



WSWA at a Glance

The Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) is the national trade association representing the wholesale tier of the wine and spirits industry. It is dedicated to advancing the interests and independence of wholesale distributors and brokers of wine and spirits.

Founded in 1943, WSWA has over 350 member companies in 50 states and the District of Columbia, and its members distribute more than 80 percent of all wines and spirits sold at wholesale in the United States. More information is available at www.wswa.org.

Who are Wholesalers and How do They Work?

The nation's nearly 6,000 wine and spirits wholesaler locations are the crucial core of a responsible and efficient distribution system that delivers adults the widest variety of products available anywhere in the world in a manner that controls access for of-age consumers, delivers tax revenue to local, state and federal governments, and ensures product safety and consumer protection.

Wholesalers account for more than 63,000 jobs paying nearly \$5 billion in wages and generate more than \$55 billion in tax revenue.

Wholesalers are the important central link in the three tier system of beverage alcohol production, distribution and sales in place in the United States.

In the first tier, alcohol beverages are produced at distilleries, breweries and wineries around the world. These facilities and their owners pay excise taxes required by the federal government.

In the middle tier are wholesalers. They are the local marketing, logistics and distribution experts for the many thousands of brands and products available to consumers at hundreds of thousands of retail and on-premise locations throughout the country. Wholesalers collect most excise taxes for state and local governments. They also work with retail outlets, bars and restaurants to develop effective local advertising campaigns, point of sale displays and promotional events.

The third tier is represented by outlets where Americans purchase beverages: bars and restaurants (known as on-premise facilities) and retail establishments (known as off-premise facilities).

The three tier system protects consumers by ensuring only legitimate, unadulterated product is sold to customers of legal age, and guarantees a predictable flow of tax revenue to government with appropriate regulatory oversight. This structure also ensures that vertically-integrated monopolies cannot exist across all tiers of the system, while also balancing the competing interests of many companies and ensuring an orderly and well-managed marketplace.