

Making export success reality

Exporting overseas can be both an outstanding opportunity and a minefield of red tape. Fortunately, one South Australian business is dedicated solely to helping small wineries make the most of overseas opportunities.

Wine Assist has been helping Australian wineries export their wines overseas for the past five years, mainly to Asia. As well as handling complex documentation, Wine Assist sends samples for potential customers to trade shows and presentations.

Australia Post has played a significant role in the success of Wine Assist through the Express Courier International (ECI) service. "We have found the ECI service to be the most economical and efficient way to get samples to customers, on time and intact," said Dan Traucki, Wine Assist principal.

"We have sent wine to the UK, Switzerland, Norway, New Zealand, Italy, China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong via ECI. Not one parcel has gone astray, highlighting the reliability of this service," he said.

"We send up to four parcels per week overseas, usually a full dozen bottles of various samples safely tucked away in an Australia Post foam box. The service to China is particularly impressive - most samples reach their destination within five days.

"We have only had one parcel come back and even though there was some damage to the outer carton, every bottle was safe and intact, even after a round trip to Beijing," he said.

Deliveries are often urgent to ensure that samples get to their destination in time. "Through the ECI tracking option we know where each parcel is at any given time. Not only can we provide an approximate time the parcel will be received, but the winery knows when to follow up – an important part of the marketing process," said Dan.

Despite the current doom and gloom, Dan says there are still many wine export opportunities if you have quality products at realistic prices. "Now is the time to look at alternative or 'less comfortable' markets, such as Asia, rather than the traditional Anglo-Saxon/European markets. Language and cultural differences make the task more challenging but with the right approach – keen but sensibly cautious – exporting can be successful and very rewarding," he said.

