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Article

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Does storytelling add value to fine Bordeaux wines?

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to understand if the use of a vineyard's storytelling helps to better understand the position of each vintage in a niche and luxury market. Two main objectives structure this article: discovering what criteria constitutes the narratives of corporate communications of the Grand Crus market on the first hand and to studying the positioning of the different communications styles depending on the designation of origin on the other hand.

Methodology: The methodology of this research is based on a lexicographic analysis of the corporate communications of the 132 chateaux members of the Union des Grands Crus.

Findings: The results show that 13 components form the basis of the narratives. According to the appellations of origin, four main styles of communication can be identified. The research also shows a link between the price level of the wine and the style of the corporate storytelling.

Originality/value: There has been a strong increase in the price of Grands Crus from Bordeaux in recent years. The price increase is not explained by the objective value of these products but rather their symbolic position and image evoked of a world of luxury. Moreover, it seems that these images generate little differentiation among wine brands, while they all claim that they are unique.

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Keywords: Storytelling; Semantics; Communication styles; Price; Wine

1. Introduction

Wine producers tell many stories about wine: stories about their families, their wine estate, and their wine-making. Wine drinkers also evaluate different stories when deciding which wine to purchase. They consider their own histories, memories, beliefs about wine and winemaking, and previous experiences with wine so as to buy the “right” wine. Even wine experts, wine journalists, and wine bloggers are charged with telling their own stories to others as a justification of their skills or expertise. Wine tastings are often the starting point for many stories

because of the sensorial and highly subjective esthetic experience. Translating this organoleptic experience into comprehensible and shareable terms requires the abundant use of figurative language (Caballero, 2009): aromas and other characteristics of the wine are evoked by consumers as well as by wine experts, sometimes in a very poetic way, through the use of many metaphors. As noted by Lehrer and Lehrer (2008) (p. 114), “wines are described as masculine or feminine, muscular or sinewy, for example, in addition to being described as heavy or light, delicate or harsh.” The talk about the wine (Bach, 2008) can be part of its pleasure when the experience is relived by periodically retelling the story of the wine tasting or visit to a winery, when the talk enhances wine admiration, and when it allows participants opportunities to learn more about it.

The topic of this article explores what happens in markets driven by evoked images rather than objective criteria. Does storytelling, as a means of corporate communication, allow consumers the opportunity to

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differentiate wines and to explain price differences? The question then seems particularly relevant for wine markets, where the diversity of supply is high and the correlation between price and intrinsic quality seems to be weak.

The purpose of this research first is to explore the texts and then to identify recurring themes. Moreover, we will seek to uncover styles of storytelling. Last, we try to measure a possible link between types of storytelling and prices of wines.

Beyond the four goals we have previously defined, the aim of this article is twofold. First, through the corporate communications broadcasted by some of the most famous Bordeaux chateaux, we set up a typology that describes the various dimensions of the image of Grands Crus (fine or premium wines). Second, we investigate a possible link between communication styles and the level of future prices for the 2009 vintage. [Section 2](#) is dedicated to a literature review. [Section 3](#) presents the data and the methodology of our empirical analysis. [Section 4](#) presents and discusses the results. [Section 5](#) concludes and offers some managerial implications.

2. Literature review

2.1. Storytelling

Storytelling is defined as “sharing of knowledge and experiences through narrative and anecdotes in order to communicate lessons, complex ideas, concepts, and causal connections” ([Sole and Gray Wilson, 1999](#), p. 6). The firm is more and more considered to be a knowledge management system; the complexity of the narratives and their content constitute part of the nontangible aspect needed to understand current economic actors’ behavior. Indeed, [Barthes \(1985\)](#) claims that the narrative is a tool to better understand the world. Concretely, narratives can be integrated into a database in order to analyze the knowledge they provide and to codify the stories a posteriori.

The seeming spontaneity of a written text is one of the usual characteristics of storytelling, suggesting a high degree of diversity regarding the elements proposed in a story. But the story’s framework can be divided into three main categories: (1) aims, action plan, and results; (2) constraints and adversity; and (3) cognitive ability and behavior of the “heroes” involved in the story. [Bourion \(2006\)](#) found that when comparing a series of narratives whose aim is the same, such as “describing a strategy” or “explaining a decision process,” the words concentrate on a short list of topics. This author claims that some elements that seem outside the scope of management’s concerns are actually constantly present in the narrative and give meaning to its logic. Among these, several personal components can be distinguished: family, education, culture, personal values, and ethnography.

As a consequence of this low diversity of formatting the narratives’ content, some authors debate the role and legitimacy of storytelling in today’s business. [Salmon \(2007\)](#)

wonders how narratives, which previously represented a method to understand and interpret the world, currently provide a kind of leadership in advertising and management. For him, advertising is a sort of machine whose aim is to produce standardized expressions and to format minds. Indeed, we know that content analysis of advertising stories has been around for a long time. [Greimas \(1983\)](#) and [Floch \(2002\)](#) consider that the following story structure is quite frequent: first highlighting a fight against a strong constraint and then promising a better way of life because of the actor taking different steps (e.g., economic, financial, image related, self-esteem enhancing, social recognition gaining).

According to [Gabriel \(2000\)](#), stories have different functions for an organization; they can entertain, stimulate imagination, offer support, provide moral education, and justify and explain positions. [Jensen \(1999\)](#) claims that stories are tools that companies can use to inform current as well as potential customers what the company is about. Storytelling is also one factor that allows brands to become icons ([Holt, 2003](#); [Woodside et al., 2008](#)). Nevertheless, the challenge for companies is to develop the “right” story for the brand ([Rosen, 2000](#)). For [Herskovitz and Crystal \(2010\)](#), every story requires a clearly understood central character with whom people can identify and create a long-lasting emotional bond. In the wine industry do the stories influence wine prices? With experience-oriented goods such as wine, the price can be totally disconnected from the production cost. Image and reputation are also involved in pricing decisions. Storytelling enables consumers to integrate the history of a wine brand or of a wine estate ([Mora and Moscarola, 2012](#)). Producers’ primary aim is to differentiate their products from their competitors within a context of plethora supply, and a semiotic approach shows how, because of common values, actors in the same competitive area can position themselves to strengthen their identities and create value.

2.2. Wine prices

The main determinants of wine prices have been studied by many researchers, especially [Landon and Smith \(1997\)](#), who show a positive relationship between quality ratings and wine prices, and [Combris et al. \(1997\)](#), who discuss the relationship among price, sensitive characteristics (taste, aromas, etc.), and objective characteristics. More recently, [Roberts and Reagan \(2007\)](#) highlight that price-quality relationships will be more intense for producers with more critical exposure. Reputation, either individual (associated with the firm) or collective (associated with the vintage, the classification, or the region of origin), is also a classical determinant of wine prices ([Landon and Smith, 1998](#); [Schamel, 2009](#); among others). [Ramirez \(2010\)](#) focuses on tasting notes, the brief testimony that describes the sensory characteristics of wines. His results indicate a positive influence of the length of the note on the price. He also reveals that the value of the tasting note does not

come from the “analytical” words, that is, the words that appear in wine glossaries that standardize the meanings of sensory words (in this sense, analytical words are grounded in the underlying chemical characteristics of the wine). Prices seem rather to depend on the more subjective component of the tasting notes, the personal opinions given by the writer. Ramirez (2010) claims that a tasting note with more subjective components can be more informative than a tasting note with plenty of analytical words, especially for a layperson unfamiliar with standard wine vocabulary.

3. Data and methodology

The sample of this research has been restricted to a particular category of fine wines produced in Bordeaux: fine wines producers, all members of the Union des Grands Crus association. Most of them appear in the 1855 classification, an official ranking in five categories of some Bordeaux wines, mostly according to prices (not tasting) and organized for the French national exhibition by the Chamber of Commerce and the local wine brokers, without any invitation to submit wines (Markham, 1998). This ranking is still the same today, except two changes made in 1856 and 1973 (see the appendix for the current classification). The Grands Crus play a strategic role in promoting the wines of France. Although they represent only 5% of the Bordeaux region, they have an international reputation because most of this type of wine is exported. In addition, the communication producers use is similar to that used by the luxury and cultural industries. Corporate communications about Grands Crus is a major selling tool because of the storytelling expected from the consumer, more than any other form of advertising.

The Union des Grands Crus aims to improve the reputation of the 113 wine estate members. The annual guidebook presents descriptions of the different members and is distributed to importers, brokers, and international distributors and during wine fairs. Every wine estate appears on its own page, with one or several pictures. A series of objective data is systematically provided: name of the owner, appellation of origin (location in the vineyard), official ranking or classification, area under vine, amount of production, type of soil, grape varieties, specificities or kind of ageing, and brands provided by the wine estate (i.e., name of the chateau). The label of the main brand is also presented. Finally, every wine estate provides some corporate communication. The entries in this yearbook are similar in terms of their length—from 150 to 300 words—which is concise enough to think that each word counts. These entries provide readers with a background on each estate and can be defined as storytelling according to Sole and Gray Wilson, (1999). The prices for the wines discussed in this article are provided by the <http://www.wine-searcher.com/> website, which broadcast most of the related future prices for the 2009 vintage.

The framework of the research is as follows. First, we read the corporate communications from the 113 chateaux and organized them into a thematic list of the main topics arising from the different stories. Then, each text was read a second time by the same researcher to assess the relative importance of every topic. The objective was to measure the intensity of the presence of the different themes on a specific scale, from 1 (no presence of the theme) to 4 (high intensity of the theme). This kind of analysis was suggested by Gergaud and Chossat (2003) in a case of comments provided by a gastronomic guidebook about French restaurants. These authors tried to explain the reputation of great chefs, measured by expert opinion, through objective data and texts written in guidebooks.

The following text about Château Cheval Blanc is an example of what is provided in the annual guidebook published by the Union des Grands Crus association:

“In the 18th century, Cheval Blanc’s current domain was mostly covered by an extensive vineyard, which can be seen in a Belleyne map from 1764. Nearly a century later, the domain was acquired by the Fourcaud-Laussac family, which would keep it until 1998 when it was sold to Bernard Arnault and Baron Albert Frère. Altogether, the domain—situated at the edges of the Pomerol district—is run as a homogeneous unit by a single tenant. The conjunction of the land’s exceptional quality and highly original grape varieties (Cabernet Franc blended with Merlot) gives its output a singular sensory identity. Over the past century, Chateau Cheval Blanc has had more exceptional vintages than any other classified Grand Cru Bordeaux wine. Even more surprising is the fact that when some of its vintages peak, they can stay at this level for years. This is a powerful, flexible, generous, smooth and rich wine, silky in its fruitiness and elegance and admirably constant. It is a wine that seems invulnerable and resembles no other.”

Union des Grands Crus de Bordeaux (2010, p. 11).

In this text, several themes are present and therefore assessed with a high score: history, geography, and grape varieties. Thus, according to this measure of thematic intensity, each piece can be scored on 13 criteria. As a result, correlations between criteria can be measured and also crosses depending on the price of the wines and their terroir.

We opted for the Grand Cru category of Bordeaux wines first and foremost because of the theoretical hypothesis that luxury products are communicated from the very outset through corporate branding and the complex narratives they generate. This can also be explained by an empirical reason, which is that the category constitutes a closed sample that has been highly stable for nearly a century and therefore helps to create communications rules that have been validated by their long-term effectiveness. This enhances understanding of their construction and helps to explain why they have been preserved in many corporate communications strategies. The authors of the

Guide de l'Union des Grands Crus are forced, willingly or not, to create a more condensed narrative structure than might optimize the staging of their product's quality, which is usually based on a rigorous and hierarchical codification of information. Indeed, we know that since 1855, a stable, specific classification has been used to present the hierarchy of the Grands Crus of Bordeaux. This corpus is particularly useful in understanding how each narrative has performed in terms of differentiation from its neighbors (constructed here in geographic and editorial senses of the term) in light of the limited number of themes being evoked and developed. Such an approach is useful because it forced us to engage in a twofold analysis.

A lexicographic analysis conducted with a dedicated software (Sphinx Online–Lexica) allowing principal component analysis, correspondent factorial analysis, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) describes the corpus and structures it according to various classifications. Then, a multiple regression analysis highlights the link between the themes provided by the texts and the price level.

The long-lasting tradition of price equations in wine economics provides a relevant framework for the left-hand side variables that potentially can explain price differences: weather conditions (Di Vittorio and Ginsburgh, 1996), sensory characteristics (Combris et al., 1997; Cardebat and Figuet, 2009), technology (Gergaud and Ginsburgh, 2010), origin (Nerlove, 1995; Schamel and Anderson, 2003), individual and collective reputation (Landon and Smith, 1997, 1998), experts' ratings (Dubois and Nauges, 2010), frequently the grade given by the famous US critic Robert Parker (see Lecocq and Visser, 2006; among others), quantity supplied (Lima, 2006), grape variety (Steiner, 2004), green labels and certifications (Delmas and Grant, 2010), and tasting notes (Ramirez, 2010). The wine-rating variable is usually included in the explanatory variables set either as a measure of intrinsic quality (e.g., Landon and Smith, 1997; Oczkowski, 2001; Schamel and Anderson, 2003; Lecocq and Visser 2006; Hadj Ali et al., 2008) or as a reputation vector (Schamel, 2000; Hadj Ali and Nauges, 2007; Dubois and Nauges, 2010). The Parker effect, defined as how Parker points modify consumers' purchasing behavior and wine producers' price strategy (Lecocq and Visser, 2006), increases wine prices on average about 2.80 euros per bottle (Hadj Ali et al., 2008). This approach generates classical endogenous issues. Indeed, for wine, a non-negative relationship between price and enjoyment can occur, especially when the consumers are experts (Goldstein et al., 2008), that is, the grade can be partly explained by price. In such a context, we estimate and compare two equations. The multivariate analysis is first conducted regressing the price against a vector of objective data and a set of themes provided by the texts through the OLS estimator. In the case of Bordeaux Grands Crus, we estimate the following equation

$$P_i = OBJ_i\beta + X_i\gamma + U_i \quad i = 1, \dots, n \quad (1)$$

with P_i the price of wine I in logarithm; OBJ_i a vector representing the objective and exogenous variables such as the appellation of the wine, its official ranking or classification, the grape varieties used in the blending, and the type of soil; and $TEXT_i$ is a series of variables extrapolated from the texts (see following). Regarding the appellation or area of origin of the wine, we distinguish wine estates according to their location along the main river in the vineyard: some wines are produced on the left bank of the Gironde river (west side of the vineyard), others on the right bank (east side of the vineyard). It enables avoiding a multiplication of attributes among the right-hand side variables. Moreover, it seems coherent to distinguish both banks according to the grape varieties used in wine production, given that the left bank provides cabernet sauvignon—dominant reds and the right one provides merlot—dominant reds. U_i is an i.i.d. error term.

Then we estimate another price equation including the grade attributed by Robert Parker before the wine futures campaign (GR_i , with $i = 1, \dots, n$) (see Eq. 2) and compare both series of results to try to avoid the endogeneity bias in our interpretation of the results:

$$P_i = OBJ_i\beta + X_i\gamma + GR_i\delta + U_i \quad i = 1, \dots, n \quad (2)$$

4. Results and discussion

The texts provided by the wineries are structured mainly by 13 kinds of topics: family, history, appellation, grape assemblage, winemaking techniques, financial partners, geography and geology, description of wines, wine ageing, art and culture, organic certification, customers, and technical investments. Hence, the first result is the limited number of topics used by the wineries in their corporate communications, as suggested previously by several researchers. This finding is a bit surprising given that most of the wineries in Bordeaux explicitly defend the idea that their wine is unique, as highlighted by the last sentence of the text provided by Château Cheval Blanc (see previous quote).

A precise ranking of the 13 argumentative dimensions shows that five of them are quite frequently used in corporate communications from the wineries: history, family, geography, wine ageing, and appellation. Far less present are expressions linked to consumers, organic certification, and business partners (investors).

By consumers we mean all the references in the speech to a potential consumer of the product (his or her identity, expectations, characteristics). As an example, a text that would say “*Château X. visitors coming from various countries in the world want to immerse themselves in a story of more than three centuries...*” clearly expresses an aim of referring to consumers (their origin, motivation) more than to the product itself.

The ANOVA presented in Table 1 shows the average intensity of every topic according to the location (appellation) of the wine estate.

Table 1
Appellations styles according to six discriminant criteria (ANOVA).

| Location (number of châteaux) | Family | Geography | Varietal | Wine growing | Description of the wines | Clients consumers |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Pessac Leognan (16) | 2.25 | 2.13 | 1.19 | 2.19 | 2.00 | 1.00 |
| Graves (3) | 3.67 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 2.67 | 1.67 | 1.00 |
| Saint-Émilion (23) | 2.33 | 2.38 | 1.38 | 2.17 | 2.17 | 1.08 |
| Pomerol (10) | 1.70 | 2.60 | 2.20 | 3.70 | 3.20 | 1.60 |
| Moulis (3) | 3.33 | 1.33 | 1.00 | 1.67 | 3.67 | 2.33 |
| Listrac (4) | 3.25 | 1.75 | 3.00 | 2.50 | 2.75 | 1.00 |
| Haut Médoc(10) | 2.00 | 2.30 | 1.30 | 1.80 | 1.20 | 1.40 |
| Autre Medoc (2) | 1.50 | 3.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Margaux (19) | 2.58 | 1.95 | 1.16 | 1.74 | 1.63 | 1.37 |
| Saint Julien (9) | 2.78 | 1.67 | 1.22 | 1.78 | 2.33 | 1.44 |
| Pauillac (12) | 3.17 | 2.17 | 1.83 | 1.67 | 1.75 | 1.00 |
| Saint Estèphe (4) | 2.25 | 2.75 | 1.25 | 2.00 | 1.25 | 1.00 |
| Sauternes Barsac (15) | 2.38 | 3.13 | 1.31 | 2.00 | 2.13 | 1.25 |
| Mean on total (113) | 2.46 | 2.29 | 1.44 | 2.09 | 2.05 | 1.25 |

This table first presents the average score of each appellation on the six selected criteria, which have a power of differentiation according to ANOVA. The bold and underlined figures correspond to a significantly different score from the average. For instance, Graves (3.67), Listrac (3.25), and Pauillac (3.17) are significantly higher than the average population (2.46) for the family style of narrative. The principal components analysis shown in Fig. 1 is a representation of the previous table board where the correlations between the various criteria are shown. The location of the appellations on the map corresponds to the characteristics of the criteria.

Indeed, the description of the texts highlights that the most frequent themes are associated with the area where the wine estate is located. As a result, four main communication styles are identified:

- The Sauternes appellation refers to the product with a description of the wines, to the grape varieties, to the appellation, and to geography. This communication is based on terroir.
- Most of the Médoc appellations (Saint-Julien, Margaux, Pauillac, Haut-Médoc) as well as Graves tell their history, the story of their family, but also refer to investments and certifications. This communication is based on tradition, sometimes combined with modernity.
- Pessac-Léognan and Listrac appellations provide technical elements with references to the winemaking process and to wine ageing.
- Moulis and Saint-Estèphe appellations focus on their customers and on art and culture, but generally speaking these topics are not frequently found in the communications.

Table 2 summarizes these results.

The OLS estimation of our price equations (see Table 3) exhibits some classical results such as a significant and positive influence of the official ranking as well as of the location on the right bank of the river compared with the

remaining locations of the vineyard. Researchers associate these results respectively with an individual and collective reputation effect (see Landon and Smith, 1998, for instance). It is interesting to notice that even if people perceive that prices are not systematically ranked like the 1855 classification, it is actually mostly the case. Landon and Smith (1997) explain that such an effect is due to incentives created by the ranking to keep a high quality level. As such, the 1855 classification remains a powerful vehicle for reputation.

Few of the 13 topics found in the texts are significant enough to explain price differences. The coefficient of “winemaking” is positive, whereas the coefficient of “geography” is negative. Therefore, technical information seems valued by consumers when it is presented in the context of a story. This is not the case when this information is provided in a more objective way.

Incorporating technical elements by sharing many details of the winemaking is betting that the reader has a certain level of expertise or at least a motivation for the rational choice. This may seem a bit paradoxical considering that the purpose of storytelling is to arouse emotions. Also the link between “winemaking” and some higher prices may be interpreted by the fact that this type of storytelling is aimed at a more educated consumer segment and therefore more involved in wine than average. This group of consumers is more demanding of the actual content of the text and otherwise is willing to pay more.

5. Conclusions and implications

This article attempts to studying storytelling as developed in corporate communications and its potential effect on the price of fine wines.

We identify 13 different topics used in the stories. Their combination enables us to define different styles of corporate communications. Schematically, we can consider two axes in these texts: the first one contrasts the “investor”

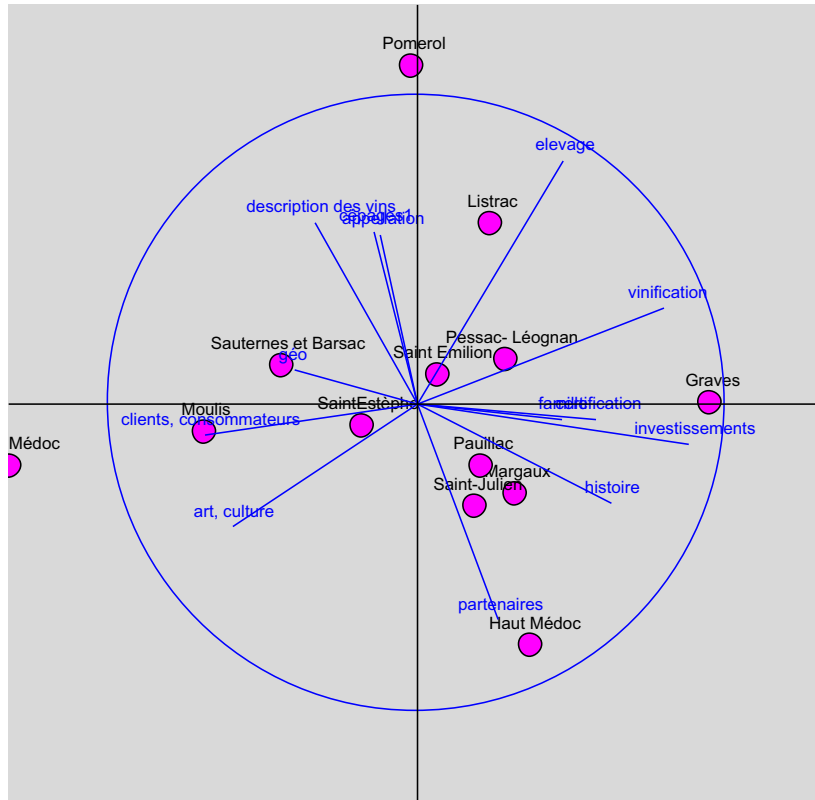


Fig. 1. Translation: Elevage=wine growing/description des vins=wine description/appellation=AOC/vinification=wine making/client, consommateurs=clients, consumers/art culture=art et culture/partenaires=partnership/histoire=history/investissement=investments/famille=family

Table 2
Criteria shaping the four forms of communication.

| Four kinds of communication | Criteria | Concerned appellations |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Group 1 | Description of wines, varieties, appellations, geography | Sauternes |
| Group 2 | History, family, investments, certifications | Saint Julien, Margaux, Pauillac, Haut Médoc, Graves |
| Group 3 | Clients, art, and culture | Moulis, Saint Estèphe |
| Group 4 | Winemaking, wine growing | Pessac Léognan, Llistrac |

(financial partners) and the “creator” (winemaker). The second axis opposes “places” (natural environment), claiming an exclusive and unique identity, and the “plant” (the assemblages of grapes) as expression of an added value. A PCA analysis reveals that some appellations are associated with some specific themes, enabling us to identify four main communication styles in the case of Bordeaux fine wines: terroir, tradition and modernity, technical process, and, less frequently, consumers and culture. Regarding wine prices, communication based on winemaking generates a price premium, whereas geography is a topic that, all things being equal, decreases the price. Taking into account a potential Parker’s effect on prices does not modify these results.

The lexical analysis shows some limitations. If the word counts gives a tangible information, there is little provided about the significance of the combination of the words. So,

talking about family, history, geography, and geology and then to gradually move to wine production and the wine’s characteristics has often been the fabric of the stories. Read one after other, these texts seem relatively undifferentiated. However, in their consumption experience, buyers of fine wine or visitors to a wine estate do not rely on such contexts. They do not compare texts. Instead, buyers are faced with a unique story that takes another singular dimension. In this sense, we can say that the systematic comparison of texts out of the same guide that requires a minimum of standardization does not reflect the reality of the producer and presents a methodological bias.

This is the reason why, far from refuting the importance of storytelling to present a château in a corporate way, we emphasize the importance of the authenticity of the speech to identify a first type of storytelling: in this sense, history, geography, and geology of the place will be particularly

Table 3
Price equation: estimation results.

| Left hand side variable | Eq. #1 | | Eq. #2 | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------|---------|
| | Estimated coefficient | t-stat. | Estimated coefficient | t-stat. |
| Objective variables: | | | | |
| Origin (right bank) | 1.315*** | 5.77 | 0.661*** | 3.23 |
| Size of the vineyard | 0.0002 | 0.08 | −0.001 | −0.73 |
| Soil: graves | 0.192 | 1.11 | 0.088 | 0.59 |
| Soil: argilo-calcareous | −0.125 | −0.78 | −0.118 | −0.83 |
| Soil: sand | 0.049 | 0.27 | 0.022 | 0.14 |
| Soil: other | 0.321 | 1.94 | 0.106 | 0.77 |
| First growth | 0.794*** | 3.69 | −0.038 | −0.20 |
| Graves great growth | 0.785*** | 3.44 | −0.144 | −0.69 |
| Classified in 1855 | 0.882*** | 5.86 | 0.138 | 0.93 |
| Classified growth | −0.506* | −1.97 | −0.392* | −1.96 |
| Topics: | | | | |
| History | −0.006 | −0.08 | 0.089 | 1.44 |
| Family | 0.0007 | 0.01 | −0.027 | −0.60 |
| Appellation of origin | −0.035 | −0.57 | −0.008 | −0.15 |
| Geography | −0.168*** | −2.68 | −0.111** | −2.20 |
| Wine making | 0.15** | 2.08 | 0.108* | 1.93 |
| Wine ageing | 0.002 | 0.02 | −0.030 | −0.51 |
| Wine characteristics | 0.011 | 0.20 | 0.013 | 0.30 |
| Grape varieties | 0.015 | 0.22 | 0.058 | 0.92 |
| Investments | −0.05 | −0.84 | −0.008 | −0.16 |
| Art, culture | 0.084 | 0.92 | 0.023 | 0.31 |
| Partners | −0.107 | −1.30 | −0.028 | −0.43 |
| Certification | 0.017 | 0.21 | −0.006 | −0.09 |
| Customers and consumers | 0.019 | 0.22 | −0.101 | −1.47 |
| Parker's grade | − | − | 0.138*** | 8.47 |
| Intercept | 2.827*** | 4.75 | −9.290*** | −6.21 |
| Number of observations | 127 | | 108 | |
| R ² | 0.508 | | 0.72 | |
| F-stat. (prob.) | 4.63 | (0.000) | 9.07 | (0.000) |

*significantly different from zero at 10%.

**significantly different from zero at 5%.

***significantly different from zero at 1%.

welcome as a first approach to the public. Other criteria register more on emotions and describe a second type of storytelling: the list of owners names supposed to be places of psychological projection as well as some wine descriptors subtly playing on nuances, which are reserved for consumers looking for a dream and for identification, as illustrated by Chinese visitors who visit Bordeaux vineyards, for example. Finally, a third type of storytelling will be reserved for experts, opinion leaders, and wine journalists who, far from being seduced by evocations, wish to focus on the technical aspects and rational criteria: vineyards management, technical investments, and logistics aspects, for instance.

Thus, we see through our recommendation that this distinction may not be unique but adaptable to different audiences. Indeed, two types of motivations may exist for consumers: either they will adopt a rational approach to determine what they look for in the guidebooks or collective websites of these Grands Crus and storytelling

will provide them an opportunity to get out of a too stereotypical shape, or the consumer will create a relationship with one Grand Cru in particular during a visit or a tasting. In this case, the storytelling will then remain classic. Three narrative styles can be offered to visitors: for the French (descriptive), foreign especially from Asia (immersive), and even for a wine expert (technical).

More specifically, another question remains when considering managerial implications: are these forms of communication specific to institutional Grands Crus (i.e., fine or even iconic wines) or are they usable in other contexts? One thinks especially of the Medoc Cru Bourgeois positioned in the wake of the Grands Crus and any premium wines whose prices range is between 10 and 30 euros for less elitist appellations such as Côtes de Bordeaux. We plan on studying these additional wine categories in order to confirm, on a much larger population, the differentiating power of communication while erasing the influence of prestigious appellations and the classifications applied in

1855. Specifically, it would be valuable to test a series of texts from various wine estates (Grands Crus, Crus Bourgeois, and more modest appellations) to measure a possible differentiating power of these texts, as is done with blind tastings.

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