

Building Wine Appreciation for the New Generation Consumer

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Industry Disconnect

Wine education poses a paradox to the industry: consumers say they desire to know more about wine, yet they report being overwhelmed. The traditional analytic approach to education has involved teaching consumers a “grid” with rules for analysis that rely on language that younger consumers dislike.

Holistic Wine Education and Communication

Wine marketing and education have been the primary means of gaining and attracting new consumers. But doing things the “old way” doesn’t seem to be working for younger consumers.

In our research we suggest that the industry move from a verbal analytic approach to a more holistic approach to their education and communication. In Study 1 we test how the analytic versus holistic approach results in differences in discrimination and liking of wine for young wine consumers. We then describe a new app, QUINI, and its digital approach to wine education. We mined three years of their data to uncover generational involvement in digital wine tasting involvement. We also conducted a survey of their consumers to determine any differences in interest in wine and wine education. We discuss the managerial implications of our findings.

Hypotheses

The traditional approach to wine education believes that consumer appreciation can be guided by unbiased, impartial, and experienced judging. Rule-based grids and verbal lexicons have been developed to teach mastery.

However, younger consumers are turned off by expert lingo and want a learning experience that is meaningful to them.

Study 1: Learning To Like Versus Discriminate

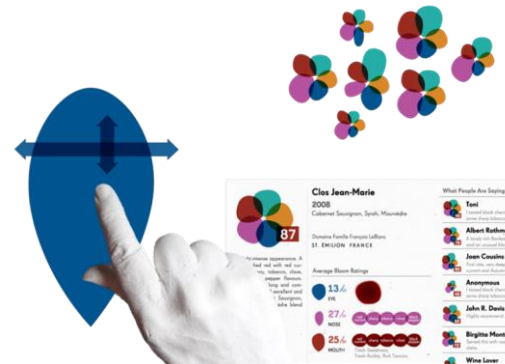
Sixty-nine wine between 21 and 35 years old) attended a learning session presented as a wine tasting and education event, where they were randomly assigned to either a holistic or an analytic learning condition. The holistic group learned to more fully experience tasting wine by drawing images. The analytic group, in contrast, learned to analyze the wine’s taste through deconstructing taste elements into individual elements and writing a detailed description of the wine.

Key Findings

Those with prior education did better on the wine test (MEducation = 2.2 versus MNoEducation = 1.2, $t(67) = 3.54$ $p = .0007$); reported drinking more styles/varieties of wine (MEducation = 4.87 versus MNoEducation = 3.15 $t(67) = 2.49$ $p = .01$) and overall more engaged wine behavior (MEducation = 12.77 versus MNoEducation = 10.64 $t(67) = 1.99$ $p = .05$).

Study 2: Generational Differences In Wine Learning

QUINI is a visual wine education and evaluation tool designed to help consumers to better understand their wine preferences, as they pro-actively learn and expand their experience of wine. The app allows consumers to evaluate wines on sensory qualities from color to aroma, to taste and finish. It is visually appealing and allows the consumer to form an overall evaluation for the wine, so that the ratings across consumers are systematic, irrespective of their wine knowledge or expertise. Users report enjoying the experience and sharing their results with others.



Key Findings

Millennials have been engaging with wine on QUINI more than Gen X and Baby boomers. Generation Z drinkers proved they are equally qualified to express an opinion about wine. They seem to be as diligent and expressive in their wine ratings, at times even tougher critics.

Method

An online survey was distributed to QUINI participants in US and Canadian tastings in the Summer/Fall 2019. 81 completed the survey (36 baby boomers, 21 Gen Xers, 21 millennials).

Measures

The Hedonic and Eudaimonic scales from the PEAQ-S used in Study 1 were also employed here. The Hedonic scales loaded on one factor with a Cronbach alpha = .84 and were combined into a Hedonic Index. The eudaimonia items loaded on one factor with Cronbach alpha = .92 and were combined to form an Eudaimonic Index.

Results

Hedonic/Eudaimonic Motivation. For Hedonic motivation the overall model was significant $F(2,75) = 3.22$ $p = .05$, with means Gen X = 26.38, millennial = 30.24, baby boom = 29.47. These were not significantly different from one another. For Eudaimonic, the model was significant at $F(2,75) = 5.32$ $p = .007$. Gen X was found to be significantly lower than the other two generations using the Tukey procedure, Gen X = 18.00, millennial = 24.52, Baby boomer = 23.5.

How do you rate the wine overall?

