



## Your Winery's Energy Saving Toolkit

As any wine producer knows, energy bills are a significant outlay. That's why reducing energy costs and consumption will help wineries save money and achieve more sustainable business models. So, as an owner of a winery, where should you start when it comes to reducing energy costs?

### Understanding your current energy usage

Compared to other wine-making regions of the world, winemakers in the UK benefit from cooler ambient temperatures, which has both pros and cons. On the one hand, UK wineries spend more on heating, especially in the winter months; on the other, cooler weather can keep refrigeration costs down in the winemaking process.

Nevertheless, electricity costs due to refrigeration are still high for fermentation cooling, stabilisation and storage purposes. In fact, heating, cooling and ventilation systems account for the largest segment of energy used, followed by lighting. Winery owners should, therefore, look to these elements first when it comes to reducing overall energy costs.

### Quick fixes for better energy efficiency

If you want a quick fix – and of course, we all do – then here are business energy broker Smarter Business's quick-fix tips for your winery – **TICK**

**T**urn it off! You could save hundreds of pounds a year if you have efficient lighting that is switched off when not in use – don't forget retail, tasting rooms, admin, office and staff areas! Better still, invest in occupancy sensors; these are easy to install and are ideal for low-use areas such as storerooms or staff rooms, saving you between 30 – 75 percent on light consumption.

**I**nsulate. Insulating old refrigeration and cooling equipment will make it far more energy efficient. Spray-on insulation, bubble wrap or foam is easy to apply.

**C**heck and maintain your equipment on a regular basis. If equipment is not fully operational for any reason, it could be using more energy than it should be. For example, if the damper vent in an air conditioning unit is stuck in the fully open position, it could add as much as 50 percent to a building's annual energy bill.

**K**eep your pressure at the right supply for your load when packaging and bottling. Generate compressed air only at the pressure you need. If you halve the pressure, you could get energy savings of more than 50 percent. You can also sequence machines to ensure that some compressors are shut off when demand is below full capacity.

## The benefits of professional energy audits

Energy, like all business costs, is much easier to control when you have the full picture of how, when and why it is being used. Having accurate data and analysis from professional energy audit helps you make better business decisions and ensures that you are less exposed to energy price hikes.

In order to effect real change and save money, it makes sense to outsource your energy audit to a specialist. For those businesses with a half hourly meter, Smarter Business offers free desktop energy audits across large and small sites. They can then translate this information into effective tactics which could reduce your energy consumption by up to 25 percent.

Tim-Sealy Fisher, Head of Key Accounts at Smarter Business said: "This type of audit looks at how much energy your winery is using and the times it is being used. We can then alert you to any spike or drop in the energy pattern, which should help you avoid overspend. It will also show which sites are more efficient than others, which will help you consider if you can replicate these efficiencies elsewhere."

Most wineries are proud of their 'green' credentials, often a prerequisite for wine consumers. The Smarter Business energy audit will also advise on how you can improve your carbon emissions to become more environmentally friendly. Reducing energy consumption not only saves your business money, but helps you market your 'green' business.

## Get expert help, save thousands – like Hattingley Valley Wines

Most wineries are too busy managing their day-to-day businesses to think about changing their supplier. An example is Bruce Green, Finance Director at Hattingley Valley Wines in Hampshire, one of the top five British wine producers.

"About 3 – 4 % of our total outlay is spent on electricity," said Bruce. "When I first joined the team three years ago, we were spending around £30,000 on electricity in the production area of the winery. I had heard positive things about Smarter Business and so asked if they could review our expenditure."

Smarter Business works with several wineries and is a gold patron of The Wine Association. The company will carry out a free, historical utility bill audit (going back six years) to find where you may be able to claim back money for billing errors - which are more common than you may think. Their free desktop energy audit will also advise if you are eligible for specific grant and rebates such as purchasing energy-saving equipment.

"It was great to be able to hand over all the hard work to somebody else," said Bruce. "We had seven meters here with differing renewal dates, and we simply didn't have the time or resources to do that in-house. Having our old bills analysed by an expert was really useful."

The audit exercise identified several suppliers that were offering a cheaper deal than Hattingley Valley's existing supplier. Bruce said: "As a result of working with Smarter Business, we switched to quite a small supplier that was not even on our radar at the time. The resulting switch beat the renewal quote with our existing supplier by a very healthy 20 percent, saving us several thousand pounds."

Bruce concludes: "To keep electricity costs competitive we will continue to utilise the switching service when our current contract approaches renewal date. However, it is not something we will have to worry about, as we know that Smarter Business will review the market for us. It's a simple and free process that saves us time and money - what's not to like?"

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