

RESEARCH PLAN

Prepared by TEAM 1 - A.C.E.S

THE HIVE

Research Plan

FEBRUARY 2021

Sequence 2 - Team Project
Benchmark 1

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February 4, 2021
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THE CLIENT

The Hive Winery, Utah's Artisan winery, features local products to make fruit and honey wines. The Hive Brandy Company is Utah's first brandy distillery. Together these companies make a one-stop-shop for local and specialized liquid refreshment. Both are micro-operations allowing them to have a wider variety of wines throughout the year. They currently feature over 50 different wines and small volume spirits.

Husband and wife team, Jay and Lori Yahne, started the companies in 2008 and are all about the “craft” and “living local” which means making every effort to support their local farmers and producers. Although they make wine and spirits with lots of different local fruit varieties, they have one simple governing guideline for the fruits they use: if they won't drink it, they won't make it.

They have won several awards, including a silver medal at the 2020 Utah State Wine Competition. Their current offerings include wine, hard cider, liqueurs, and spirit-soaked fruits.

Their store is located in Layton, Utah; due to current government regulations and safety protocols, they cannot do tastings or open their tasting room. However, their storeroom is open for customer sales. They also sell to state stores and local restaurants.

RESEARCH SUMMARY

In the initial stages of this project, the team looked for local products and companies with limited brand strategies, allowing us to elevate this strategy through the deliverables of this project. The Hive was brought to our attention through personal exposure and consumption of the product. Our team then reached out to the client and inquired of their interest.

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Upon compliance from the client, we set up a meeting where the team could interview the owners in order to gain essential information to help with the production of a SWOT analysis and the designing of marketing collateral. Prior to our conversation with the client, the team did research by way of evaluating their current online platforms, including website and social media, as well as examining elements of their branding such as their logo and labels on their products. We then formatted a list of questions to discuss in the interview to gain a better understanding of their company, challenges, strengths, and where we could work to improve their current marketing strategy.

At the conclusion of the interview, our team met and discussed where we felt the major weaknesses in their branding were and what marketing collaterals we could design to assist in the strengthening of these areas. We determined there were four areas of major concern we wanted to focus our efforts on: Website Design, Logo Design, Label Design, and the current program for their product tastings.

SECONDARY RESEARCH

In speaking with the client and meeting as a team, we have decided to produce deliverables in four areas, and have assigned a team member to spear-head each of these deliverables by way of research and design.

AREA OF FOCUS	TEAM MEMBER(S)
Website Design	Ellen and Sam
Logo Design	Abbeylin
Label Design	Casie
Product Tasting Experience	Anna

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Research will be conducted in order to assist in evaluating where the opportunities of improvement in each area lies and how we can use the marketing collateral we will design to assist in remedying those weaknesses.

- **WEBSITE DESIGN:** As a combined effort, Ellen will research competitor websites (see the “Competitor Analysis” section of this report) to identify patterns in content, layout, and general presentation from comparable local businesses. Sam will investigate current web design platforms available by way of reading reviews from other users to determine each platform's primary strengths and weaknesses. After conducting the website research, he will then explore websites built by these platforms as well as test the platforms themselves to evaluate how well they meet the goals of the group. He will also determine the ease of use for our client in order to achieve continued successful integration of the new online designs after presentation to the client.
- **LOGO DESIGN:** An in-depth evaluation of current logo trends will be conducted, followed by a focus group and survey. A blind online survey will be conducted assessing how customers react to certain design elements in logos. This survey will be followed by a virtual focus group to evaluate client perception and preferences in judging products off of label designs. General preferences will be asked alongside specific and targeted questions regarding our clients current logo.
- **LABEL DESIGN:** Online research regarding label design will be conducted, with the intent of gaining a better understanding of modern design trends within the alcohol industry. The effectiveness of those design aspects in current marketing practices will also be assessed. The blind online survey conducted will focus, in-part, on what design elements in beverage labels catch the eye of current and potential customers.

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- **PRODUCT TASTING EXPERIENCE:** In determining the best practices and customer preferences in tasting programs, we will use online research and a blind online survey. Review of current tasting programs among successful small wineries and distilleries will be compared to our client's current program. Questions included in the blind, online survey will ask customers' what they prefer to learn about and what is important to them while attending a tasting. The research, along with participation from the client, will determine what areas of their current tasting program need to be updated in order to elevate their program moving forward.

The group will meet weekly to discuss and critique the research and designs being done, making the end result a collective, cohesive project to be presented to the client. The breakdown of research to be conducted, designs to be created, and timelines associated with each area is broken down, by section, below. Upon the completion of this project we will have designed new or updated marketing collateral for our client in the four areas of website design, logo design, label design, and tasting programs. The research gathered prior to moving to the design phase will help us provide our clients with informed and relevant marketing collateral. This will be executed by making a more streamlined, visually pleasing website by way of a user-friendly online platform. The information gathered regarding logo and label design will provide us with a better understanding as to what elements of beverage labels and company logos catch the eye of The Hive Winery and Spirits Company's target demographic, and the data collected regarding product tastings will allow us to create an elevated and well received tasting program for their customers.

WEBSITE

We will be retooling The Hive's homepage and providing the client with a template for their website. The client's current website is visually outdated and a bit difficult to navigate. Our goal is to create a website that is aesthetically pleasing, well organized, and concise in its information.

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In determining which stylistic and informational choices will be most beneficial for The Hive's company website, Ellen will be focusing on two areas of research:

- **SURVEY ANALYSIS:** A blind survey will be conducted which, in-part, will focus on The Hive's website. These questions are intended to see what sort of information prospective customers would like to find online about the client, and where they are most likely to look for it. These questions include: What kind of information would you like to find on a product's website? Where would you most likely go to find contact and company information? Where would you most likely go to find product information?
- **COMPETITOR ANALYSIS:** We will be comparing The Hive's website to the websites of similarly sized breweries and distilleries servicing the Wasatch Front. We will be taking note of the pages on each website's navigation page and interesting elements on the homepage. This information will be used to identify patterns in content, layout, and general presentation from comparable local businesses to gain inspiration when building a more streamlined visually pleasing website.

Information from the Survey and Competitor Analysis will be presented to the group on March 1st.

In addition to creating a better visual layout and design than the current website, we will also do so on a platform that meets the clients goals. Given the intensive and sometimes expensive process of creating and maintaining a website of this nature, the client has requested the website be created through a platform that allows for simple and straightforward editing, and will either be entirely free or relatively inexpensive.

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During the course of our research, Sam will investigate and evaluate various pre-existing website design platforms that meet the company's criteria, while cross-referencing their goals with our own design goals to allow for the best design updates possible. This research will include investigating current web design platforms available, reading reviews from other users to determine each platform's primary strengths and weaknesses, and testing websites to evaluate how well they meet the goals of our team and our client.

A draft of the website platform and visual layout will be designed and presented to the group by the meeting held the first week of April. This timeline will allow for client approval, as well as any changes the group and/or client wish to make prior to the group-set submission date of April 11, 2021.

LOGO UPDATE

The current logo is a combination mark, using both graphics and words, and our client prides is easily recognizable by customers. The design features an oval bee, colored in bright yellow, with four bright red wings, and the name of the company in a playful lowercase font. The attempt of the logo is playful eccentricity, which the client would like the brand to be recognized for. The client wants to keep the bee design and would like to keep the current colors.

Based on our initial interview with our client, some logo modification is acceptable. They currently like the logo and design, but as they are working to rebrand their company name, they have agreed to allow us to create some alternative logos that will maintain the integrity and originality of the brand.

Research will be conducted in the following: survey results, virtual focus group, and logos gathered from similar sized wineries and distilleries in the US. The book Logo Design Love will also enable us to make proper stylistic choices in combination with our other research methods.

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To achieve proper logo research, Abbeylin will first work with the client to answer the following questions:

- What is your current logo?
- What do you like about this logo?
- What don't you like about this logo?
- What colors do you use in your logo?
- What fonts do you use in your logo?
- What message does the logo currently communicate?
- What message would you like the logo to communicate?
- What are some brands with logos you like?
- What are some brands with colors you like?
- Are there specific graphics or images your logo is known for?
- What do you like about these graphics/images?
- What was your initial purpose in using these graphics/images?
- Are these graphics/images important to maintain recognition with your clients?

Input from the focus group and survey questions (both of which are outlined in this document), will inform a strategy for logo updates. The focus group will be asked questions regarding Product Overview, Product Demand, and Brand Recognition (specific questions found in a later section of this document).

Upon completion of the focus group and survey, Abbeylin will reach out to the client to discuss the results and desired changes to the current logo. We will use the results in conjunction with the search of logos of winery and distilleries.

Abbeylin will be responsible for this portion of the project but will utilize the talents and abilities of the other group members when redesigning the logo, particularly Casie, as the logo is incorporated on the wine and spirits labels.

Two drafts of the logo redesign will be designed and presented to the group by the meeting held the first week of April. This timeline will allow for client approval, as well as any changes the group and/or client wish to make prior to the group-set submission date of April 11, 2021.

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WINE AND SPIRITS LABELS

The Hive Winery offers over 50 different flavors of wine. The majority are offered year round, however, they also have seasonal flavors they only offer during certain times of the year. According to the owners, the majority of the labels mirror each other: most have a white background, their logo in the middle, and product name and details below that. There are a few exceptions of labels that stray entirely from this layout.

Upon speaking to the client, we learned that they are interested in redesigning one or more of their wine labels. In starting this exploration, the owners mentioned they would specifically like us to explore redesigning the raspberry peach wine and their summer mead labels. Prior to the redesign our team will be collecting information that will guide the design decisions that will be implemented.

Casie will be conducting online research with the intent of gaining a better understanding of modern design trends within the alcohol industry and the effectiveness of those marketing practices. Our team is also conducting a survey that will provide us with a better understanding as to what elements of beverage labels catch the eye of The Hive Winery's target demographic. The research and survey findings, in tandem with client input, will determine the aesthetic and design decisions made while creating the new wine label.

Research regarding best practices for creating alcohol and beverage logos will be collected and presented to the team on Monday, March 1, 2021. Following this, the team will discuss concepts for how we would like the new label to look and Casie will lead the redesign efforts with the support of Ellen. The team will review the first iteration of the label the first week of April and revisions will be made based on team input. This timeline will allow for client approval, as well as any changes the group and/or client wish to make prior to the group-set submission date of April 11, 2021.

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DIGITAL DISPLAYS FOR TASING ROOMS

In meeting with our client, we discussed their desire to update and elevate their tasting program. They are currently remodeling their tasting room within the store and will soon be offering reservations for tastings via their website. They discussed that, beyond these two measures, they were unsure of how to restructure the presentation of their tastings and what to include in the program. As a team, we determined that we want to ease their current uncertainty by using it as one of our deliverables for the project.

We will start by doing research into common practices and preferences of wine and spirits tastings in three ways:

- **ONLINE RESEARCH:** Research evaluating other companies' and general practices for tastings will be conducted to compare common tasting materials and information provided during tastings of both wine and spirits.
- **SURVEY ANALYSIS:** A blind survey will be conducted which, in-part, will focus on client preferences of what they would like to learn and experience in a tasting. These questions include:
 - When attending a wine tasting how important is it for you to know:
 - Where the grapes/fruit came from
 - Foods to pair with the selection
 - Temperature to serve/store the selection
 - Learn the proper technique to taste/try wines
 - Alcohol content of the selection
 - Process of making alcohol/wine
 - Story of the owners/vineyard/company
 - Is there anything not mentioned that would be important for you when attending a wine tasting?

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- **CLIENT INSTRUCTION:** After gathering data, we will then consult with our client, and assess the way they presently have been executing tastings, as well as the information they have provided to customers during the experience. We will then present our data/findings and will discuss any changes they would like to make to the program. As a group we will then analyze what of that information would be beneficial to placing into the digital displays.

The survey will be sent to individuals within our client's specified target market (women ages 30 – 50) by way of social media and other online platforms. We will not discriminate against anyone wanting to take the survey; however, we will focus on this demographic. The survey will be active from February 21 – 28. Upon closing the survey, Anna will gather and calculate all of the data. The online research and survey will be conducted by Anna and will begin February 22. The research synopsis and survey results will then be presented in graph form, for ease of evaluation, and made available to the other members of the group at the currently scheduled meeting on March 1.

Upon completion and presentation of the online research and survey, Anna and other members of the group will meet with the client to discuss the results of the research. Upon information gathered from this meeting, and after obtaining all applicable company and product information along with materials currently used, we will design the deliverable in association to the wine tasting room and experience. Anna will be responsible for this piece of the project and the accompanying deliverable however, will utilize the talents and abilities of the other group members.

The client's newly remodeled tasting room will contain 2-3 flat screen TVs. During our interview, the client was presently unsure of what they would like to feature on these TV displays. As a group we discussed, and presented to the client, the idea of creating two displays in conjunction with our research regarding tasting preferences. The two displays will be as follows:

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- **COMPANY FOCUSED DISPLAY:** This display will contain information about the company, etc. and will not need to be changed or updated regularly.
- **PRODUCT TASTING DISPLAY:** This display will list the type of products involved in the tasting as well as information regarding these products (alcohol content, ingredients, food to pair it with etc.)

The second display will act more as a template, as it will need to be updated regularly to match the products in the tasting room. These displays will be created in a format easily accessible and usable for the client.

A first draft of both displays will be designed and presented to the group by the meeting held the first week of April. This timeline will allow for client approval, as well as any changes the group and/or client wish to make prior to the group set submission date of April 11, 2021.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS/SWOT ANALYSIS

We have already conducted a detailed interview with our client, in which we discussed different aspects of their current situation and their company's strengths and weaknesses. This interview has given us the necessary information to complete both situational and SWOT analyses. If we require any additional specific information from the client, we will contact them accordingly while compiling our additional research.

In addition to information from the client themselves, we will consider the results of the survey analysis, as discussed below. The responses from this survey will give an external perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the client's current logo and label usage. The findings from these analyses will be compiled and made available to the group by March 1.

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COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

Per our interview the client has explained to us that they are uniquely positioned within the Utah alcohol scene in that they do not have winery competitors that are local and comparable in size. They said that when they have attempted to market their products utilizing similar tactics to wineries located in other states, the efforts have been unsuccessful here because the Utah market is strikingly different to demographics in other states.

Because of this, our team will be looking at similarly sized local breweries and distilleries in Utah, more specifically the Salt Lake City area and Wasatch Front, to see how they are marketing their alcoholic beverage and products. As per the insistent terminology of our client, we will be referring to these competitors as “colleagues” within any deliverables sent to The Hive.

We will be working off of Gastronomic SLC’s list of Utah breweries from January 2021 and Visit Utah’s guide to Utah distilleries to identify which businesses have a similar scope. From there, we will be comparing websites, packaging, social media presence and content, and other similar branding materials that correspond with our target deliverables for inspiration.

This will help us identify which breweries and distilleries in the area have a similar marketing scope to The Hive, as the client primarily advertises on Facebook and Instagram. This will also help us identify what content Wasatch Front consumers are looking for on a liquor company’s webpage, and how this information has been presented effectively by others. Lastly, this will allow us to identify effective branding and marketing trends for alcoholic beverages relevant to Wasatch Front consumers.

The findings from the analysis will be available to the group for discussion by March 1.

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SURVEY QUESTIONS

Our blind, online, survey will consist of 25 questions encompassing the range of our project deliverables. These questions will be broken down into four sections: Wine tasting preferences, logo design, label design, and website design. Survey participants will be given our client's current logo and label images to base their answers on. Data will be collected by way of short answers, multiple choice, check box, and Likert scale options. Participants will be asked the following questions:

- **Wine Tasting Preferences**

- The following questions will start with: When attending a wine tasting, how important is it to know:
 - where the grapes/fruit came from?
 - food to pair with the selection?
 - temperature to serve/store the selection?
 - learn the proper technique to taste/try wines?
 - the alcohol content of the selection?
- Is there anything not mentioned that would be important for you when attending a wine testing?

- **Label Design**

- How did you find the brand of wine you currently favor? (If it was finding it "randomly" at a store, what drew you to it?)
- When buying a product in the store, what elements of a label make it enticing to buy?
- If this product was available today, how likely would you be to purchase it based on the label?
- What are the strengths of this label?
- What information, if any, is missing on this label?

- **Logo Design**

- Is this logo memorable?
- What is your first reaction to this logo?
- Based on the logo, what do you think this company does?
- What do you like about this logo?
- What would you change (if anything) about this logo?
- If you saw this logo on the shelf, would it make you interested in purchasing this product? Why/why not?

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- **Website Design**

- What kind of information would you like to find on a product's website?
- Where would you most likely go to find contact and company information?
- Where would most likely go to find product information?

In addition, we will ask several questions which will help to identify where our participants fall within our client's target demographic.

- Gender
- Age
- Alcohol Consumption
- Location
- Where they purchase wine
- Prior knowledge/purchase of The Hive brand

This survey has been written by Anna, with the help of the other group members, and will be sent to individuals within a target market specified by the client; women ages 30 – 50, by way of social media and other online platforms. We will not discriminate against anyone wanting to take the survey; however, we will focus on this demographic. The survey will be active from February 21 – 28, 2021. Upon closing the survey, Anna will gather and calculate all of the data. The results will then be presented in graph form, for ease of evaluation, and made available to the other members of the group by way of the group's Google Drive folder, by March 1, 2021.

The insight we hope to gain from this survey will enlighten us to how the client's desired target market relates to and connects with certain aspects such as:

- What characteristics of a logo make it noticeable
- What kind of label makes the bottle jump off the shelf
- What information customers want to find on a website
- What information is the most appreciated/needed at a product tasting

We plan to use the data collected in determining the most successful way to design and implement the marketing collateral and deliverables promised to our client.

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INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Following the conclusion of our blind survey, we will hold a virtual focus group. As customers have the majority portion of perceived “ownership” in The Hive Winery and Spirits Company, it is critical to measure current brand perception and identify what is working well, and what could use improvement as our client moves forward with the renaming of their company.

Our focus group questions are open-ended and are aimed at setting the tone for the focus group. These questions will gauge the group’s interest level and knowledge of the product. As we have already gained information from our client regarding their top-selling products, these focus group questions center around fruit-based wine.

Our focus group will specifically target Utahns age 21 and up. Since our survey is directed at the client’s particular demographic, this focus group will include men and women, of various ages (21 and up to abide with alcohol laws), social, religious, and economic backgrounds. Utah residents will specifically be targeted due to the state’s unique liquor laws. This focus group will be conducted via Zoom Saturday March 6th.

Product Overview

- Today’s topic is fruit-based wine. What are your general feelings about it?
- What do you already know about fruit-based wine?
- How did you first hear about fruit-based wine?
- What words or phrases come to mind when you think of fruit-based wine?
- How familiar are you with fruit-based wine?
- What do you like best about fruit-based wine?
- What brands do you associate with fruit-based wine?
- What is your favorite aspect of fruit-based wine?

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Product Demand

- What is/was your first reaction to fruit-based wine?
- How often do you/would you use fruit-based wine?
- When and where would you use it?
- Do you think of fruit-based wine as something you absolutely need, something you could do without, or something that's somewhere in between?
- How much would you be willing to pay for a bottle of fruit-based wine?
- How would you ideally like to buy this product?
- In the liquor store? From the Winery storefront? After a tasting room session?
- If you ended up liking the product, could you see yourself repurchasing? If so, how often?

Brand Recognition

- What words come to mind when you think of fruit-based wine?
- What words come to mind when you think of local wine?
- When looking for fruit-based wine, what company or brand first comes to mind? Have you tried that company/brand's fruit-based wine?
- What about that company/brand is memorable?
- What colors does the company/brand utilize?
- What is your initial reaction to "The Hive Winery and Spirits Company"?
- What words come to mind when you hear this name?
- Have you heard of this company?
- What is your impression of this company?
- If you are familiar with The Hive Winery, what is your impression?
- If you are familiar with The Hive Winery, what is memorable about the company? Are you familiar with their products?
- Are you familiar with their product labels?
- Are you familiar with their logo? What colors do you think of when you think of The Hive Winery?

These interview questions are to gauge the current understanding of fruit-based wines, and what, if any, impressions are held by a general audience regarding this product in the state of Utah. The insight we hope to gain from this focus group will enable us to reflect on how the client's current brand strategy connects with customers, current and potential.

The report drawn up following this focus group will inform our team's decision and design regarding our deliverables, and will be delivered to the client for future reference as they continue to expand their brand and product offerings in the state of Utah.

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We plan to use the data collected in determining the most successful way to design and implement the marketing collateral and deliverables promised to our client.

CONCLUSION

After our initial interview with the client, and meeting as a team, we have discussed how our group and this project can help to inform and alleviate uncertainty in our client's ability to market and promote to their customers, as well as stay relevant and stand out amongst their competitors. We believe our efforts will be best spent researching and designing deliverables in the areas of:

- Website Design
- Logo Design
- Label Design
- Product Tasting Experience

The research gathered will help to inform the client of opportunities for improvement within their current practices, and will help in determining the best design elements for the marketing deliverables element of the project. We will present our client with a home page template, a remodeled logo collection, redesigned labels to be used for current and new products, and displays for a new tasting room program. These deliverables will be used by our client to elevate and propel their current branding.



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