

Chapter 9

Analysis of User– Experience Evaluation of French Winery Websites

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ABSTRACT

Wine consumption becomes more informed, smart, and connected. A website is a vitrine for wineries providing better visibility and higher attractiveness toward visitors, buyers, and business partners. Due to the increasing competition on the wine market, it is important to assess the digital development of wineries. Yet, there is no common instrument to evaluate website development of wineries. This research aims to create an evaluation grid adapted for European wineries website based on the extended Model of Internet Commerce Adoption (eMICA) and the model of Davidson. The grid comprises 108 attributes organized under eleven dimensions. A quantitative methodology based on a questionnaire was developed to evaluate user-experience of wineries websites of 255 consumers. This approach allowed to validate a grid that might be used to analyze and benchmark the digital advancement within the specific context of the French wine industry.

INTRODUCTION

Information processing and analysis capabilities offered by Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) open up tremendous opportunities for organizations in all areas. More specifically, the information-intensive nature of the wine industry suggests the important role for the Internet and Web-based technology in the promotion and marketing of wineries products, services, and channels. The total volume of wine sold through e-commerce in western Europe increased by 66% between 2010 and 2017. Over 360m liters of wine were sold online in 2017 which accounts for around 4% of the total

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off-trade wine volumes in western Europe (RaboResearch, 2019). There is a clear trend in shortening wine procurement channels which will lead to an increase of online sales via wineries' own online stores (Hochschule Geisenheim University, 2019). The market share of e-commerce is higher in terms of value than in volume as online wine buyers are ready to pay more for the uniqueness of a product they cannot find elsewhere (RaboResearch, 2019).

With changes in consumption practices linked in particular with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), consumers are increasingly using the Internet as a source of information in the search for products and services (Basu, 2018; Cristobal-Fransi et al., 2015). More precisely, online wine buyers are active participants and co-creators of information, offerings and value (Sigala & Haller, 2018). They are empowered and can be considered as real "decision makers" who fix the rules of the game, sometimes referred to as "ATAWAD- Any Time, Any Where, Any Device." They are looking for advice, human contact and proximity (Bressolles, 2016). The research shows that more and more wineries have websites and are using social media to create effective customer interaction (Szolnoki et al, 2016; Thach et al. 2016; Haller et al., 2020).

However, beyond simple transactions and interactions, customers are looking for an overall compelling experience. Indeed, wine is by nature a hedonic (Bruwer & Alant, 2009), information-intensive and complex product (Johnson & Bruwer, 2007). Hence, customer experience is crucial for the wine industry. The customer experience can be defined as the sensory, cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral dimensions of all activities that connect the customer and the organisation over time across touchpoints and channels. It encompasses all activities involving the customer. (Bolton, 2016). Digital or user-experience (UX) has become a concept at stake in the field of human-computer interaction (HCI) and interface design. With the technological evolution, UX is not only focused on instrumental needs, useful information or ease of use. Digital interfaces must now engage in non-instrumental needs and experiences in a more complex sense and must entertain, impress and engage (Bargas-Avila & Hornbæk, 2011, Hassenzahl & Tractinsky, 2006). It is important to go beyond the instrumental and understand the influence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on affect and emotional aspects. These dimensions are of prior importance in creating customer experience and influencing brand attitude and behavior (Hassenzahl & Tractinsky, 2006). In the wine industry, UX is crucial given the hedonic nature of the product and experience that should be developed through any point of contact with the consumer. Behavior of the modern and connected consumer is explained much better by the website interactivity than by the product concerned (Bressolles & Durrieu, 2011). Digital customer experience triggers wine purchases and positive word-of-mouth, which can lead to brand loyalty (Massa & Bédé, 2018). Modern wine customers expect a rich digital experience (Muñoz et al., 2019).

Wineries are facing a growing difficulty of trying to stand out in an increasingly crowded market and they struggle to find the right approach to capitalize on the online opportunity. Even if the wine industry has been reluctant to fully embrace Web-based technology mainly due to tradition, and inability to measure direct results (Shepp, 2013), wineries are now required to continuously integrate ICTs in their work processes. One of the most important digital experiences is the winery website: it predicts trust in the winery and perceived quality of the wine (Brewer et al., 2008). Thousands of wineries around the world are beginning to use their websites and social media tools to sell wine online (Szolnoki et al., 2016). Websites can be a possible solution for capturing the market in the wine industry. They would then be considered as real alternative distribution channels providing information on the company and its offers. The use of a website allows wider dissemination of information to potential consumers, saving the business time. Moreover, the winery website is probably the first contact with potential customers. In the

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