



Italian Wine Podcast

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## The Effectiveness Of Podcasts, A Heart To Heart Discussion On Making Content That Means Something

Stevie Kim is among the keynote speakers at this year's Wine Media Conference where she will speak about the podcast industry, using her own podcast, Italian Wine Podcast (IWP), as a case study. The Italian Wine Podcast is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year and has grown exponentially. There are several factors that have contributed to its success, such as the types of shows, the landscape of listeners, the backend and most of all the ethos required: maintaining consistency.



The Wine Media Conference was founded in 2008 and attracts wine bloggers, writers and influencers from across the globe. This year Stevie Kim, Producer of the Italian Wine Podcast and Managing Director of Vinality International, is among the keynote speakers. Her session will discuss whether or not podcasts are effective. Focusing on the wine genre, her view is that effective podcasting means

different things to different people but, often its ethos is to break the barriers in wine, steering it away from the pitfalls of the past, or to educate. She believes stats are useful, and engagement and expansion can be used as a yard stick. Moreover, what did the Covid period teach people about podcast listenership? Does it pay to podcast and what does this have to do with success in this medium? In this vein, she believes success is relative, podcasting is a personal investment that goes beyond simply accruing listenership for the sake of profits. Kim will also discuss the ups and downs of delivering a successful podcast and what the medium means for the future of wine communications.

The Italian Wine Podcast was launched in 2017 and amassed 23,000 listens in its first year. Since then it has enjoyed unprecedented growth and is now rapidly approaching 3 million listens, half of them coming in the last year alone and this is largely due to the pandemic, during which people were stuck at home craving distraction in one form or another. IWP is not simply another podcast on wine, rather it's about Italian wine people (and not only producers). It has tried to encompass a wide range of topics that can appeal to a wide-reaching audience, this is a key factor when attempting to grow listenership and staying power. Choosing the right people with the right expertise to host IWP's shows is also of paramount importance to the success of IWP; 'The Mod Squad' as they were coined, consist of Cynthia Chaplin (Voices), Steve Raye (Get US Market Ready With Italian Wine People), Polly Hammond (Uncorked), Marc Millon (Wine, Food & Travel), Professor Attilio Scienza (#everybodyneedsabitofscienza) and Stevie Kim (On The Road Edition / Clubhouse Ambassador's Corner). Each host has a unique style which again, goes towards appealing to a wide-ranging audience. In summation, with a daily schedule of entertaining and informative programming presented by some of the best-known personalities in the field, the Italian Wine Podcast has emerged as one of the most important voices on the Italian wine scene.

Since wine is quite niche in terms of potential audience, it is key to appeal to as many tastes as possible, this is why IWP closely monitors how the general public responds (whether via social media or listenership numbers or at trade events); therefore, IWP has many different types of shows on offer. From business to communications, to diversity, to food and wine, to travel as well as educational/scientific material. However, with all these avenues to explore, one of the biggest eye openers over the last 12 months has been the more chat style podcast. Clubhouse, the live audio drop-in chat has been revolutionary. While the app faded in listenership once the pandemic waned, the replay of these conversations on IWP has truly resonated with audiences. It seems that the more conversational and natural free flowing interviews have won the hearts of IWP's loyal listenership.

'Clubhouse Ambassador's Corner' features interviews between the international wine community, more specifically, The Vinitaly International Academy Italian Wine Ambassadors and producers all over Italy. Each Ambassador chooses which producer they wish to converse with, and Stevie Kim moderates the session. Not only does it promise great conversation, it allows for learning objectives as well as providing a bridge between producers creating the wines and the wine community who want to make contacts and foster relationships with these people regardless of distance. Ilaria Tachis, Owner of Podere La Villa winery near Florence wrote: *"This was my first long interview in English! I was excited and thrilled at the same time! Stevie Kim and Cynthia Chaplin (my interviewer) were incredible because they immediately made me feel at ease. It was like chatting among friends, as if we were sitting and talking over a cup of tea... or better a glass of wine!!! They are friendly and charming...it was a great experience for me and I would like to do it again when possible"*. Rocco Toscani of Azienda Agricola **Toscani** who was interviewed by Gill Gordon Smith in

Australia wrote: *"I love speaking and working with Gill, things always come out the way they should!"* The success of this show is tangible and Kim is proud to be part of something so meaningful, since it goes beyond simple entertainment, it has practical and positive repercussions for those taking part. So far there have been 40 published sessions of [Clubhouse Ambassador's Corner](#), and it is still going strong.

In terms of listenership demographic, Stevie Kim noted that: *"While Instagram offers instant gratification and a striking visual showpiece, podcasts allow us to create more meaningful, long form content in a convenient and intimate way that suits the 'on the go' lifestyle of audiences. We've tried to create programming that is educational and informative, but also accessible and entertaining too, and that's reflected in the wide diversity of our listeners, from seasoned wine producers and industry insiders, to wine enthusiasts from across the globe who enjoy our simple brand of storytelling and wine-related content."*

It is not all a bed of roses. Kim wants to expound the satisfaction that comes from such a gratifying project, but she also wants to make sure she remains grounded in reality. Her message at the conference will also encompass the incredible amount of sacrifice and heroic effort it takes to maintain a podcast, by her and her team. Consistency is key, failures must be met as challenges. Moreover, podcasting is not a sprint, it is a marathon, something that cannot be undertaken lightly, and there are very little monetary gains at the finish line. Therefore, while a podcast must have the winning ingredients to keep it going and growing, the impetus behind this undertaking must come from those who genuinely love their content – more simply put, the motivation behind the work must be pure and not for profits, ensuring longevity and great content.

The Wine Media Conference will take place on the shores of Lake Garda from 29 September to 1 October 2022. For more information just visit: <https://www.winemediaconference.org/from-the-organizers/35-minute-video-on-wmc22/>

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**About:** The *Italian Wine Podcast: Cin Cin with Italian Wine People!* launched in 2017 as a project dedicated exclusively to the Italian wine world. The program uncovers the unique world of Italian wine in conversation with some of its key protagonists. Under the umbrella brand of Mamma Jumbo Shrimp (encompassing books, maps, and videos, bringing together a global community of wine, food, and travel), Italian Wine Podcast aims to inform, educate, and entertain listeners with content for wine professionals and casual listeners alike. The only daily wine podcast in the world, content includes wine business, food & travel, diversity and inclusion, wine producers, science, and marketing and communication. Italian Wine Podcast is available on SoundCloud, iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, XimalayaFM (for China), and on the official website. It now boasts almost 900 recorded episodes with a growing online following of over 2 million listens. Donations to the show are welcomed and help fund a portion of the show's equipment, production, and publication costs. To advertise on the show, please request a prospectus and/or customized advertising plan from [info@italianwinepodcast.com](mailto:info@italianwinepodcast.com). Cin Cin!