

STRATEGY

# Trade Shows and Wine Festivals in China

## Tips for Making These Events Profitable

*By Marie-Claude Veillette*  
*Global Wine & Spirits*



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# Maximize Your Investment

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Trade shows and wine festivals are growing in popularity at breakneck speed in China. Organizers of lesser known or less popular events scramble to attract producers worldwide. For example, the Guizhou Province subsidizes foreign vineyards at up to 10,000 CNY as a way to entice them to come and expose. They also offer to take care of accommodations. Others propose a kiosk for free the first year or at a reduced cost, that is to say between 2000 and 5000 CNY.

## How Much is the Investment Worth?

As a producer, you have to question whether the investment in time and money will yield some return. In short: will your presence at a particular trade show ensure financial benefits at least equivalent to the costs showoff attendance? The answer depends on your efforts, but one thing is certain: trade shows are a great opportunity to showcase your wines, increase your visibility,

establish new contacts and increase sales.

However, there are several factors to consider before you start to attend trade shows or festivals for wine professionals.

## Evaluate Your Expenses

To maximize your presence abroad, set your goals and develop a specific strategy. Ask yourself the following question: **What is my main source of motivation?**

## “Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained”

Many people say: make more sales. Yes, of course, but to do so, you must adopt an effective strategy which many producers fail to do.

### Where to start?

To increase your sales and your profit margin, you must first know how much your participation in a trade show or a festival will cost in terms of time, money and materials. Take everything in consideration: travel expenses, accommodation budget, booth cost, translator fees, product costs (allow an average of 25 to 30 bottles for tasting + import fees), etc.

### Why is it so important?

Because knowing the total costs will give you a better idea of how many contacts you'll need to make and of what quality those will need to be for you to justify these expenses. It does not mean that you will make your investment immediately profitable. If you have the chance to do business on the spot, that's great! Otherwise, keep in touch with the people you have met and nurture those relationships so as to eventually get a return on your investment.

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained," says Marie Soubirac, Director of Sales at Global Wine & Spirits. With a long track record in the industry, she has accompanied several producers in their efforts to export.

"Most producers are initially hesitant about engaging in trade shows or wine festivals. Many look at these events as an expense but they should rather look at them as an investment for the future. The language barrier is also an obstacle for many producers who are afraid of not being understood. When they give me this argument, I respond that there is always a way to be understood. For written communications, translation software may be of help, but during the events, translators are essential."

### Target Your Audience in Order to Select the Right Event

Who are your customers? Or, what kind of customer do you want to target? You have to answer this simple, but crucial question before taking any kind of marketing approach. Be sure you're answering it before you invest money in renting a booth.

Second step: try to determine what type of buyers will be present depending on the type of event you choose to participate. At certain trade shows, you'll sometimes find members of the general public, importers and traders (depending on the size of the trade show), distributors (on every trade show) and sometimes restaurant owners (if the event is held locally). Wine festivals are smaller than trade shows. They are often organized by local distributors for their customers (wine merchants, restaurant owners, bartenders, and wine clubs).

### Set the Stage

Once you have focused on which type of customers you plan to target and determined the type of event you want to attend, you will need to put forward strategies to attract potential buyers and encourage them to stop by your booth. Ask yourself what you can do to get their attention? Maybe you can offer small gifts (pens, balloons, mouse pads, mugs), provide attractive packaging, etc. Think about establishing contacts before your departure.

## “Assess Your Performance”

Some trade shows offer the opportunity to purchase a list containing the names and addresses of visitors who will be attending. You can use it to preselect some buyers and send them an email inviting them to your booth. If you do not have the time to engage in this type of approach, at least consult the list. You'll have a better idea of who will be present and be able to develop more effective marketing strategies.

### The Importance of Working with GWS

Getting into the world of professional trade shows in China and Asia in general requires a certain amount of audacity. If you do not feel comfortable in taking the plunge alone, think about getting help from professionals. The Global Wine & Spirits' team participates increasingly in large trade shows and each time, representatives of the B2B network work tirelessly in helping member producers promote their wines and spirits among importers and distributors.

During the Hong Kong International Wine & Spirits Fair in November 2012, the GWS pavilion featured six producers from France, Mexico, Australia and Argentina. These members benefited from a turnkey booth solution in which they were able to market their products, offer tastings and build business ties.

“To maximize the experience of our guest producers and increase their chances of developing strong business relations, we organized a dinner to help them network with potential buyers. The evening was a great success as many concluded deals and future engagements with importers and distributors,” says Jean-Michel Stam, Vice-President of Operations.

### You are Ready to Dive in Alone?

Whether you are guided by GWS or not, keep in mind that you need to define: the costs, the goals and also be familiar with the target audience. Put forward strategies to attract potential buyers who spend an average of 15 seconds per booth at a trade show.

Therefore, make sure that your staff is well-trained and aware of your goals. As your level of sales will be proportionate to their efforts, think about rewarding them on the results. Make sure they know the market well and have solid sales experience, good interpersonal skills, and better yet, a few contacts among potential buyers.

### Follow-up after the Trade Show

All your hard work and investment in time and money will be worth nothing if you do not make the effort to rapidly get back in touch with potential buyers with whom you have made initial contact. Interact with them by email or phone or however necessary but above all, you need to cherish these encounters that could benefit you in the long run.

**One last tip:** Assess your performance to learn from your mistakes and improve yourself for the next trade show or festival. Do not hesitate to seek your staff's advice, and remember that there is nothing like perseverance in achieving results.

## List of Major Trade Shows / Events

Date	City	Trade show/event
Feb. 26-28, 2013	Shanghai	Vinisud Asia
Mar. 15-17, 2013	Hong Kong	<a href="#">Hong Kong Wedding Banquet and World Wine Expo 2013</a>
Mar. 28-30, 2013	Shanghai	The 10th China (Beijing) International High-end Vintage Wine Expo 2013 – ( <b>Best Wine China 2013</b> )
Mar. 28-31, 2013	Chengdu, West China	The 88 <sup>th</sup> China National Food, Wine & Spirits Fair ( <b>Chengdu Fair</b> )
April 1-3, 2013	Shanghai	The 10th Shanghai International Wine & Spirits Exhibition 2013 ( <b>Shanghai Wine Fair 2013</b> )
April 20-22, 2013	Wuhan, Central China	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> China (Wuhan) International Wine Fair
May 7-9, 2013	Shanghai	Sial China 2013
May 10-12, 2013	Guangzhou	The 4th China (Guangzhou) International Wine & Spirits Exhibition ( <b>WINEXPO 2013</b> )
May 30-1st June 2013	Guangzhou	China (Guangzhou) International Wine & Spirits Exhibition. ( <b>InterWine China</b> )
June 4-6, 2013	Beijing	TopWine China 2013 Beijing ( <b>TWC 2013 Beijing</b> )
June 6-8, 2013	Beijing	China International Food Industry Exhibition
July 11-13, 2013	Hangzhou, East China	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> China (Hangzhou) International Wine & Spirits Fair
August 29-31, 2013	Shenzhen	International Beverage Exposition and Competition 2013 ( <b>IBEC 2013</b> )
Sept. 11-14, 2013	Ho Chin Minh City, Vietnam	Vietfood & Beverage 2013
Sept. 26-28, 2013	Hangzhou	Zhejiang International Wine and Spirits Exhibition 2013 ( <b>VINEXPO CHINA 2013</b> )
Nov. 5-8, 2013	Pékin	International Wine & Spirits Fair
Nov. 5-8, 2013	Canton	Interwine Canton
Nov. 7-9, 2013	Hong Kong	2013 Hong Kong International Wine & Spirits Fair
Nov. 13-15, 2013	Shanghai	The 4th Wine & Spirits China 2013 ( <b>FHC 2013</b> )
Nov. 13-15, 2013	Shanghai	17th Int'l Exhibition for Food, Drink, Hospitality, Foodservice Bakery & Retail Industries ( <b>FHC China 2013</b> )
Nov. 15-17, 2013	Beijing	China National Food Wine and Spirits Fair
Nov. 22-24, 2013	Jinan	The 7th China National Food Wine & Spirits Fair Jinan 2013