

Who Is Shaping Search Engine Results in the Wine Industry? A Cross-Country Analysis

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According to the recent perspective of inbound marketing (Halligan e Shah 2014), the aim of marketing should be to gain the interest of potential customers and draw them to the company website, rather than to send out communication to customers and wait for their reaction. However, competing on the web to appear early in search results can prove to be difficult. Moreover, depending on the industry and country, different players and typologies of websites might influence the competitive online environment (Peterson & Merino 2003; Huang, Lurie & Mitra 2009; Lemon & Verhoef 2016). This research aims at mapping the role of different players in the wine industry in different countries when it comes to organic search results. In particular, through online research and with a cross-country perspective, it has the aim of answering the following questions: What are the categories of players defining the online competitive arena in organic search marketing results for wines in different countries? Do these categories of players vary depending on the wine type and country?

In terms of research process, first of all, we selected six types of wine that: a) are both wines and terroir, b) are significant for traditional wineries in the old world: Champagne and Bordeaux (France), Prosecco and Chianti (Italy), Cava and Rioja (Spain). We only used the “wine type” as the search keyword, in different consumption countries: Italy, Spain, France, US, UK, Australia. These countries happen to be among the most critical countries in the world in terms of consumption (OIV 2018) . We used specific software (Ubersuggest) to analyse Google’s SERP results in each country. Finally, we created meaningful categories of websites in order to map the role of different players/websites in SERP results.

Our preliminary results highlight interesting differences in the role of players/websites for different wines in various countries. They inspiring ideas for reflecting on the different roles played, in each of the countries we considered, by the players of the wine channels. These preliminary results also suggest that some interesting managerial implications can be drawn in order to successfully compete in markets that are increasingly characterized by an omnichannel approach.

Keywords: search marketing; Google; SERP; SEO; wine

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