

Who Are the Wine Techies?

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Marketing to and communicating with consumers is changing rapidly in all areas of business with the use of social media. The wine industry has been adopting social media and communicating with its consumers using platforms such as their own websites, Twitter, and Facebook. The purpose of this research is to examine the consumers that are most interested in discussing wine using a social media platform. This research examines those consumers by using a survey instrument that was administered through the use of a personal interview during the winter of 2012 in the California. The random sample of 372 wine consumers was collected in San Luis Obispo County, California. San Luis Obispo County was designated the best test market in the United States by Demographics Daily (Jackoway, 2001). San Luis Obispo was found to be the best of 3,141 counties to represent a microcosm of the United States based on 33 statistical indicators.

Consumers were asked how strongly they agree with the following statement: I would like to join a website that facilitated discussions about wine and the wine industry. Twenty five percent of the wine consumers agreed that they would like to join a website to discuss the wine industry. They are referred to as wine techies in this research. The wine techies were more likely to purchase higher priced wine, know the type of closures on the wines they have purchased, and be more accepting of screw cap closures. The wine techies are also more likely to describe themselves as themselves foodies and wine connoisseurs. They are more likely to enjoy talking about wine with their friends and use a website that has the latest news about wine and the wine industry.

The wine techies find organic, locally produced and from a family winery to be somewhat to very desirable attributes of wine and more desirable than the non-techies. Interestingly, they are also more accepting of using biotechnology to produce wine, rating it as slightly to somewhat desirable while non-techies rate biotechnology as only slightly desirable. While this seems to be a contradiction, it may be hypothesized that the techies are more accepting of using technology.

Wine techies are more likely get information about wine from phone apps, magazines online, LinkedIn, and the websites Yelp or Open Table. Therefore, they are using technology to learn about wine and want to expand their use of it to learn more and discuss more about wine. Wine techies are more likely to have children at home and be between the ages of 30 and 44. They are a substantial part of the wine consumer market, 25%, and would be a profitable segment to target.

