



NOMACORC®

## SPEC'S: A CASE STUDY



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—Lisa Key, Vice President Marketing, Spec's

### PROFILE

Spec's Wine, Spirits & Finer Foods has been a Houston tradition since 1962. Founded by Spec and Carolyn Jackson, the business grew slowly until 1972, when they opened what was, at that time, the largest retail liquor store in the country. Spec's flagship store in downtown Houston became a landmark and is still today their flagship store with more than 60,000 square feet of retail space.

Company ownership of the seven stores with 200 employees went to daughter and son-in-law Lindy and John Rydman in 1996. Today, the company boasts 70 locations including Beaumont, College Station, San Antonio and Austin with over 1,400 employees. They are known for having the largest wine and liquor selections available, beer, bar supplies and nonalcoholic goods, cigars, and gourmet and fine food products. Spec's Wines, Spirits and Finer Foods received the "2008 Retailer of the Year" award from Wine Enthusiast magazine.

Their historical presence in Houston has made the retailer a cornerstone of the community and as such, Spec's is equally committed to supporting the local community.

The company's philosophy is simple: surpass customer expectations with superior service, provide them an exciting variety of quality products at consistently competitive prices, and do that in a fun and positive environment.





## CHALLENGES

As the largest wine and spirits store in the state of Texas with the most comprehensive selection of wines, Spec's was well aware of the inconsistencies present in the wines that they sold.

"Often, we would find that consumers would bring their bottles back to the store that tasted unfavorably, including corked or oxidized wine," said Lisa Key, vice president marketing for Spec's. "With over 15,000 wines sold in the store, and about one bottle returned from each case due to bad taste, it can add up to quite a bit of wine."

The large quantities of returned wines negatively affected the retailer's bottom line and the consumer's impression of Spec's products. Because of Spec's commitment to selling only the highest-quality products in their stores, they sought another option for remedying the problem.

## SOLUTION

Partnering with Nomacorc offered Spec's a solution to ensure their consumers were receiving wines tasting as the winemaker intended and that supported their commitment to quality.

First, Nomacorc's enologists educated the wine buying team on the significance of oxygen management to wine development and preservation.

"Nomacorc took what is a very scientific process and broke it down for us in a more understandable way," said Hermen Key, vice president of operations.

Furthermore, Specs began specifying Nomacorc for their own private label wine.

"We know that when we sell a bottle of wine closed with a Nomacorc closure, they are getting the very best product possible and I know that I am not going to get that bottle of wine back," said Lisa Key. "Nomacorc has provided all retailers with the ability to feel confident about the wines being sold in the store and ease of mind that wine isn't corked, oxidized or reduced."

In addition, in May 2009 Nomacorc introduced Spec's to its TerraCycle program, which upcycles Nomacorc wine closures into unique consumer products. After almost one year of upcycling, Nomacorc and Spec's have collected more than 200,000 corks and donated over \$4,000 to local charitable organizations.

"When you use a Nomacorc product you know the wine. It makes sense for us to carry wines closed with this product and recommend it to our customers," said Lisa Key.



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