

## How a diversity of wine marketing methods may lead to an increase of German wine sales on the Dutch market

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### 1.1 Motivation for choosing this topic

It took a very long time to decide which topic to choose for my thesis. The topic I have chosen offers me the possibility to learn something completely new (social media) while combining theory with practise (the communication plan and the recommendations).

### 1.2 Objectives of this thesis

1. to evaluate the different social media options and to investigate if social media can be applied as a marketing tool for German vintners who would like to increase their sales on the Dutch market.

2. to researched which wine labels appeal to a certain age group. Again, I have especially focussed on German labels and German wine bottles and hope to make recommendations for those wineries that would like to appeal to the Dutch Y-generation (the generation that varies

between 16 and approximately 35 years of age). In addition, this generation also uses social media to find independent product information and therefore the two objectives of this thesis can be linked.

### **1.3 Methodology: An outline of methods used**

1. For the analysis of the Dutch market, I relied on market data provided by 'Informatiebureau voor Duitse wijn' (The German Wine Information office) for the Netherlands and Belgium and on survey results provided by other offices like Trendbox BV.
2. The information on social media was at first obtained through books and the web
3. Addition information was obtained through interviews with professionals, communication experts, trend watchers and vintners.
4. Personal experience was obtained by initializing several social media sites. The platforms I initialized were LinkedIn (under my personal name and under a group name called Thesis German wine), Facebook (personal name), Twitter (Ygermanwine), Slideshare, YouTube and Picasa.
5. Finally, my survey – which was named Wine by Design-, was conducted by means of a digital survey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)) and therefore answers are visible on an intranet environment. A variety of questions has been used and only 100 (out of the 127) questionnaires were taken into account for the final analysis in order to increase the validity of this survey.

### **1.4 Content**

Chapter 2 contains an analysis of the Dutch wine market, the wine consumption trends (with detailed information per age group and gender) and an analysis of the general cultural differences between the Dutch and the Germans.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of the social media usage in both countries and offers information about the most commonly used social media tools.

Chapter 4 is an argumentation for the implementation of social media, while chapter 5 is a practical 'step by step' guide that shows the options how a German winery can incorporate its existing marketing policy into a social media communication plan.

Chapter 6 consumed most of my time, although this is not expressed in the number of pages that I've written. In this chapter I've written my conclusions and my recommendations for those German wineries that would like to increase their wines sales in the Netherlands.

Chapter 7 describes which objectives I have achieved (and which ones I haven't). Furthermore, it contains a very long list of improvements that German wineries could follow up on if they would like to increase their label appeal for the Dutch market, or if they would like to start implementing social media.

### **Conclusion**

It would be interesting to watch how new wineries will start implementing social media. Much to my surprise I found that German wineries were lacking participation (together with their French colleagues.) The Austrians, Spanish and the Americans are better represented in this way.

Finally, I can't wait to find out if (and how) some of the recommendations will be implemented. I believe that wineries should be there for two purposes: the first one is to produce and sell their wine; the second purpose is that their wineries need to be promoted as a tourist attraction (by regional tourist offices) and therefore play an important role for the

touristic development in their region. It's my opinion that especially these possibilities should be further explored. Naturally, social media can play a crucial role.