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- Home
- News
- In Focus
- On The Shelf
- Resources
- Companies
- Events
- Products
- Magazine
- Food & Beverage Industry Awards
- Search

## The Wine Society merges with Cracka Wines

December 19, 2017 News

The Online Liquor Group, which owns Cracka Wines, My Wine Guy and Winegrowers Direct, has merged with Tws Wholesale, owners of The Wine Society.

The Wine Society has been part of the local liquor market for more than 70 years, pioneering monthly wine plans and exclusive wine selections for members. New CEO Lloyd Heinrich has focused on rebuilding the industry stalwart by improving its digital capability and offering an improved range of wines.

Heinrich said the merger marked an exciting time.

"This merger puts our group in pole position to lead the expected consolidation in the online liquor industry and be a serious contender for the number one independent within the sector," he said.

"With total revenue of \$400.5 million in 2016–17, online sales represent just four per cent of the overall liquor market in Australia. Online is the fastest growing channel in the Australian retail landscape and with our combined credentials, we will now be a significant player in this space with the expertise to grow quickly."

Heinrich will lead the merged business with Cracka Wines founder Dean Taylor as joint CEO.

By joining forces the two businesses will create a database of over 400,000 wine lovers. The Wine Society has a following of long-term members who buy higher-value product regularly, while Cracka Wines has a dynamic and younger following seeking out wines not readily available from other retailers.

Taylor said the merger would provide a broader based network of members to suppliers and a superior product range to members.

"Cracka Wines had planned to be the first company in Australia to complete a crowd-funded capital-raising project but instead saw the merit in joining forces with The Wine Society. Cracka has invested heavily in technology to drive a direct-to-consumer model and has grown revenues rapidly since its formation only seven years ago," he said.



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