

INTERNET

Vincast uncorks wine data to aid collectors' investment portfolios

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Vincast's logo

By JEN KING

Vincast, a digital tool for wine lovers, is helping connoisseurs maintain their collections through investment-grade analytics.

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Whether a consumer is looking to begin collecting or uphold an established collection, being privy to insights regarding various types of wines and their worth can be essential to profitability. The Vincast by Auction Forecast platform tracks data points such as auction prices, collectability scores, market indices and return-on-investment forecasts to ensure the collector that they are making a sound purchase or fair sale.

"Everyone wants to be smart about their purchases, whether they are drinking or storing," said Joseph L. Breeden, founder of **Vincast** and CEO of **Prescient Models**. "Fine wines can often be a significant purchase, so having greater information helps those with an interest in wine to buy more confidently.

"As buyers, we want answers to the same questions we would have with any significant purchase: Is this a good price? Is the market trending up or down? Will it be worth more in the future?," he said.

"For experienced collectors or investors, we help to quantify their intuition. For beginning collectors or investors, we are providing the information needed to buy safely. Both groups will benefit from Vincast's unique features."

Oenologist data

The auction and collectables industry has established price guides and histories, but the wine industry, also highly collectable, did not. Noticing the gap in wine investment, Mr. Breeden created a platform to fill the void, the first of its kind for the wine industry.

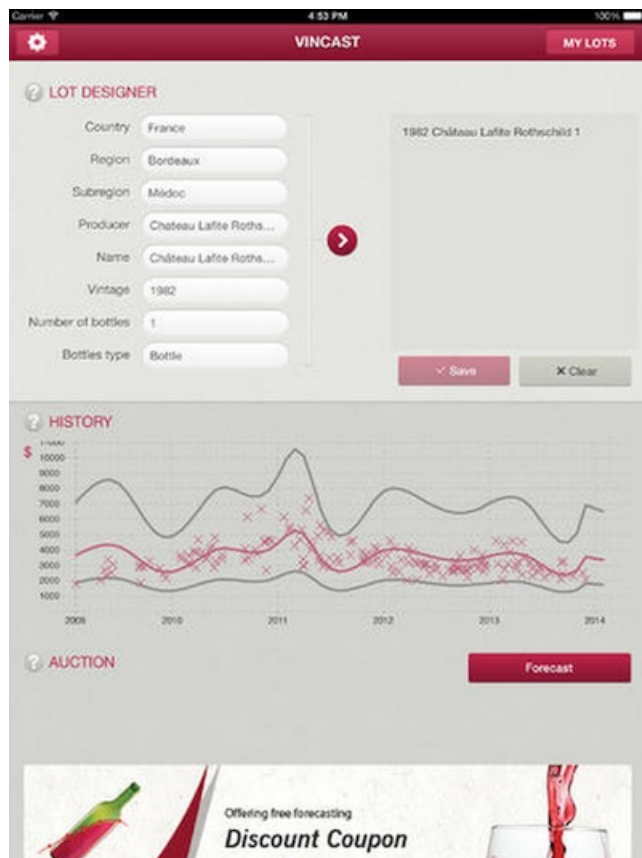
Together with a team of developers, Mr. Breeden approached wine investment from the position of a wine lover, not necessarily a collector. Nevertheless, Vincast is based on the detailed information available for stocks, bonds and commodities to allow the collecting investor to make solid, long-term decisions and plans.

As a starting point, Vincast's developers gathered historic wine data, but a historical rendering of vintages on the market did not provide an overview of the market or expectations for future value. Likewise, wine ratings tell which taste the best, but do little to gauge value.

To gain a better sense of the data available on wine vintages, Vincast partnered with Prescient Models, a leader in

vintage analytics, to leverage the information.

Investing in the wine industry at this time is considered a smart move by oenologists and analysts. In a statement, senior analyst for Vincast Sisi Liang said, "Because the Chinese stock market crash has effectively brought down prices in the fine wine market, the near future may be an excellent opportunity for interested investors to get into the fine wine market to reap rich rewards over the long run."



Collector's wine bottle lot on Vincast, iPad version

For investors looking for creative ways to diversify their portfolios, investing in fine wines may be profitable. This is due to emerging market conditions that have caused a quality bottle from a good vintage to appreciate to a higher value.

Vincast helps these investors, and those who are interested in keeping track of the value of a collection, by tracking more than 1 million auction prices spanning more than 10 years from 12 auction houses. While most information is free, Vincast also offers a paid subscription with additional features.

The platform's primary free feature allows collectors to digitally design their lot to be saved in a portfolio by filling in fields that ask a bottle's country of origin, region, subregion, producer, name, vintage year, quantity and bottle type.

Once a lot is filled in, Vincast's history panel plots the fluctuated values of the bottle of wine helping to determine the overall value throughout its lifespan.

Additionally, collectors can use Vincast to forecast return on investments for an entire lot of single bottles. Vincast's premium paid features include tools to determine bidding prices, ROI graphs, collectability scores and elements that track the market index and scenarios.

In the portfolio section, collectors can keep track of current bottles, sold items, future forecasts and returns.

Vincast is currently available as an application for [Apple iPad](#) and will soon be launched on iPhone and Android.

It's okay to wine a little

The digital space is becoming a haven for wine lovers looking to connect and make purchases.

Stocking a wine cellar with vintage and contemporary wines can be a daunting task and intimidating to the novice collector due to the immense offerings available.

International merchant of fine wine and spirits AWC, formerly The Antique Wine Company, works with ultra-high-

net-worth individuals to curate their cellar collections through educational tastings and seminars and the ease of collecting through ecommerce. Since its founding in 1989, AWC has expanded its focus on historic and ancient vintages to offer a diverse selection of fine wines resulting in an \$31 million profit turnover and the expansion to three international offices in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and the Philippines ([see story](#)).

Hong Kong-based affluents have been especially important for the wine industry.

Le Pan, a new international magazine and Web site, is aiming to redefine coverage of the fine wine industry with an emphasis on modern-day fine living.

Published by Hong Kong-based publisher LPM Communications Limited, the imprint, led by publisher and CEO Jeannie Cho Lee, the first Asian Master of Wine, will have a wine to lifestyle ratio of 80:20 when launched this summer. Its origin and connection to the Asian market is a reflection of the region's growing interest in fine wine and luxury goods ([see story](#)).

As with AWC and Le Pan, having access to knowledge and industry insights will help wine collectors, both investor-minded and connoisseurs, make the best selections.

"Having greater information available always serves to expand a market," Mr. Breeden said.

"For wine collectors and investors, it lowers the barrier to entry and allows them to buy with confidence," he said.

"No one can guarantee positive returns, but buyers can know that they've made the smartest possible decisions."

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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