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Twenty-five Years of the Wine Industry Financial Symposium

IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE FINANCIAL COMMUNITY



When the founders of the **Wine Industry Symposium Group** met in early 1992, the hope was that by forming a new industry conference, they would create an open exchange of thoughts and ideas concerning financial aspects of the California wine industry. Relatively few bankers understood the unique dynamics of wineries at the time. The group realized there had been a breakdown in communication between wineries and banks.

From this, the **Wine Industry Financial Symposium** was born. A couple of years later, in 1994, the group started a similar program, **Central Coast Insights**, to fit the needs of that region, and a year later, the **Vineyard Economics Seminar** was created for grape growers.

As the symposium celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2016, the Wine Industry Symposium Group continues its mission of providing a platform for communication and dialogue between the multiple facets of the wine

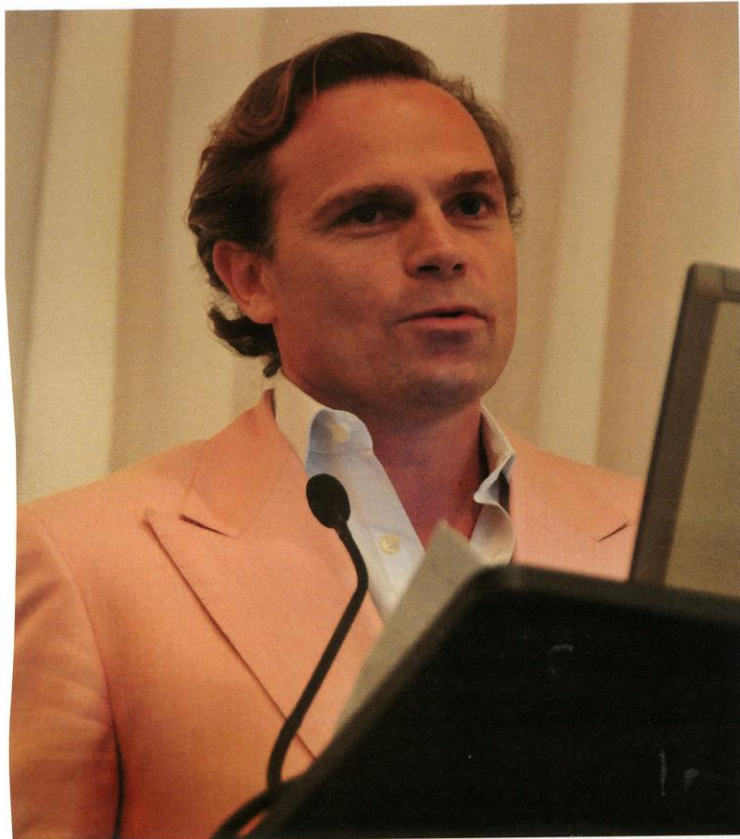
business and the lending community. **David Freed** and **Kathy Archer**, who were later joined by **Waunice Orchid** and **Lisa Walter**, create a forum for members of both communities to share their views on a range of wine and financial topics.

The symposium has become a spot on the calendar where bankers get a refresher while speakers also focus on the future. Today there are larger, more sophisticated wine companies while banks specializing in lending to wineries understand the industry well. Today, there are many lenders, equity investors, and all sorts of financial specialists that didn't exist when the symposium started.

"Looking back, a lot of good has come from bringing members of the financial community and members of the wine community together," symposium founder Freed said.

The need for a financial forum is still there, however.

"It's a tremendous communication device, both with the dissemination of information, but also with networking in the old-fashioned sense where people get together on breaks, over meals, to talk and share what's going on," Freed said.



DAVID FREED

Jean-Charles Boisset was one of many speakers to lend his expertise over the years.