

# How Henkell & Co., the World's Largest Sparkling Group, Keeps Up with the Market

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Henkell's CEO talks about a recent major acquisition and how he expects the demand for Prosecco, rosé and alcohol-free wines to trend higher.

By Anne Krebiehl MW



Henkell's CEO, Dr. Andreas Brokemper

In March, when German [Henkell & Co. Group](#) bought the controlling stake of Cava producer [Freixenet](#) they became the world's largest sparkling wine group. This giant now has an 8% share of the global sparkling wine market and combined revenues of \$1.25 billion (EUR 1.1 billion).

Henkell produces Sekt, Cava, Crémant and Champagne. The company also owns the world's top-selling Prosecco brand, [Mionetto](#). Freixenet, the global leader in Cava production, brings with them a portfolio that includes Spain's [Segura Viudas](#) and California's [Gloria Ferrer](#).

Dr. Andreas Brokemper, Henkell's CEO, wants the company to reach a 10% market share in the coming years. He explains how utilizing economies of scale will achieve this and which trends drive the sparkling market.

## A plan for growth

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"There is potential for cooperation in every aspect," says Brokemper. "We are now one of the most diversified wine buyers in Europe. Take two volume streams in the same market and add them up. You very quickly have full containers, full trucks."

But Brokemper insists the strength of the new union goes beyond material savings.

"A significant aspect of two large players coming together is simply know-how," he says. "That the only two enterprises with a global presence in the sparkling wine market come together, with experience in and knowledge of every major market, be that Paraguay, Russia or China, is a huge element."

Citing the "core international brands" Mionetto, Freixenet and Henkell, Brokemper says, "working together with an extended portfolio has tremendous possibilities to serve markets much better."

## Alcohol optional

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London-based TechNavio, a market research firm, estimates the global sparkling wine market will grow almost 2% until 2022. Brokemper sees three strong trends that will help propel that expansion: Prosecco, sparkling rosé and alcohol-free, wine-based sparkling beverages.

"Everyday consumption drives the trend. Prosecco fuels the trend," he says. "Prosecco has the big advantage of being an accessible, affordable wine for new consumers."

### Ruffino Expands Prosecco Production with \$34 million of Vineyards, Winery

New consumption trends, like Prosecco with brunch or as a base for cocktails, are also significant. Pairing this with increased demand for all things pink with fizz is a winning combination. Here, Brokemper cites evidence from Segura Viudas Rosado and Mionetto Rosé sales. He also sees future potential in the expected approval of DOC Prosecco Rosé.



Brand equity is central to the growth of sparkling beverages based on alcohol-free wines that are popular in Europe. "Consumers buy because they trust a brand. We have noticed that if we offer an alcohol-free version of a strong brand, the proportion of people who go for the alcohol-free version increases." He cites various brands including Freixenet Legero to illustrate this. "There is not a single product which does not show annual double-digit growth," he says.

“If we manage to stand for every 10th bottle of sparkling wine bought in the world then we will have reached our aim of ‘making life sparkle.’ I think this is a realistic prospect,” says Brokemper.

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### **Reviews wines from Austria, Alsace and England**

German-born but London-based, Anne Krebiehl MW is a freelance wine writer contributing to international wine publications. She also lectures, consults and translates and has helped to make wine in New Zealand, Germany and Italy. She adores acidity in wine and is thus perfectly suited to her Austria/Alsace/England beat. Her particular weaknesses are Pinot Noir, Riesling and traditional-method sparkling wines.

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