Clos Du Val has also been named “Winery of the Year” two years in a row by Wine and Spirits Magazine. Across all focus groups, consumer’s recognized Clos Du Val as “elegant,” “understated,” “safe,” “old-fashioned,” and of “good value.” Clos Du Val is confident in its quality and experience, with research showing that consumers agree. Clos Du Val can seize this opportunity to differentiate itself and establish a niche market where it will thrive.

Clos Du Val will seize this opportunity with a plan to reach out to its core audiences in Napa Valley and beyond. For this plan to be successful, Clos Du Val must be able to stand out amongst the clutter of other wines in the market, but must be careful not to over flood the market as well.
**Core Opportunity**

Clos Du Val, known for its good-tasting traditional French wines, has the opportunity to advance itself as a standout French winery in Napa Valley. While many Napa Valley wineries are placing an emphasis on the future, Clos Du Val brings a unique background that must be emphasized to grow its business in the wine industry.
**Goal**
The goal for this plan is to establish Clos Du Val and its wines as a high-class, niche French winery in Napa Valley.

**Key Audiences**
**Prominent Wine Publications:**

* Primarily monthly magazines, including:
	+ Wine Spectator, Wine Enthusiast, Food & Wine
* Send out weekly e-mail newsletters
	+ Local media, print and broadcast
* Napa Valley print media
	+ Napa Valley Register is the only print newspaper in Napa Valley
		- Has a circulation of about 14,130
	+ Inside Napa Valley focuses on food, entertainment, and culture in Napa Valley
		- Has a circulation of about 18,000
* San Francisco print media
	+ San Francisco Chronicle
		- Published daily
		- Has circulation of 223,549
		- Has dedicated wine editor, Jon Bonne, who publishes a wine column every Friday
* San Francisco radio
	+ KGO AM 810 (ABC)

**Wine Enthusiasts:**

* 30-55 year old, mostly white males in the Napa Valley and San Francisco, Sacramento
* Business leaders or prominent members of their communities
* Income is greater than $75,000 a year

**Wine-Focused Social Media:**

* Demographics:
	+ 30-40 years old
	+ Primarily white
	+ Primarily men
* Bloggers
	+ WineLibraryTV YouTube user
	+ Grape Radio podcast
	+ Vinography
	+ Dr. Vino’s Wine Blog
	+ Dan Berger’s Vintage Experiences

**Key Messages**
**Prominent Wine Publications:**
Primary Messages: Clos Du Val offers traditional French wines made in California that rival the taste and quality of the highest-caliber wines of Napa Valley.
Secondary Messages: Emphasize history and elegance of Clos Du Val wine culture and promote unique qualities of the winery. Support with testimonial from Jon Cleux about the tradition of excellence among Clos Du Val wines.
**Napa Valley Publications:**
Primary Messages: Clos Du Val is a Napa Valley winery that makes excellent traditional French wines.
Secondary Messages: Emphasize history and elegance of Clos Du Val wine culture and promote unique qualities of the winery. Support with testimonial from Jon Cleux about the tradition of excellence among Clos Du Val wines.
**Wine Enthusiasts:**
Primary Messages: Clos Du Val is a high-quality wine made in Napa Valley using traditional French techniques.
Secondary Messages: Discuss the high rating by *Wine Spectator*. Emphasize history and elegance of Clos Du Val wine culture and promote unique qualities of the winery. Support with testimonial from Jon Cleux about the tradition of excellence among Clos Du Val wines.
**Wine-Focused Social Media:**
Primary Messages: Clos Du Val has a long history of using Napa Valley grapes to make a quality wine with traditional European techniques.
Secondary Messages: Emphasize tradition and elegance of harvest season and promote public events at the winery. Support with testimonial from Jon Cleux about the tradition of excellence among Clos Du Val wines.

**Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics**
**Prominent Wine Publications:**
Objective:
To get three product reviews and two feature articles in prominent wine publications over the course of one year.
Strategies/Tactics:
Emphasize rich French tradition at Napa Valley winery.

* Winery started in 1970
* Promote the meaning of the name in promotional materials: “French for ‘small vineyard estate of the valley’”

Give prominent wine journalists a chance to sample Clos Du Val’s wines and provide a firsthand experience of the brand’s culture, taste and history.

* Host a tasting event for the new vintage wine in April for prominent wine journalists, longtime Clos Du Val customers, distributors, and affluent members of the Napa Valley and San Francisco community.
	+ Create personal invitations for prominent wine media journalists
	+ Arrange and cover travel expenses for journalists
	+ Host dinner/tasting event
	+ Provide housing and transportation
* Host a tasting event before harvest and invite prominent wine journalists, longtime Clos Du Val customers, distributors, and affluent members of the Napa Valley and San Francisco community.
	+ Create personal invitations for prominent wine media journalists
	+ Arrange and cover travel expenses for journalists
	+ Host dinner/tasting event
	+ Provide housing and transportation
* Pitch interview opportunities with Jon Cleux, Co-Founder and Vice Chairman
	+ Offer personal testimonies from dedicated customers
* Send samples of red and white wines to prominent wine journalists
	+ Select 1-2 bottles of the winery’s best wine to send in a wine basket
		- Include cheese, chocolates, and other complements to the wine

**Local Napa Valley Media:**
Objective:
To have one print article published every three months, with two television news spots and three radio spots featured over the course of one year.
Strategies/Tactics:
Emphasize how French tradition differentiates Clos Du Val from other wineries in Napa Valley while also enhancing the reputation of the Napa Valley wine industry.

* Describe the French tradition of winemaking
	+ Invite local media to observe the harvest
		- Ex. Walk the vineyard, take the grapes off the vine, stomp the grapes, interview winery owners, taste in the tasting room, etc.
* Gather testimony about the quality of Clos Du Val’s French wines made in California
	+ Interview opportunities with Jon Cleux
	+ Interview opportunities with wine club members and loyal customers
	+ Interview opportunities with distributors

**Wine Enthusiasts:**
Objective:
To attend four trade shows over the course of one year to have Clos Du Val wines placed in 3-5 upscale restaurants.
Strategies/Tactics:
Emphasize how the blending of French and Napa Valley winemaking techniques makes for a delicious wine that belongs in the best high-end restaurants.

* Pick three expos to go to spaced throughout the year
	+ Boston
	+ Santa Barbara/Orange County
	+ Vancouver
	+ At expos, have a booth, network, invite guests to featured events
* Target key messages to each restaurant

**Wine Bloggers:**
Objective:

To have ten blog posts carrying our key messages posted by our targeted wine bloggers over the course of one year.
Strategies/Tactics:
Reach out to new customers by emphasizing Clos Du Val’s long tradition of excellent wines.

* Secure two interviews/features on wine-focused podcasts by pitching interviews with Jon Cleux, Co-Founder and Vice Chairman
* Receive coverage from six prominent wine bloggers by sending a social media news release announcing both the harvest and the new vintage
	+ Invite wine bloggers to tasting/touring events to experience Clos Du Val for themselves and blog about their experience.

**Calendar**
Our calendar starts at harvest and ends at the next year’s harvest.
**September-October (2011):**
    Invite journalists to event.
    Hold tasting and winemaking event for journalists.
    Invite the local media to a “make wine day”; this would include them with the whole process of how Clos Du Val is made. This will include TV, radio, and local news outlets.
**November:**
    Issue a social media news release to inform news outlets about current and potential developments regarding Clos Du Val
**December:**
    Personalize social media initiatives to encourage customers to buy Clos Du Val around Christmas time.
    Push it as a great gift item.
**January (2012):**
    Book a booth at the Boston Trade Show 21-22.
    Hold a table at the Unified Wine & Symposium in Sacramento, CA 24-26.
**February:**
    Use social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter to push our wines as great presents around Valentine’s day.
**March:**
    Hold a booth at the Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival in Vancouver, WA
on March 28-April 3.
**April:**
    Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival, March 28-April 3
    New vintage event 15,16
    Orange County Expo 28,29
**May:**
    Use Evites and e-mail pitches to gain coverage from social media outlets.
**June:**
    Use our social media to push wines as graduation presents and graduation parties.
**July:**
    Push our wine for 4th of July events.
    Santa Barbara Wine Expo 13-15.
**August:**
    Use social media outlets to review and refer to our new vintage.
**September**:
    Pitch traditional media sources to showcase new vintage and harvest.

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Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival. 10 February 2011.
           <http://www.playhousewinefest.com>.

**Evaluation**
**Objective:** To get three product reviews and two feature articles in prominent wine publications over the course of one year.

* If we have three product reviews and two feature articles over the course of one year then this objective was successful.

**Objective:** To have one print article published every three months, with two television news spots and three radio spots featured over the course of one year.

* If we get an article every three months, two TV news spots and three radio spots over the course of one year then we have been successful.

**Objective:** To attend four trade shows over the course of one year to have Clos Du Val wines placed in 3-5 high-end restaurants.

* If, through the four tradeshows we attend, 3-5 restaurants feature Clos Du Val wine, then our plan was successful.

**Objective:** To have ten blog posts carrying our key messages posted by our targeted wine bloggers over the course of one year.

* If credible bloggers, who have a large following and active blog, write about Clos Du Val over the course of one year then we will be successful.

By setting up Google Alerts we will be able to measure and track the use of the Clos Du Val name and our key messages. We will track the usage of the Clos Du Val name within news, realtime, blogs, video and discussions. To ensure that Clos Du Val is receiving positive media attention and our key messages are being communicated correctly we will specifically track when Clos Du Val is mentioned along with words like excellence, impressive, Napa Valley wine, enjoy and other key words.