

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

## New content from Hennessy answers most common Cognac questions

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*The label has launched a new series of videos, each centered on answering one of the most popular questions from the public. Image credit: Hennessy*

By ZACH JAMES

LVMH-owned Cognac brand Hennessy is answering consumers' questions in a new slot.

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The label has launched a series of videos, each centered on responding to the most popular questions it receives from the public. Seeking to put the viewer at the heart of the content, the short films capitalize on luxury customers' desire for operational transparency in a unique way.

Q's and A's

Seemingly taking inspiration from Cond Nast-owned technology magazine *WIRED*'s web series asking celebrities the most researched questions about them, a collection of videos called "Ask Us Anything" is out now with an entirely different motive.

While the original is more of an interview with Google-sourced queries, Hennessy's take on the idea, hosted by global brand ambassador and mixologist Jordan Bushell, answers one of the internet's most-searched questions per one-minute-long film.

*Mr. Bushell informs the audience that the difference between its V.S, V.S.O.P and X.O drinks are their respective ages, which leads to different flavor profiles*

Responding to 10 separate inquiries in just as many entries, the maison grants insights into how its beverages are produced and what sets each variation apart from the last.

The slickly-produced videos housed on Google's YouTube platform showcase Mr. Bushell in a wide range of distinct locales, from one of the label's barrel resting and storage cellars to its French grape vineyards. Cuts come quickly to keep the action moving and the fast-paced nature of the content intact.

While answering questions is the main goal of the series, reaching that intention with an attention-grabbing style seems just as important.

Breaking down how their products are made and whose hands contribute to the end result presented to buyers also grants a fascinating, albeit brief, behind-the-scenes look into supply lines, small business contributors, timetables for the liquor's mandated resting period and just how many cooks are in the metaphorical kitchen by the time a bottle is finalized.

*While a master blender is the final say on what goes out of Hennessy's doors, the wines used to build up the released product are often produced by smaller, family-owned distilleries*

"A cooper had to make [the] barrels to put the eau-de-vie in," says Mr. Bushell, in one of the films.

"When we look at the name on the barrel, that came from the family that produced it, maybe distilled it, maybe sent it to another distillery," he continues. "So, there's been generations of people involved, and many hands have passed the eau-de-vie along until it gets to Renaud Fillioux de Gironde, Hennessy's eighth-generation master blender."

The master blender, as explained further in the videos, is in charge of all of the combinations of the different barrels to create the maison's signature Cognac amalgam. Started with a base of wine, that's then distilled twice, it matures in a barrel for at least two years; after that, multiple barrels of the double-distilled liquid known as eau-de-vie are mixed together into the bottle that's available to the public.

### Taking pride

Hennessy isn't the first alcoholic beverage company to take the approach of connecting with its fans and customers through the medium of online video, though it is, by far, the most direct in its purpose.

Diageo, the British spirits distributor, recently backed a full-length documentary that was released on YouTube and Amazon's streaming platform, free to watch with a Prime Video subscription ([see story](#)). The film takes viewers into the world of the brand's World Class Global Bartender of the Year competition, showcasing the stakes and skills at play to those who participate annually.

In Scotland, whisky maker The Macallan took a different approach. Enlisting the help of rock band Simple Minds, also founded by Scotsmen, the pairing went about creating a soundtrack for the former's promotional short film, reimagining an existing tune ([see story](#)).

Apart from simple advertising and commercial spots, it seems that luxury beverage brands are moving more toward distinct features on how their products are made, the history behind them and who is involved along the way.