



*Safely Trimming the budget in your
Ultra-Premium Vineyard Operation*

Garrett Buckland June 2nd 2009

Premiere Viticultural Services

- We provide Viticultural Consulting to 52 high end vineyards in Napa, Sonoma, Sierra foothills
- Over 2,100 acres
- We consult for Wineries large and small
- Vineyard management Companies
- Individual vineyard owners
- We provide Database services to over 1000 users. Management companies, individual vineyards, and wineries comprising more than 20,000 acres of vineyard.

The Use of a database helps keep stuff straight, fewer number of things fall through the cracks

Every clients needs are slightly different, from Vineyard owners- Management companies-boutique wineries-large producers



**soils climate rootstock
clones pest diseases
irrigation canopy mgmt
harvest chaos sales
petioles nutrients
weather NDVI
pressure bomb
hang time
chemistry
water**



DATA "AT REST" / BLACK HOLE



Challenges and Opportunities

- Managing increasing complexity
- Accessing current and historical information
- Planning farming activities in advance
- Using inputs more efficiently
- Tracking activities and inputs
- Increasing the effectiveness of the viticulture staff
- Improving communication

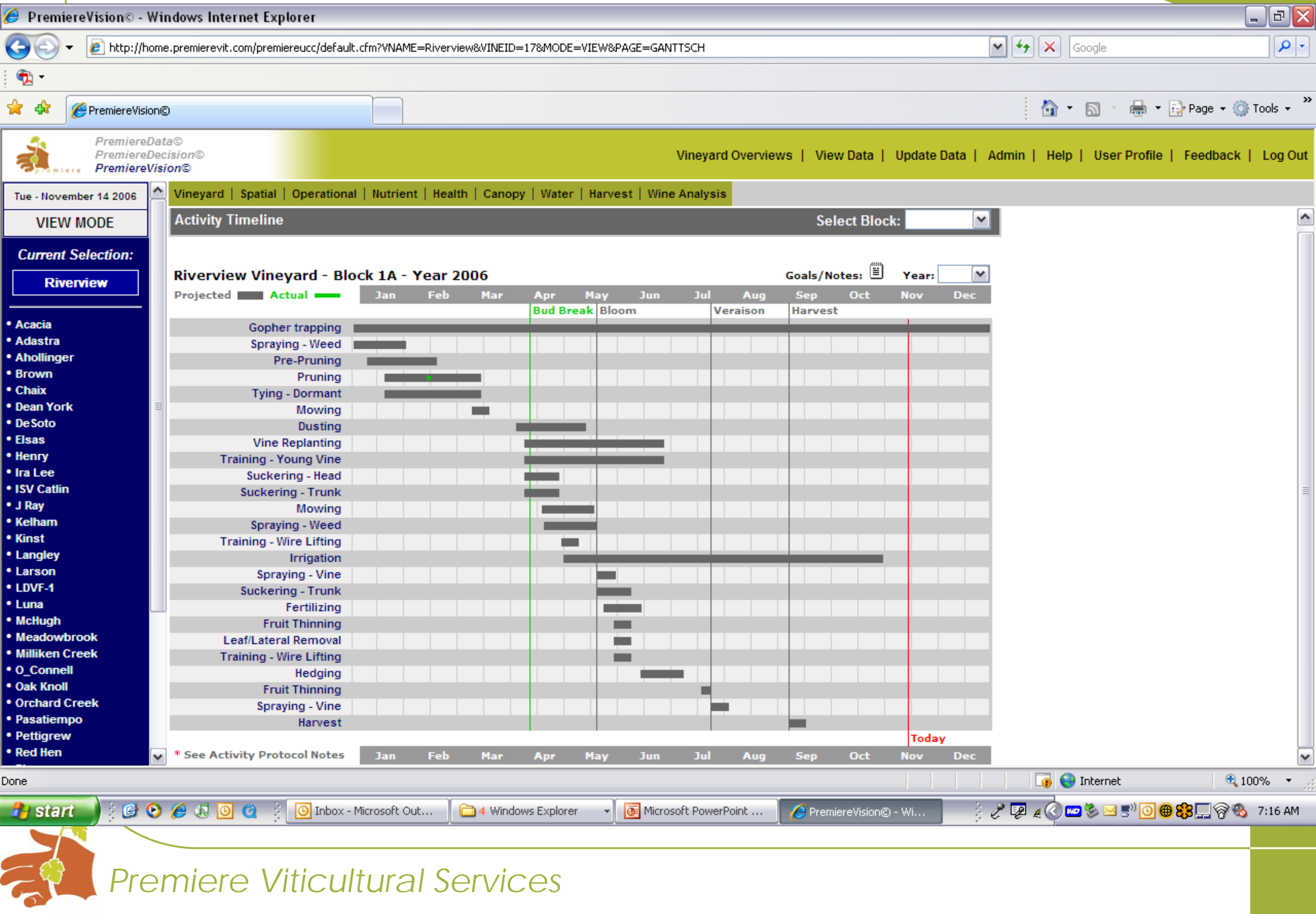
Making better decisions



The Premiere Approach

- Improve planning and communication in your organization and with clients
- Improve operational control / results
 - Utilize new technologies to make better decisions
 - Improve data collection, access, analysis, communication
 - Maximize grape quality and production prior to harvest
 - Improves quality control and relationships with winery clients
- Reduce complexity and chaos by making better decisions throughout the entire year (“Make the right decision every step of the way”).
- Improve profitability by minimizing or eliminating costs / tasks that don't improve/affect quality





Tue - November 14 2006

Vineyard | Spatial | Operational | Nutrient | Health | Canopy | Water | Harvest | Wine Analysis

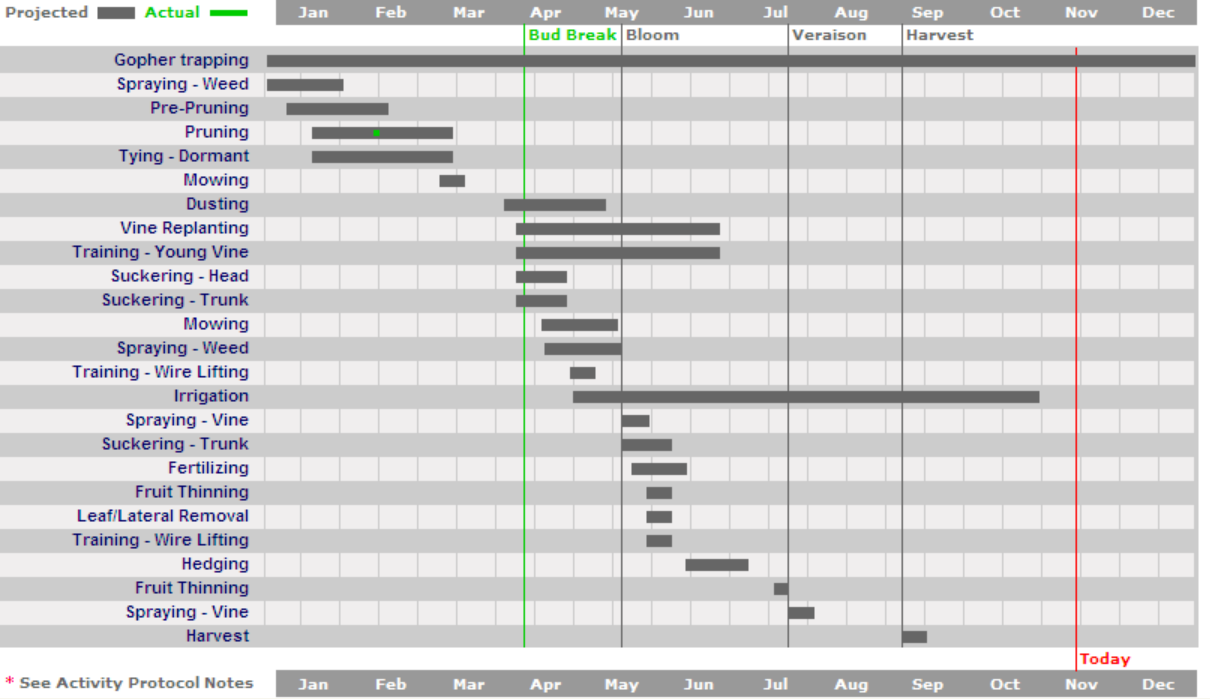
VIEW MODE

Activity Timeline Select Block: [dropdown]

Current Selection:

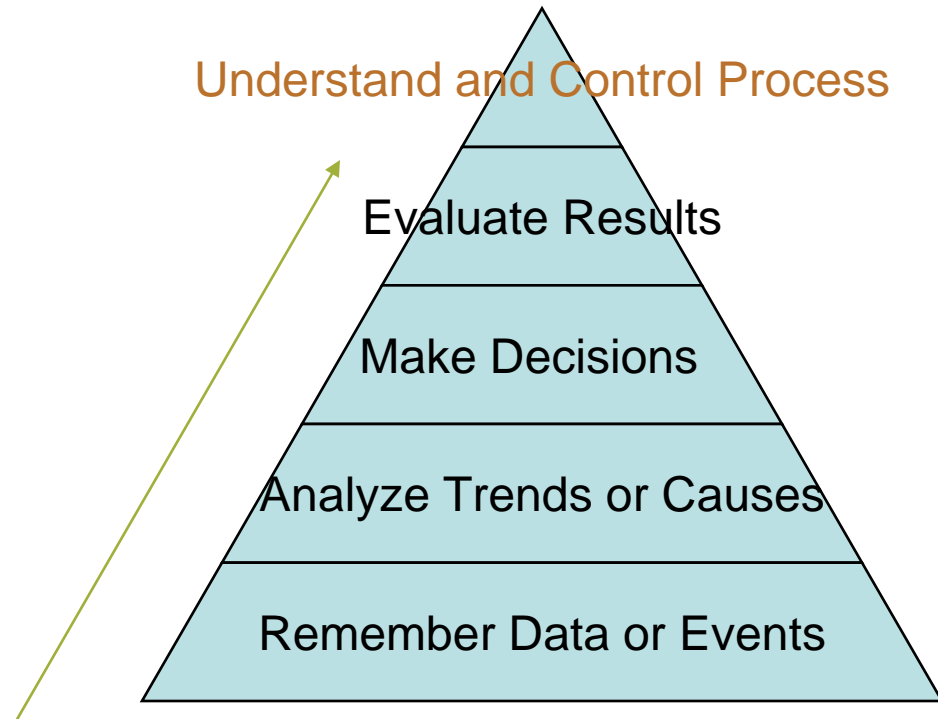
Riverview

Riverview Vineyard - Block 1A - Year 2006 Goals/Notes: [icon] Year: [dropdown]



Technology has the sole purpose of moving us up the pyramid.

Any piece of Technology needs to pass this test!



Stay the Course!

- Don't cut the vineyard budget too much
 - it's tempting but can seriously harm quality
- Some cuts are better than others
- How do we know which ones?
 - Will vary by site, but there are general trends
 - Listen to the Vineyard Manager & viticulturist
 - Employ another set of eyes
 - Balance cutting hours and keeping a low headcount



The short list

1. Aesthetics

- Isolate the manicured garden look to the blocks right around the winery, a few weeds aren't the end of the world

2. Time activities well

- 2 weeks makes the difference in every operation

3. Hire the right management company or people

- They must understand your needs
- Must be able to execute operations perfectly, and on time

4. Track Data

- Don't shortcut, build intellectual capital, and make informed decisions

5. Use technology appropriately

- If it doesn't help you learn, or make a more informed decision, save time/money, it's not worth it



Think Low Impact

- Whatever umbrella you decide to farm under, think about lowering impacts in the vineyard system
 - Organic
 - Sustainable
 - Biodynamic
 - Conventional
- Make fewer passes, think logically about what you're doing and seriously weigh the benefit of each operation



Budgets

- No two seasons are exactly alike (this year is pretty close to 2005 so far)
- Budgeting in farming should be looked at as a moving target, not a Cap.
- It's very easy to shave 20% from a \$10,000/acre budget, but it's nearly impossible to shave 20% from a \$4,000/acre budget without serious consequences.



The season is a continuum

- Continuum: anything that goes through a gradual transition from one condition, to a different condition, without any abrupt changes or “discontinuities”.
- We start from Pruning, suckering, shoot thinning, cultivation wire moving, lateral/leaf removal, hedging, fruit removal, irrigation, fertilization, fruit removal, and finally harvest.

EVERY subsequent step is influenced by all previous activities.

Minor changes in the early steps have the potential for dramatic increases in COSTS for each activity, and even bigger wine quality issues.



Vineyard 2008 Timelapse project

- Sauvignon Blanc
 - Oak Knoll District
 - Timelapse movie of the entire calendar year one image per day at 12:30 pm
 - April 2008 through April 2009
- Sauvignon Blanc Clone 1, 3309C rootstock
Planted 1997
Quad, Cane pruned vines
Useful technology, visually represent a whole season



New cost study for Napa county 2009

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Can be found at:

www.napagrowers.org

Click "programs"

Or UC ANR at

Coststudies.ucdavis.edu

\$8,000/acre average production costs for Cabernet Sauvignon

2009

SAMPLE COSTS TO
ESTABLISH A VINEYARD AND PRODUCE

WINEGRAPES

Cabernet Sauvignon



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premiere

Check out our **Free tools**: Irrigation Scheduler &
Degree Day Calculator @ www.premierevit.com

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