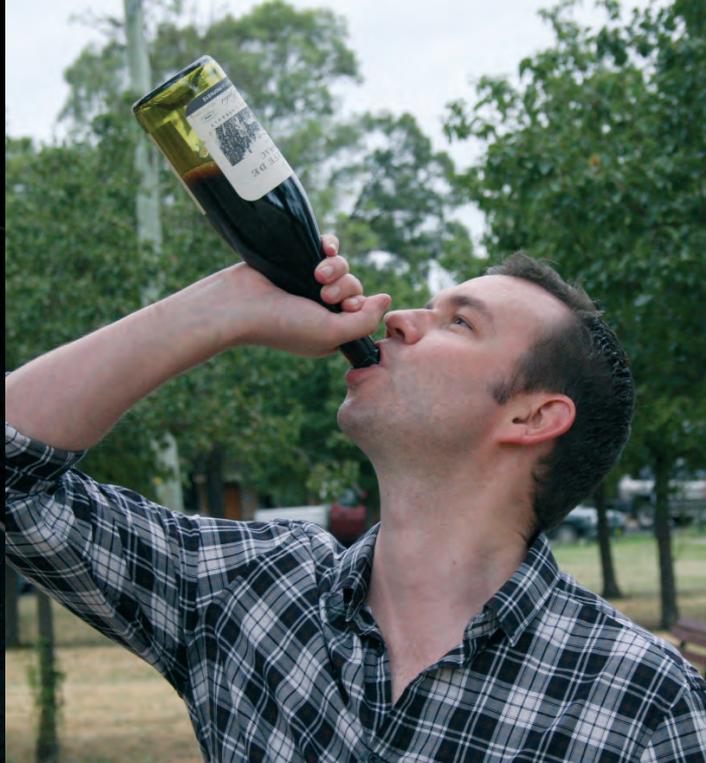


ONE MAN'S WAR AGAINST BS



WINE COMMENTATOR STEWART NOBLE RUNS THE 'WINE WITHOUT BS' WEBSITE. HE'S NOT THE MOST POPULAR GUY AMONG WINE SCRIBES BECAUSE HE THINKS MOST MOST REVIEWS ARE FULL OF, WELL, BULLSHIT. WE TALK TO THE MAN WITH THE JAMES BOND TWITTER AVATAR.

WHAT IS YOUR WINE BACKGROUND?

For the past eight years I have owned a number of mortgage broking franchises in Sydney. During that time I have experimented with various side ventures and have always had a passion for food and wine. So wine is not my full-time thing, but I'd love to achieve that some day. Over the past 12 months I have been presented with some really exciting opportunities including consulting jobs with some of Australia's largest companies, which could lead to a full-time wine job in the future.

YOU HAVE 5,500 TWITTER FOLLOWERS. HOW MANY OF THOSE ARE CONSUMERS AS OPPOSED TO INDUSTRY/TRADE?

It's hard to get an exact figure without going through each one of them, but I would say at least 50% consumer to 50% trade. I follow pretty much anyone who engages their other followers and is clearly a real person.

WHAT ARE WE DOING WRONG AS AN INDUSTRY IN TERMS OF CONNECTING WITH WINE CONSUMERS?

Industry members seem to spend a lot of time (and Twitter is a great example) almost exclusively talking to one another. A lot of wine literature comes across as silly, pompous and just generally unhelpful to a large range of wine consumers. In fact I would argue that 'large range' is the vast majority of people who buy wine. Many take themselves a bit too seriously.

HOW DO YOU CONNECT WITH THE PUNTERS?

I engage in conversation, share information on various topics (mainly wine related) and run events that encourage meeting my followers face to face.

WHAT IS YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PHILOSOPHY?

My philosophy is simply to be social, participate in

conversation, don't over-think each and every response but be mindful of the fact that you are in a public arena where everyone can read what you say. Strong personal opinions on things like religion, politics and major social issues are topics I do my best to stay away from. I also encourage real life connecting with people I communicate with via SM channels. I have met more than 200 people I first connected with via social media and it has led to amazing opportunities. If you never intend on coming out from behind the computer, you are missing out on the real life potential of SM.

WHAT OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DO YOU USE?

Google +, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest and LinkedIn, yet nothing has been quite as productive for the WWBS brand as Twitter.

A FEW PEOPLE HAVE A CRACK AT YOU ON TWITTER FROM TIME TO TIME - WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

They have a crack at me because I, from time to time, have a crack at them, or at least the way they talk and write about wine. Most of these people are in the wine industry and are passionate about their work and have every right to defend themselves. Wine Without BS is all about consumer engagement: most people love their wine, but don't particularly want to hear that it smells like the forest floor or has horse stable undertones. However, there are definitely a few people out there who have a crack at me for no particular reason I can think of. If you have critics you must be doing something right.

WHAT WOULDN'T WE KNOW ABOUT YOU?

Another passion of mine is music and I play the bass guitar and drums. Oh, and I am not the guy in the tuxedo in my avatar, nor do I smoke cigars.

