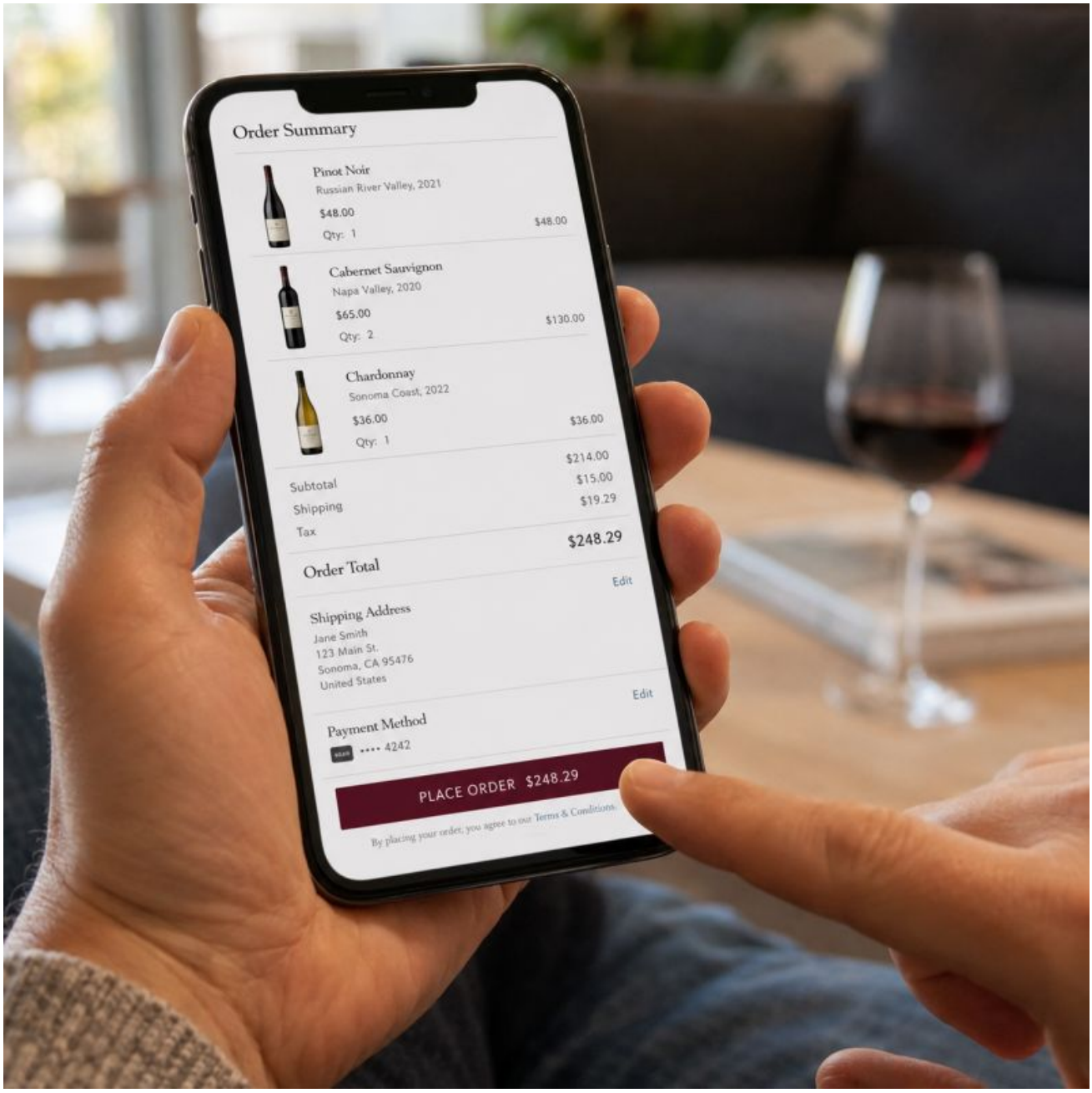
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Most West Coast winery websites fall short on speed, hurting online sales

A report on 5,580 sites found repetitive branding, weak retail features and shipping friction that may be costing wineries millions

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A new industry report from Transom says most winery websites on the West Coast are slow, hard to distinguish from one another and poorly equipped for modern online sales, creating what the firm describes as a major drag on direct-to-consumer revenue.

The 2026 Digital Winery Report examined 5,580 winery websites in California, Oregon and Washington using data collected from February through May. The study reviewed website performance, e-commerce tools, tasting room features, wine club structures, social media use and brand messaging.

Transom found that 79% of winery websites fall below modern performance benchmarks, with a median Google Lighthouse performance score of 58 out of 100. The report said median scores for SEO and accessibility were much higher, at 92 and 91, but argued that technical speed remains the main weakness because it is closely tied to conversion.

The firm linked those findings to online wine sales, citing annual direct-to-consumer e-commerce revenue of $394 million for the industry. It said even small delays can reduce conversions and estimated that faster sites could unlock tens of millions of dollars in additional revenue through purchases, reservations, club sign-ups and email captures.

The report also found that winery branding online is highly repetitive. According to Transom, 94.1% of wineries use some combination of quality, terroir or family and founder stories as central brand themes. Individually, 59.2% emphasize quality or craft, 56.6% focus on terroir or place and 53.6% lean on family or founder narratives. Only 21% were judged to have a distinct brand voice, while 45% used what the report called largely interchangeable copy.

Audience targeting was also limited. Transom said only 23.5% of wineries used language clearly aimed at a specific audience. Most targeted broad groups such as “Lifestyle Explorer” or “Engaged Enthusiast,” each used by 36% of wineries.

On the technical side, WordPress was the dominant content management system at 46.3% of sites, followed by Squarespace at 18.2%, Shopify at 7.3% and unidentified or hand-coded systems at 11.5%. The report said many wineries rely on template-based platforms rather than custom-built sites.

E-commerce adoption was widespread but often basic. Transom said 93.2% of wineries had e-commerce enabled, yet few used common retail features that are standard in other consumer categories. In a sampled subset of online stores, 33% offered Apple Pay or Google Pay, 25% used high-resolution product images, 11% offered cart incentives, 8% showed related product recommendations and almost none displayed customer reviews.

Commerce7 was the most common identified wine commerce platform at 27.3%, followed by WooCommerce at 21.9%, OrderPort at 11.3%, Shopify at 10.5%, WineDirect at 8.8% and VinoShipper at 7.1%. Transom said WooCommerce's strong showing suggests many wineries are choosing simpler general-purpose tools over wine-specific systems.

Shipping costs emerged as one of the biggest barriers to online conversion. The report said only 8% of wineries offered any shipping discount to non-club members and estimated that shipping friction causes the loss of about 30% of potential online wine sales. It cited broader cart abandonment research showing that unexpected costs account for 39% of abandoned carts and noted that shipping often adds 10%-25% to a typical order.

The study also pointed to weak measurement practices. Only 50.3% of winery websites showed evidence of using Google Analytics or Google Tag Manager, according to Transom. At the same time, 82.4% included some form of newsletter signup, suggesting wineries are trying to capture customer information without always having strong visibility into how visitors behave on their sites.

In hospitality, the report said wineries have largely embraced reservations for tasting rooms. Among visitor-welcoming wineries, 84.3% used some form of reservation system. Tock led among identifiable platforms with 48.8%, followed by Commerce7 at 21.9%.

But the report found a gap between tasting room offerings and changing consumer habits. Only 5.1% of wineries mentioned non-alcoholic beverages on their websites, even as younger consumers increasingly say they are drinking less. The study cited figures showing that 65% of Gen Z and 57% of millennials report trying to cut back on alcohol.

Family- and pet-friendly positioning was also limited. Transom found that 19.6% of wineries described themselves as family-friendly and 14.2% as pet-friendly, compared with broader U.S. household figures of 39% with children in the home and 43% owning a dog.

Wine clubs remained common and standardized across the region. The report said 65.1% of wineries offer a club, usually with three tiers, quarterly or twice-yearly shipments and discounts between 10% and 20%. Common benefits included discounts on wine, member-only events, complimentary tastings and priority access to releases. Only 5.6% offered what Transom classified as true subscription-style models with more flexible frequency and product choice.

Social media use was broad but often inactive. According to the report, 78.4% of winery websites linked to at least one social platform. Instagram led at 71.9%, followed by Facebook at 67%. But among scraped Instagram accounts, the median follower count was just 2,003, while 58% posted less than weekly and nearly 40% had not posted in the previous two months.

Transom described the project as the first comprehensive review of how wineries across California, Oregon and Washington present themselves online. The company said its findings are based on publicly available data combined with automated scraping, manual checks and large language model analysis of website content.