LWIN - A short introduction to the common language for wine and spirits

The role of a unique identifier

Unique and universal identifiers exist for almost every product bought and sold today – commonly introduced to remove ambiguity and increase confidence and efficiency in supply chains. For the book industry it is the International Standard Book Number (ISBN), for the retail sector it is the Global Trade Identification Number (GTIN), and for property in the UK it is the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN).

Since 2011, the wine and spirits trade has benefited from having its own unique identifier, the Liv-ex Wine Identification Number (LWIN).

With LWIN freely available to use, all businesses with an interest in wine and spirits - retailers, wholesalers, logistics providers, trade bodies and publications – can now enjoy the same advantages that other industries have benefited from for many years. Namely, the ability to connect, share information, and automate easily. This ultimately removes ambiguity and increases confidence and efficiency across the whole supply chain.
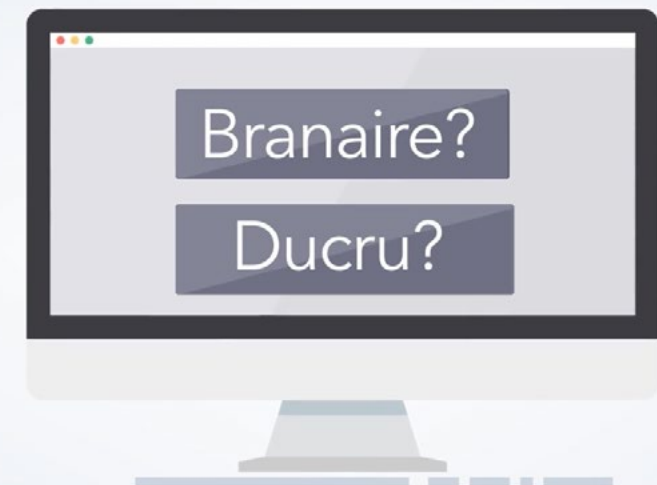
Why is a common language important for wine and spirits?

Wine producers and traders have traditionally adopted different naming conventions for their products, often depending on which parts of the wine label they feel are the most important. It is an issue the industry has adapted to for hundreds of years and is further compounded by variations, abbreviations and contractions. "Grange" for example, is widely understood as "Penfolds Grange", despite there being over 200 wines with "Grange" in their title.

For humans it is possible (although not always) to understand the subject matter. The same cannot be said for computers. Very rarely is the full name of a wine used. Even less frequently is it written or keyed consistently in every system, document or form when wine is created, transported, marketed, bought, sold or stored. In fact, details of wines are commonly recorded more than ten times for a single transaction and repeated many times over in the life of a wine.

Without a unique identifier, it is challenging to exchange information about wine quickly and accurately. It is impossible to exchange it automatically – something that is essential in the digital age.

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What is LWIN?

LWIN, the Liv-ex Wine Identification Number, is a universal identifier for wine and spirits. It assigns unique codes to wine and spirits, providing a bridge between systems across the trade so that they all speak the same language. It is free to use, and always will be.

An LWIN code is an integer value of 7, 11, 16 or 18-digits. The key part of each code is the initial 7-digit value which describes the product. Subsequent digits are used in a methodical manner to describe the vintage of the product, bottle size and pack size.

Leoville Barton 2009, 12x75

1012361 2009 12 00750

Wine name   Vintage   Pack   Bottle

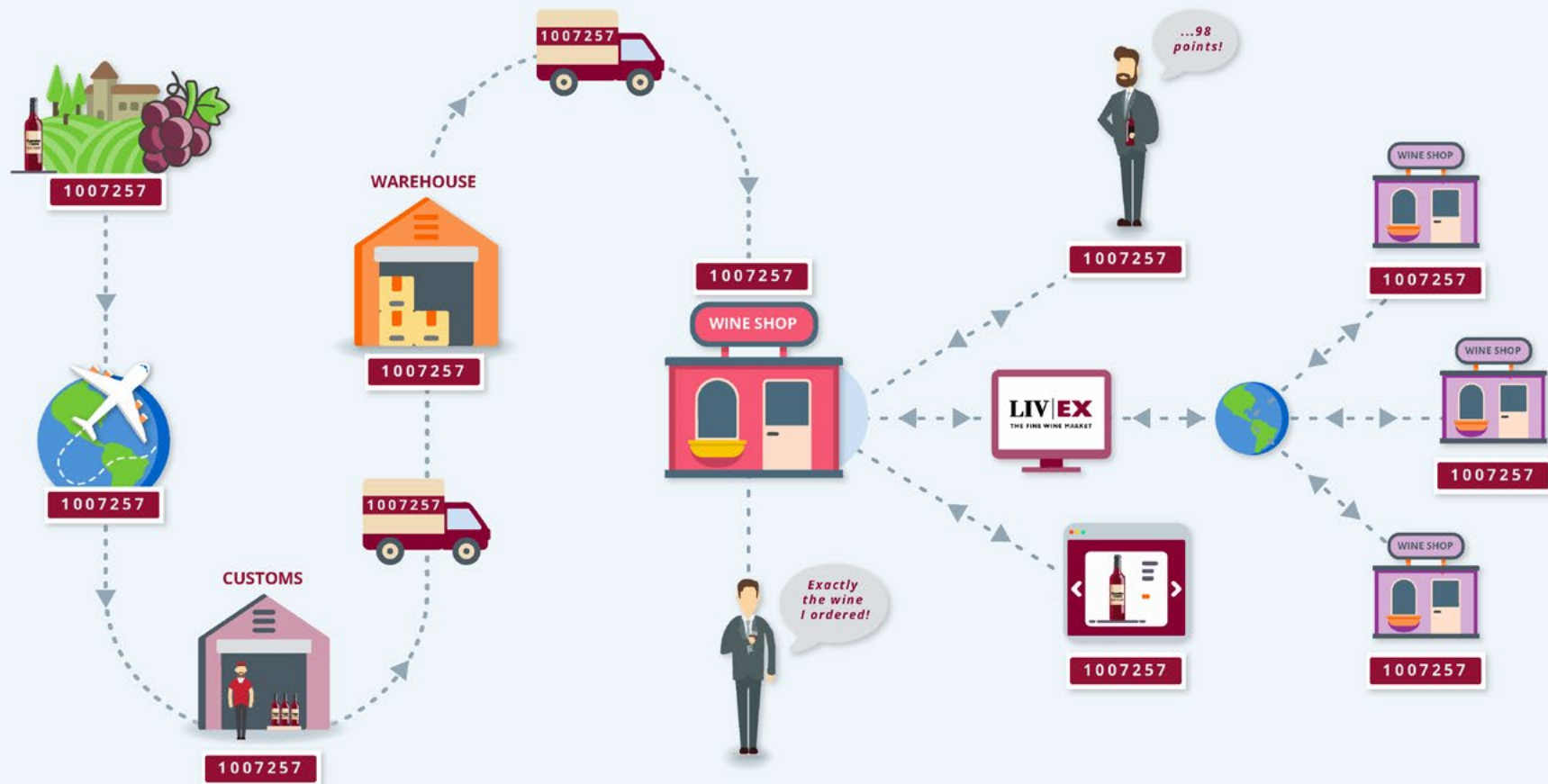| LWIN	Format	Describes	Wine example	LWIN example
LWIN7	7-digit integer	Product	Leoville Barton	1012361
LWIN11	11-digit integer	Product + vintage	Leoville Barton 2009	10123612009
LWIN16	16-digit integer	Product + vintage + bottle size	Leoville Barton 2009, 75cl	1012361200900750
LWIN18	18-digit integer	Product + vintage + pack size + bottle size	Leoville Barton 2009, 12x75cl	101236120091200750

LWIN attributes

LWIN doesn't just provide a code for each wine. Many other data points are included in the LWIN database, which is free to download in Excel or can be reached via API.

These include colour, classification and detailed regional information down to the individual parcel where relevant. A standardised display name is also provided. Users can choose whether to use it or continue with their own display names.

Attribute	Value
LWIN	1437818
Display name	Benjamin Leroux, Meursault Premier Cru, Blagny La Piece sous le Bois
Status (Live or expired LWIN)	Live
Producer title	
Producer name	Benjamin Leroux
Wine	NA
Country	France
Region	Burgundy
Sub region	Meursault
Site	Blagny
Parcel	La Piece sous le Bois
Colour	Red
Type	Wine
Sub type	Still
Designation	AOP
Classification	Premier Cru
Vintage configuration	Sequential
First vintage	2014
Final vintage	
Reference	

LWIN works across the supply chain to make sure everyone is speaking the same language.

Opportunities – A consistent naming convention

LWIN's universally consistent code, and optional display name, make it easier for you to manage stock or lists of wines. In the past, it was common to see wines entered in multiple different ways in the same system. This would lead to inconsistencies in stock counts and system searches.

For example, a computer system interprets "Château Montrose" and "Montrose" as two different wines, so a stock summary or search result might have shown 10 cases of one and 20 of the other. With LWIN, it's clear that you have 30 cases of the same wine.

- Make stock reconciliation more accurate
- Get a better view of your stock for insurance or valuation purposes
- Display consistent names to your customers – look more professional

Opportunities – Enriched product data

As well as providing a code and display name, LWIN offers extensive geographic, colour and classification information, which you can use on your website or in your system.

- Show extra wine information to your customers and staff to increase their confidence when buying or selling
- Add filters to your website and internal systems, helping customers and staff to locate wine
- No more time wasted manually entering detailed product data

Opportunities – An LWIN community

LWIN has a growing network of users worldwide. Retailers, wholesalers, importers, logistics suppliers, publications, developers and apps are adopting it. When you start using LWIN, you can share and receive information with them easily and accurately.

- Share clearer lists with customers and suppliers. Work together more easily.
- Send or receive accurate shipping instructions. Be confident that you're both talking about the same product.
- If your business involves sharing information about wine, for example publications, you can use LWIN to share it and commercialise it easily.

Opportunities – Connect and automate

With LWIN in your system, it's easy to begin to automate processes. Many merchants are already taking advantage of this to eliminate manual processes and increase sales – several case studies are available online. You can connect to Liv-ex to automatically:

· Get accurate price information for insight and valuation
· Buy and sell with a global marketplace – Increase sales exponentially
· Manage logistics and payments – reduce admin

Average uplifts using Liv-ex automation
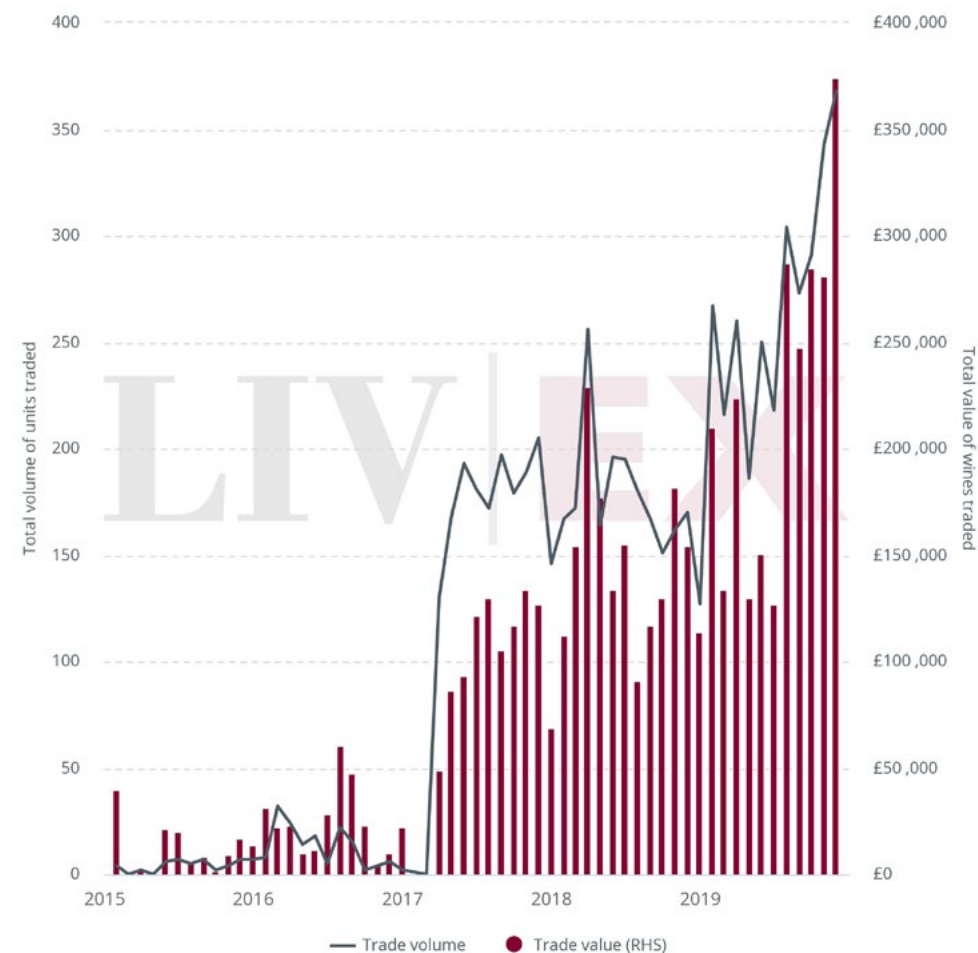
8.8%
Higher selling prices

5.9x
Increase in trade volumes

200%
Uplift in sales volumes

Impact of automation for one Liv-ex member

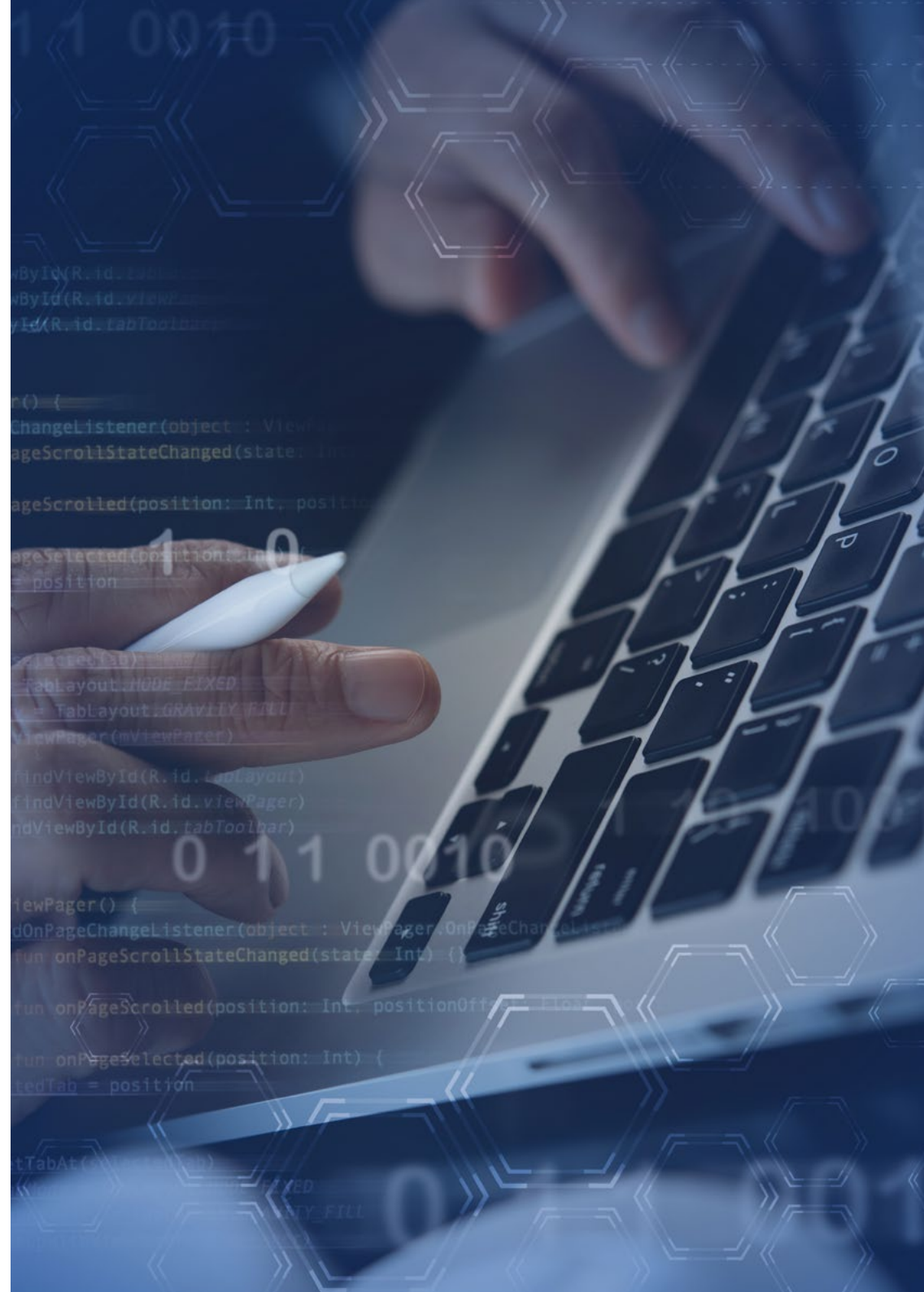Trade volume — ● Trade value (RHS)

How to get started

Getting started with LWIN is free and easy. By understanding what LWIN is and some of the benefits, you've already taken the first step.

The next step is to match your list of wines to LWIN. You can do this quickly using Wine Matcher, an online tool developed by Liv-ex. Simply upload your Excel list and the tool will identify the wines and add LWIN codes for you. You can access Wine Matcher free for one month, which is plenty of time to conduct an initial match.

After that, download the LWIN database to add extra data – like regional and classification information – to your list.

You'll then be ready to add it to your own system, stay informed, and request new LWINs whenever you need them. This can either be done manually or automatically, via the LWIN API.

All of this is laid out in detail in our implementation guide, which you can access online.
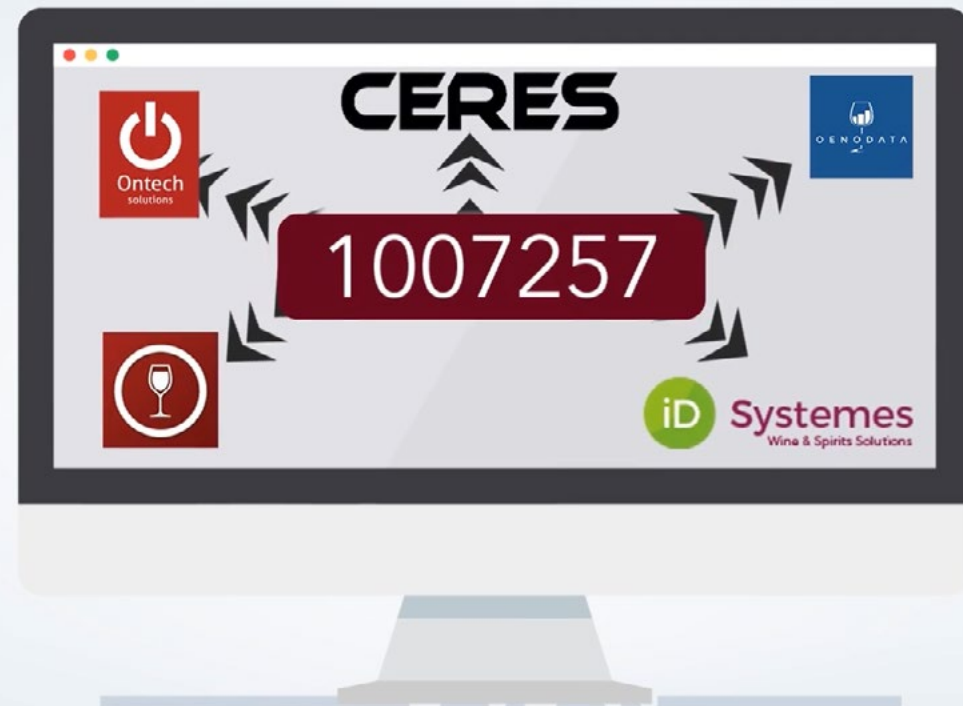
Who uses LWIN?

LWIN is used by a growing number of wine professionals worldwide, and many popular systems have been built with LWIN in mind.

Fine wine management systems – including Vision and Vintner – and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software from Microsoft and Magento have also incorporated the LWIN structure. This gives another option for merchants and logistics providers to adopt LWIN.

What others say

The LWIN initiative has earned praise from influential players in the industry. In 2018, it was awarded Supply Chain Initiative of the Year by The Drinks Business magazine.

The publication commented: "Our judges praised Liv-ex's innovative LWIN system … and applauded the company's 'generous and selfless' decision to make the service free for other companies to use, acting 'for the greater good of the wine trade'".

Wine reviewer and founder of Vinous, Antonio Galloni has also shared a positive view of LWIN:

> "As well as supporting the flow of information to help make the market more efficient, LWINs present interesting opportunities in product development."

Antonio Galloni
vinous

Conclusion – A simple, connected future

LWIN is enabling the wine and spirits trade to benefit from a common language – something that other industries have enjoyed for many years.

This common language is helping the wine and spirits trade to connect and share information more easily, ultimately removing ambiguity and increasing confidence and efficiency across the whole supply chain. It is fundamental to facilitating automation.

As more and more players in this field adopt LWIN, we are creating a more efficient and more profitable wine and spirits trade together.

Further resources

- <u>How to get started with LWIN</u> – This short guide tells you everything that you need to know about getting started with LWIN, which is free and easy to use.

- <u>LWIN database</u> - The LWIN database contains all wines that have an LWIN, plus all of the additional information like region and classification. New LWINs are added weekly.

- <u>Request access to Wine Matcher</u> – Use Wine Matcher to add LWINs to your list automatically

- <u>Enquire about APIs</u> – With APIs, your changing list will stay up-to-date with LWIN automatically.

LIV|EX

THE FINE WINE MARKET

Liv-ex is the global marketplace for the wine trade. It has over 475 members from start-ups to established merchants and supplies them with the data, trading and logistics services they need, to price, source and sell wine more efficiently.

Liv-ex was founded in 2000 by James Miles and Justin Gibbs. It started with a group of 10 founding members in London, and a vision to make fine wine trading more transparent, efficient and safe.

Liv-ex publishes the actual prices at which wines are transacted. Its platform contains over £60m of firm buying and selling opportunities in over 15,000 wines. All are available to trade in real-time. Liv-ex conceived the Standard-in-Bond (SIB) contract to assure stock condition, delivery and faster payment and provide cost-effective logistics and storage solutions. Its APIs can automate much of this to further improve its merchant members' gross profits.

For more information visit www.liv-ex.com[1] or get in touch today[2].

1   https://www.liv-ex.com
2   http://bit.ly/LXGetInTouch