

Napa is missing a prominent sommelier — and his business partner, defunct wine brand and failed shipping service

March 30, 2016

Note to Premium subscribers. If you have forgotten your password, you and I are both in a bit of a bind.

Passwords and other account information are maintained by the billing service, [EC Suite](#), a subsidiary of [CCBill](#).

EC Suite has a major malfunction in the administrative interface that I need to access in order to retrieve your

password for you. Yes, I understand that there should be a way for you to reset your own password.

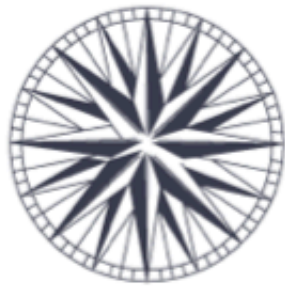
The only solution right now is to contact EC Suite

consumer support: E-mail:

consumersupport@ecsuite.com or call 1-888-736-6475

I apologize profusely for the inconvenience. It is my mistake to have chosen EC Suite/CCBill and will find more reliable alternatives for the future.

At this point I would recommend that you also avoid them as online payment partners. While their security for credit cards and other data is superb, their ability to maintain client- and consumer-facing needs sucks.



AMEDEO

... a sommelier's approach to Winery Direct

DIRECT TO CONSUMER INNOVATION

MOBILE ORDER INTERFACE | DATA INTEGRATION

BESPOKE FULFILLMENT | HIGH TOUCH CONSUMER RELATIONS

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Image from amedeowines.com which went dark after *Wine Executive News* contacted owner Michael Greenlee about this article.

Prominent New York sommelier Michael Greenlee has gone missing from Napa Valley along with his

failed wine brand, defunct direct shipping company, and former business partner.

Left behind are an unpaid court judgment brought by a former winery client along with a series of unanswered questions, evasive and contradictory statements, claims to a company that does not exist and the conundrum of what really happened to his enterprises and why.

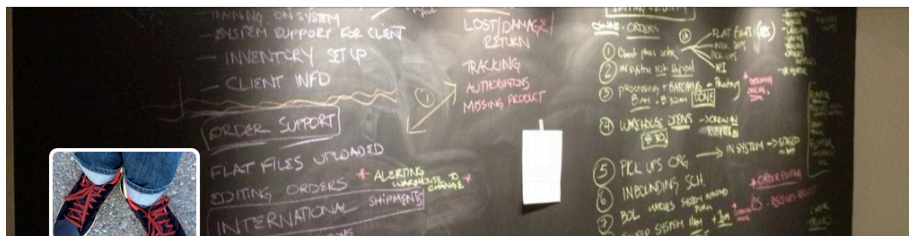
Greenlee, [according to this link](#), has been the Chief Sommelier and Director of the Wine Program at Gotham Bar & Grill in New York City and held similar positions at Peacock Alley at the Waldorf Astoria, Le Cirque Restaurant, and the Dining Room at the Four Seasons.

Also gone from Napa Valley is Greenlee's business partner, Keiko Niccolini who is a New York yoga instructor, well known in Manhattan high society, and the daughter of Four Seasons Restaurant co-owner Julian Niccolini.

Wine Industry Insight received numerous inquiries (from among its 24,000+ subscribers) when Amedeo went missing from its location at 163 Camino Dorado near the Napa airport. Typical of those

emails is one from a large shipping company executive who requested anonymity because of corporaterpolicies:

“What have you heard about wine shipping fulfillment company, Amedeo located in Napa? The operation abruptly shut down in late August 2015 & I heard that they sold their client list. Their web site is still up, but there is another company in their space. Can you offer any insight? I need to know whether to take them off my approved list.” ”



Michael Greenlee @mgwino

Builder, fixer, disrupter. Back to my roots in NYC. stay tuned for PBNYC in a neighborhood near you

Brooklyn, NY

Joined June 2009

2,167 TWEETS 731 FOLLOWING 620 FOLLOWERS 373 LIKES

Tweets Tweets & replies Photos & videos

Michael Greenlee @mgwino · Mar 27
Happy easter!!! #rayasgreenlee [instagram.com/p/BDdewOvnSY2/](https://www.instagram.com/p/BDdewOvnSY2/)

Michael Greenlee Retweeted Club W @ClubW · Mar 25
Like wine? Join our experience with \$13 off your first order!! [Follow link in bio] #wine #wineclub

Michael Greenlee @mgwino · Mar 25
Brooklyn. Little bit country a little bit rock and roll. #happyfriday [instagram.com/p/BDY2EH+SYD/](https://www.instagram.com/p/BDY2EH+SYD/)

Who to follow · Refresh · View all

Ben C. Sutton, Jr. @BenSut...
Follow

Ad Age @adage
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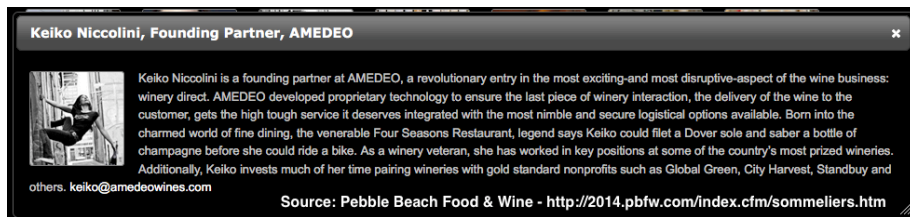
Jen Phillips @ClutchScience
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#EgyptAir
212K Tweets

#StayStrongKehiani

Right-click graphic to view a larger image



Right-click image to view larger version.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This article began as a basic trade story about ventures that failed in two very challenging business sectors: winemaking and direct shipping. It's worth noting that some of the best minds, skilled business people and talented vintners have failed in those areas.

However, as I tried to determine exactly what happened, when and why, I encountered a pattern of non-responses, evasiveness, statements that were provably false and other unusual characteristics. Decades as a journalist indicate to me that those characteristics almost always point to larger issues worth reporting.

The following 2,101-word premium article presents the facts as they can be verified and notations of the questions that cannot yet be answered.

In the end, this may be a 21st-century refutation of Frank Sinatra's statement that if you can make it in New York, you can make it anywhere.

===== free ends? =====

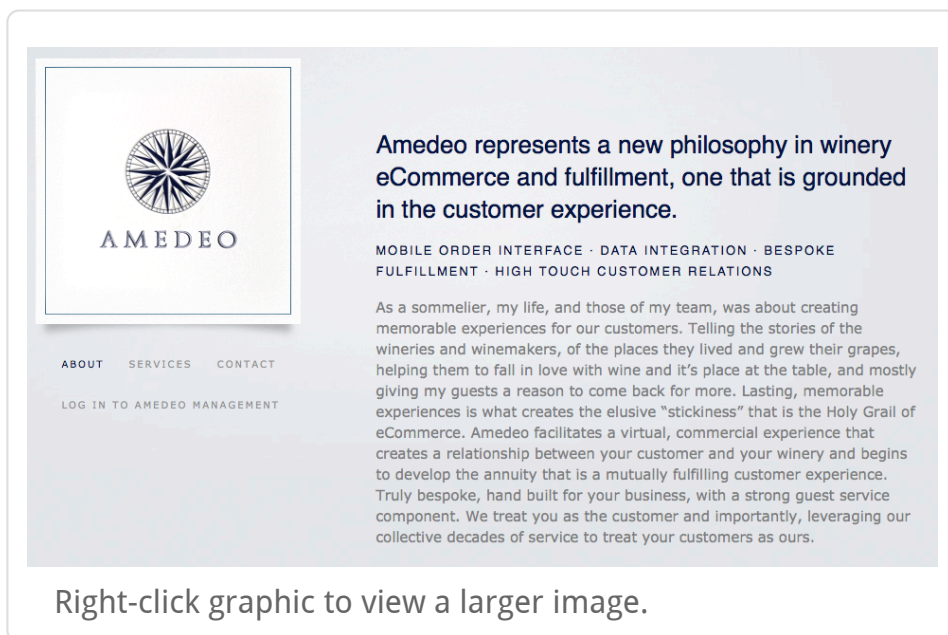
Amedeo Fulfillment's new "Bespoke ... Holy Grail" philosophy" in direct shipping

The Amadeo fulfillment operation probably began in 2011 which is when Myuge, Inc. was registered in California.

Entity Name:	MYUGE INC.
Entity Number:	C3375521
Date Filed:	04/22/2011
Status:	SOS FORFEITED
Jurisdiction:	NEW YORK
Entity Address:	1471 FIRST ST
Entity City, State, Zip:	CALISTOGA CA 94515
Agent for Service of Process:	ANDREA L ANDERSON
Agent Address:	1471 FIRST ST
Agent City, State, Zip:	CALISTOGA CA 94515

According to the Amedeo Wines website (which went dark after WEN first contacted Greenlee), the shipping service aimed at *"the Holy Grail of eCommerce.... Truly bespoke, hand built for your business, with a strong guest service component."*

The full statement can be found in the graphic, below. This screen capture is a page from amedeowines.com. A link to that page is unavailable because the site went dark soon after *Wine Executive News* contacted Greenlee about this article. Greenlee said that was a coincidence.



Amedeo buys another direct shipper, WineFlite

According to a press release in April 2014, Amedeo bought [Wineflite](#) which, according to the release:

“*With this acquisition Greenlee developed the first fully integrated global logistic service focused on the wine industry. This*

acquisition for AMEDEO, known as a bespoke, high touch fulfillment firm, now has a unique operations solution for the global import and export of wine Direct to Consumer.” ’’

However, in November, the recently acquired WineFlite was accumulating [horrible reviews on Yelp](#).

Like the Amadeo Wine website, Wineflite.com no longer exists.

Greenlee says he never bought WineFlite, but his own words & PR say he did.

According to an email from Greenlee:

“ “There is pending litigation surrounding WineFlite, nothing I am involved with but something between the prior and current owner, so I can’t comment much but AMEDEO never bought or owned WineFlite. I am aware there was an article written that stated that we did, that was inaccurate.” ’’

Greenlee had no reply when questioned about the

news release below, issued by Amedeo, written by his business partner and widely circulated and published, including [this instance](#).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Keiko Niccolini
keiko@amedeowines.com
415|828-4799



AMEDEO Wines Acquires WineFlite

Now Offers Fully Integrated Global Logistics Service for the Wine Industry

Napa, CA, April 10, 2014 - Recently, AMEDEO proprietor Michael Greenlee along with a financial partner acquired WineFlite, a global shipping service focused entirely on the transport of wine. With this acquisition Greenlee developed the first fully integrated global logistic service focused on the wine industry. This acquisition for AMEDEO, known as a bespoke, high touch fulfillment firm, now has a unique operations solution for the global import and export of wine Direct to Consumer. According to the 2014 Wine Market Council research conference held earlier this year, DTC sales were at 3.47 million cases in 2013, a \$1.57 billion market.

Michael Greenlee CEO and Founder of AMEDEO stated, "As quickly as the wine industry grows and expands, both in existing and emerging markets from South Africa to Southeast Asia it is conversely becoming a smaller, more connected community of motivated buyers and sellers. Our goal when we started AMEDEO, was to tie into this motivated consumer and help the wineries we service reach them more nimbly, all with a very high level of customer service. By utilizing our systems and expertise and tying into WineFlite's logistics network and agencies we can expand our reach into the non-domestic arena and help these wineries, whether they be in the European Union, South Africa, South America, Australia or New Zealand, reach their customers directly. The newly combined infrastructures of AMEDEO and WineFlite offer our domestic partners a secure, compliant solution for export and access to emerging markets. It is a particularly bullish time for the DTC market, as the segment is growing faster than the on-premise marketplace and has incredible potential."

About AMEDEO

AMEDEO, a technologically advanced business, headquartered in the heart of the US wine country of Napa, California, with its proprietary systems, currently facilitates compliance and delivery services for over 200 domestic wineries. AMEDEO also acts as a third party logistics partner to non-producer players in the wine and beverage landscape. For more information, please visit www.AMEDEOWines.com.

About WineFlite

WineFlite was conceived as a high quality amenity for wine savvy travelers to ship their bottles home, compliantly, from abroad. WineFlite's networks include operations throughout France, Italy, Spain, England, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, China, Singapore, South Africa and the UK.

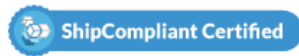
For press inquiries, please contact Keiko Niccolini at keiko@amedeowines.com or 415-828-4799.

#

Amedeo integrates with ShipCompliant



Amedeo Fulfillment Integration



Amedeo has a direct integration with the ShipCompliant fulfillment gateway to receive shipment information for packing and add tracking confirmation.

Categories: [Certified Partner](#), [Fulfillment](#), [Wine Industry](#)

In addition, [Amedeo completed a ShipCompliant Integration](#) which is still live at ShipCompliant.

Greenlee says “wind-down” of Amedeo was not sudden

In an email to *Wine Executive News*, Greenlee said the closure of Amedeo was methodical and that no one should have been surprised.

“AMEDEO had over 100 clients and upwards of 90,000 cases in storage,” said Greenlee. “The clients were all notified well in advance of our closure, as per the terms of our service agreement and all of the inventory was pulled, counted and staged.

“This was a multi-month process,” he explained, “that began in May [2015] and culminated in ultimately selling the final hard assets and turning over the warehouse, broom clean, to the landlord on August 1. We worked closely with most of the clients to find them new homes for storage and for fulfillment.”

Greenlee had no comment when asked why Amedeo was closed — especially so soon after buying WineFlite.

Issues regarding the court judgment, excise tax hold and New Hampshire seizures (below) seem to contradict Greenlee’s description of an orderly shut down.

Amedeo operated under Myuge ABC licenses

California and federal data indicate that Amedeo Fulfillment never had a license under that name. California Secretary of State records indicate that Greenlee’s company, Myuge, Inc., is registered in New York State ([Current NY Entity Name: MYUGE INC.](#)) but has forfeited its approval to do business in California.

Instead Amedeo operated at the 163 Camino Dorado address under under [ABC licenses issued to Myuge](#): winegrower (Type 02) and Beer and wine importer (Type. 09)

Both of those licenses were placed on an excise tax hold on Jan 11, 2016. In addition, because Myuge is no longer at that address, the California ABC says they have no authority to operate any sort of alcoholic beverage business without registering the correct information.

The TTB listing for Myuge also lists 163 Camino Dorado as its address. Because the terms of the TTB license includes (among other things) an approved bonded warehouse, the status of Myuge's federal license is also in question.

Greenlee did not answer when *WEN* asked about the reasons behind the excise tax hod.

Closure of Amedeo coincided with clash in at least one state

The closure of Amadeo and Greenlee's departure from Napa happened around the time [New Hampshire began seizing his wine shipments](#)

AMEDEO	630 DOWD AVE	ELIZABETH	NJ	07201	8/3/2015
Amedeo	163 Camino Dorado	Napa	CA	94558	8/3/2015
AMEDEO FULFILLMENT	626 CALIFORNIA BLVD	NAPA	CA	94559	8/3/2015
Amedeo Fulfillment	163 Camino Dorado	Napa	CA	94558	8/3/2015
AMEDEO FULFILLMENT 94559	626 CALIFORNIA BLVD	NAPA	CA	95251	8/3/2015
Forenzo Wine Company DBA Page Wine Cella	14100 Mountian House Ro	Hopland	CA	95449	8/3/2015
GREENLEE, Michael CEO of Amedeo Fulfillme	1687 Alabama Street	San Francisco	CA	94110	8/3/2015
MyUge Inc	626 California Blvd	Napa	CA	94559	8/3/2015
MYUGE INC	630 DOWD AVE	ELIZABETH	NJ	07201	8/3/2015
Myuge Inc	163 Camino Dorado	Napa	CA	94558	8/3/2015
NICCOLINI, Keiko (VP of Myuge)	1600 Sylvaner	Saint Helena	CA	94574	8/3/2015

Source:

<https://www.nh.gov/liquor/enforcement/licensing/documents/unauthorized-direct-shippers.pdf>

Greenlee explained:

“*“New Hampshire maintains what is called a “Seizure List” this is a list of shippers or wineries that have not reported direct shipments into their state for one reason or another by the monthly deadline for filing, and they are Draconian.*”

“AMEDEO was a direct shipper, responsible for reporting all of the wineries shipments into the state on a monthly basis, and Myuge holding a Winery Permit was also a licensed Winery.”

“As we didn’t require either of these permits after July, when we stopped direct shipping of any clients wines, we let this permit lapse and it is possible we were listed for a time on this “Seizure List” as we

went about notifying the state that we had suspended shipments to their state as a winery and as a fulfillment house, functionally surrendering these permits. To my knowledge no clients shipments were ever seized by the state of New Hampshire. “ ”

The [New Hampshire seizure list](#) contains a large number of California wineries. It is unknown whether those were Amedeo clients.

The odd case of Amedeo Holdings

Both Greenlee and Niccolini, are listed as business partners on ABC licenses and a wide variety of other documents. Both also claim to be officers or partners in Amedeo Holdings, Inc.

Michael Greenlee

CEO at Amedeo Holdings

Brooklyn, New York | Wine and Spirits


Education The Ohio State University


Connect

Send Michael InMail

2nd

96 connections

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-greenlee-7abaab45>

 Contact Info

However, state corporation records indicate that a company by that name has never been qualified to do business in either California or New York. A

Delaware company with that name does exist and is owned by [various princes related to the Sultan of Brunei](#).

We asked what role Amedeo Holdings, Inc. played given that corporate records in Calif and NY have no record of a corporation of that name. And that the one in Delaware is owned by relatives of the Sultan of Brunei?

Greenlee's only response was, "AMEDEO is a registered dba of Myuge, don't know the Sultan of Brunei."

Myuge Wines



The wine name: “my usual”



A search of the TTB Certificates of label Approval returned four listings for Greenlee’s Myuge Wines:

Search Results: COLAs

[Printable Version](#)

[Save Search Results To File](#)

1 to 4 of 4 (Total Matching Records: 4)

TTB ID	Permit No.	Serial Number	Completed Date	Fanciful Name	Brand Name	Origin	Class/Type
05038002000001	BW-CA-6465	050001	02/24/2005		MYUGE	01	88
05244003000009	BW-CA-6465	050005	09/07/2005		MYUGE	01	88
05308002000012	BW-CA-6243	050021	11/15/2005		MYUGE	01	88
09190001000096	BWN-CA-16264	090044	07/17/2009		MYUGE	01	88

[Printable Version](#)

1 to 4 of 4 (Total Matching Records: 4)

And a further search indicated that the earliest two were made at Staglin Family Vineyards, the

November 2005 at Terra Valentine and the 2009 at Tuck Beckstoffer Wines.

Superior Court judgment, a Michigan drop box, and no forwarding address

Records at Napa Superior Court indicate that Greenlee lost a court case brought by Derr Family Vineyards that charged Amedeo lost \$5,000 worth of its wine sometime between July of 2012 and May of 2014.

Attempts — as recently as September 2015 — to recover that judgment have been unsuccessful because no one has been able to locate Greenlee at his last known address: A mail-forwarding service near Grand Rapids Michigan at 2885 Sanford Ave. SW, Grandville.

Greenlee said the Derrs are at fault in the Napa court action:

“ *Though the action with Derr family is still pending litigation and my counsel advises I don't speak about it directly, it is proof*

itself that when the warehouse was vacated, the only remaining inventory was 19 cases of empty glass with "Derr" written on the shrink wrap. ””

We asked John and Andrea many many times to provide us with a BOL [Bill Of Lading] showing the quantity inbound, and spent countless hours(and labor dollars) following up on the contested inventory in the warehouse even though we sure that this was an inbound paperwork error on our side, many years prior and would be cleared up by reviewing a copy of the BOL from the winery. ””

I will also mention that we stored 90,000+ cases of wine, for over 100 wineries for 4+ years and never had an issues like this with any other client, nor were we in the habit of writing checks for missing inventory, because we were extremely diligent and when there were questions or issues, they were quickly addressed and resolved. ””

When asked why Greenlee had left no forwarding

address in the Derr case, Greenlee said in an email:

“ Again, there is pending litigation with the Derr Family so can’t say much. ”

We didn’t receive the court notification until days prior and we attempted to adjourn and were unsuccessful in notifying them, so the hearing went forward without us being represented, so they received a judgement in absentia. ”

You probably know that already. ”

I have never received a copy of the judgment, so your email is confirming that it exists. ”

There is no longer anyone to receive mail at the business address at Camino Dorado. ”

You were able to find our agent of service, evidently the Derr Family didn’t care to look hard enough to make sure they actually notified us of the proceedings. ”

WEN pointed out that the Derr litigation was no longer pending because it has a final judgment by

default and that Napa Superior Court doesn't have any filings for an appeal, Greenlee replied: "I'll contact my attorney to clarify the Derr issue.

No conclusions yet

This is an odd story of wine businesses that did not make it. It's complete with oddities that provoke a host of questions and conjecture.

But it is impossible to conclude on the basis of information gathered so far whether there is more to the story. This could be simple wine trade article about the circuitous decline and death of a wine brand and shipping business wrapped up in a bumbling closure and panicked flight to home territory.

It could simply be that Sinatra was wrong sometimes.

Posted on [March 30, 2016](#) by [Lewis Perdue](#) in [Featured Articles](#)

