Rich Sermone

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RICH SERMONE

**ABOUT ME:**

I have spent my entire career in the beverage industry working for many great companies with incredible brands. I have been fortunate enough to do so with many talented partners and teammates. I have extensive executive leadership in the beverage space across many categories and channels of trade.

**CORE COMPETENCIES:**

**Team Hiring/Team Building**–Almost every key hire developed and progressed to bigger roles and everyone is part of the team if they work for me.

**Brand development**-This is as much a sales responsibility as it is marketing’s. In my current role, our top selling item represented 80% of volume in the largest channel at low margins. Through intense focus on improving sales mix with higher margin products, the item now is 40% of revenue and channel gross margins increased eight points, while still obtaining the overall revenue goal.

**Omni channel go to market strategy-**We improved overall revenue through expanding previously low volume channels. We launched a corporate gifting program that will account for 8-10% of sales revenue in 2021 from 0 and increased E Commerce six-fold in the last three years.

**P&L improvement –** I work collaborativelyacross departments to understand COGS, OPEX, gross marginsand salesvelocity to understand opportunities to increase profitability. Last year we increased overall company margin by 10 points driven by overperformance in DTC sales combined with price increases and reducing OPEX and price increases in the wholesale business.

**Programming Execution-**Great programming is crucial to a brands success. In May 2021 we participated in a Chardonnay program with four other wineries for one of the largest retailers in the country. We were the only wine that did not have distribution in the chain and within thirty days, achieved 94% distribution gaining 180 stores in the process.

**EXPERIENCE:**

[**Executive Vice President Sales**](https://www.linkedin.com/company/adelsheim-vineyard/)

**ADELSHEIM VINEYARD**

[Dates Employed: November 2017 – Present](https://www.linkedin.com/company/adelsheim-vineyard/)

[Employment Duration: 3 years 7 months](https://www.linkedin.com/company/adelsheim-vineyard/)

[Location: Wine Country, Oregon](https://www.linkedin.com/company/adelsheim-vineyard/)

**JOB SCOPE:**

I have had several leadership roles in less than three years, including co-leading the company for fifteen months during a time of CEO transition and initial phase of COVID-19.   I currently manage all revenue, inventory across the company, wholesale, national accounts and developing channels. Most of my tenure has included managing through an incredible amount of change and major shift in portfolio focus and direction.

**AREAS OF NOTABLE IMPROVEMENT:**

* Profitable revenue growth
* Budget creation and management in all phases
* Go to market strategies
* Team development and culture
* National Accounts relationships
* Strategic partnership development

**KEY WINS:**

**Built an excellent team** focused on very specific skill sets with varying backgrounds who have all had a high level of contribution to goals.

**Helped achieve 6x ecommerce growth** in 2 years off a solid base. We improved our offerings and the overall shopping experience. When the pandemic hit, our Director of Marketing, VP of Consumer, and I developed new programing with unique offerings, strong value propositions and strong campaigns with interesting partners. Our growth was 30 percentage points higher than our peer set.

**Created and implemented omni channel sales** and marketing thematic calendar, dramatically improving focus, execution, and sales on key priorities. This “live” document helped create a framework for programming that helped align channels and simplify the planning process.

**The consumer business grew 15%** in 2019, with all 4 channels growing and 17% in 2020 despite the tasting room being closed for much of the year.  Launching Corporate Gifting and leaning into Ecommerce provided for half of the growth and created a runway for future significant incremental contribution.

**\*2021 YTD performance is off to a fast start** with all five channels at an aggregate of 115% of the net revenue goal and 10% below budget in OPEX spending.

Currently, 2021 wholesale business is 17% above very aggressive goals, 850 new retail Points of Distribution.

**PAST EXPERIENCE:**

[**Vice President of Off Premise Sales and Distribution**](https://www.linkedin.com/company/stumptown-coffee-roasters/)

**STUMPTOWN COFFEE ROASTERS**

[Dates Employed: March 2016 – November 2017](https://www.linkedin.com/company/stumptown-coffee-roasters/)

[Employment Duration: 1 year 9 months](https://www.linkedin.com/company/stumptown-coffee-roasters/)

[Location: Portland, Oregon Area](https://www.linkedin.com/company/stumptown-coffee-roasters/)

Stumptown is an incredible brand with a tremendous following and great pricing power.  Our focus was on scaling cold brew coffee distribution in grocery and deeper penetration with whole bean business in specialty retail.   I helped navigate an integration with Peet’s Coffee, who had the same route to market, with the same products, but on an entirely different scale with a completely different culture.  This was a great experience in managing large company politics and the influence on a much smaller company.

**KEY WINS:**

Initially, we had only one path to market on cold brew coffee through a refrigerated wholesale system that took 20% margin.  We were able to successfully go directly to key customers, including Kroger nationally, resulting in an additional 1.5 million in revenue.  In addition to Kroger, our team successfully gained national distribution in Target, Whole Foods and HEB with new products. Our focus on strategic retailers that allowed us to ship directly to their distribution centers was a big swing in profitability.

**Reason for Leaving:**

I was recruited to Adelsheim and this was a tough decision, but I had wanted to be back in the wine industry at some point and this was a good fit.

[**Vice President of Sales**](https://www.linkedin.com/company/coffee-bean-international/)

**COFFEE BEAN INTERNATIONAL / FARMER BROTHERS COFFEE**

[Dates Employed: March 2010 – March 2016](https://www.linkedin.com/company/coffee-bean-international/)

[Employment Duration: 6 years](https://www.linkedin.com/company/coffee-bean-international/)

This was my first experience of integration with a parent company, whose culture and business model were vastly different yet in the same industry.  I had three positions over my tenure, and all revolved around the private label side of specialty coffee which is a unique space. I managed teams focused only on generating new business and those who only managed existing customers, all very large and strategic.

**KEY WINS:**

Our teams over the last three years acquired new customers contributing more than 40 million dollars in annual sales, retained and renegotiated 8/8 contracts for existing key customers, representing over 50 million dollars in annual sales, and was named vendor of the year in Target and Einstein Noah’s Bagels. Addressing contract renegotiations early to work through any challenges and to initiate new projects helped lock us in for renewal.

**Reason for Leaving:**

I was recruited to Stumptown to manage and grow the cold brew wholesale business. I had accomplished a lot and after the significant organizational change, it felt like a great time to go to a hot brand.

[**Vice President of Sales**](https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=Jones%20Soda)

[**JONES**](https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=Jones%20Soda) **SODA**

[Dates Employed: March 2008 – January 2010](https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=Jones%20Soda)

[Employment Duration: 1 year 10 months](https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=Jones%20Soda)

This was a brand with incredible popularity and was a lot of fun to work with. It was also a complete turnaround situation; the company was losing money, overstaffed, had deteriorating relationships in wholesale/trade and the brand was becoming stale.  I was part of a team that right sized and reallocated the workforce, changed the product line up and invested in the right strategy and partnerships.  It was the most difficult job in my career, with really challenging situations but It was also the best business education I could have asked for. All the core team are having flourishing careers in other places.

**KEY WINS:**

We were able to stabilize volume, improve the P&L and implement a more focused selling strategy. The brand was left in a much better place largely through improving our relationships with key customers and our wholesale partners.

**Reason for Leaving:**

I was recruited to run business development in the unique space of private label specialty coffee.

[**Division Manager**](https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=Ste.%20Michelle%20Wine%20Estates&lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base%3BMiNc%2Fn28SFCN2%2B8DhIZZ%2Bg%3D%3D&licu=urn%3Ali%3Acontrol%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base-background_details_company)

[**STE.**](https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=Ste.%20Michelle%20Wine%20Estates&lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base%3BMiNc%2Fn28SFCN2%2B8DhIZZ%2Bg%3D%3D&licu=urn%3Ali%3Acontrol%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base-background_details_company) **MICHELLE WINE ESTATES**

[Dates Employed: March 1995 – February 2008](https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=Ste.%20Michelle%20Wine%20Estates&lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base%3BMiNc%2Fn28SFCN2%2B8DhIZZ%2Bg%3D%3D&licu=urn%3Ali%3Acontrol%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base-background_details_company)

[Employment Duration: 13 years](https://www.linkedin.com/search/results/all/?keywords=Ste.%20Michelle%20Wine%20Estates&lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base%3BMiNc%2Fn28SFCN2%2B8DhIZZ%2Bg%3D%3D&licu=urn%3Ali%3Acontrol%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base-background_details_company)

I had a variety of roles and grew the business 10x during 13 years in a period of rapid growth for the company.  I was responsible for developing a multistate sales team and Canada.

I consolidated the wholesale network from an independent network, gaining valuable experience in negotiations and market evaluation.

My results over the years were at the top of the company from every measure, benefitting from my team, peers, and leadership.  My direct reports over the last five years of my tenure achieved four President’s Club Awards, Salesperson of the Year Award, Business Development Manager of the Year Award, and new promotions with higher pay upon my departure.

**KEY WINS:**

The business had a 18% CAGR over my final five years with the company, despite having a very mature core market. This ranked my team as #1 in the company. We achieved this through incredible teamwork and an intense focus on maximizing market expansion through great retail execution in previously underperforming outer markets.

**Reason for Leaving:**

I was at a point in my career where I really wanted more responsibility and there was very little turnover at the senior level. I was recruited to work at Jones Soda and left to become a VP of Sales.

**EDUCATION:**

**[Portland State University](https://www.linkedin.com/school/19202/?legacySchoolId=19202" \t "_blank)**

[Bachelor's degree](https://www.linkedin.com/school/19202/?legacySchoolId=19202)

[Liberal Arts and Sciences](https://www.linkedin.com/school/19202/?legacySchoolId=19202)

**FAMILY/COMMUNITY/HOBBIES:**

My wife Sandra and I have three amazing children and we live in SW Washington State. We enjoy cooking and eating as a family and spending time at the beach. I enjoy mounting biking, yoga and coaching youth soccer and baseball. I am an avid investor in the stock market and love to watch football and soccer.