Abstract

Thesis Title: Sales and Education Supporting Tools in Our "E-Wine" World

Candidate: Tamás Oroszlán (nr. 10000943)

Institution: Weinakademie Österreich

Date: June 2026

1. Motivation for Choosing this Topic

The wine industry is currently facing significant challenges caused by declining consumption in most of the markets, changing lifestyles, stronger competition from alternative beverages and generational shifts. While wine remains connected to culture, history, gastronomy and terroir, traditional methods of communication are not always sufficient to engage modern consumers.

Based on the author's professional experience in the international wine trade and on wine sector researches and articles, this thesis not only highlights the need for more accessible, consumer-oriented and digitally supported approaches for easier communication and better ways to sell wine but also gives new ideas and possible solutions.

2. Problem / Objective

The primary problem is the increasing gap between traditional wine communication and the expectations of modern consumers, leaving digital tools in sales and education underutilized. The objective is not to replace professional expertise or traditional culture with technology, but to explore how digital tools can create accessible commercial entry points.

The main objectives are:

- To evaluate the state of digitalization across wine sales and educational sectors.
- To analyse changing consumer behaviours and generational communication needs.
- To identify existing and untapped digital tools that simplify buying, optimize sales paths, and make learning entertaining.
- To propose practical, new ideas, concepts to drive wine sales and to create more engaging wine education.

3. Methodology

This study combines academic and industry literature with primary qualitative market research:

- **Primary Qualitative Research:** Interviews conducted in 2026 with international industry leaders from Kjær & Sommerfeldt, Vininova, Global Wineries, Château Cos d'Estournel, Systembolaget, and Delta Wines. These provide practical insights into the importance of investing into digitalisation and into their modern digital tools that support sales.
- **Secondary Research:** A review of industry data, articles, and books, including researches of the Wine Market Council, IWSR, Deloitte Digital.
- **Concept development:** based on the identified market challenges, literature reviews, interview findings and the author's practical experience in the international wine trade.

4. Content

The thesis is structured into four main sections:

- **Section 1:** Presents shortly the traditional period of wine sales and education and give a picture of early stage of digitalisation and its acceleration by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Section 2:** Demonstrates that low-involvement newcomers require simpler language, faster pace and developed modern digital tools to catch their attention and to engage them.
- **Section 3:** Reviews active tools, split into backend drivers (ERP, PIM) and storefront touchpoints (Preferabli, monopoly apps, NFC bottle authentication, and AR labels), showing how digital education can be enhanced through greater interactivity and digital modern tools.
- **Section 4:** Proposes some new retail concepts including a life-sized "cardboard sommelier" with a QR code that generates guidance and a simplified shelf map for low-involved consumers. It also introduces a flavour- and price-oriented shelf organization method, and also interactive QR code based modern labels, and "Memovin" - a platform where casual consumers save emotional wine moments ("Drop a Wine Memo") while advanced students log digital, real-time classroom tasting notes based on the WSET Systematic Approach to Tasting (SAT) within a single database.

5. Conclusion

Digitalization should serve as a supportive commercial engine helping the trade communicate its values in an understandable, attractive, and profitable way for modern consumers. While large corporations invest millions in operational AI and applications, small-and-medium wineries face a serious financial situation. Therefore, this thesis recommends that governmental subvention programs should consider relocating funding toward digital sales, communication frameworks, and educational technology rather than focusing exclusively on vineyard and winery infrastructure. Eventually, digitalisation should be the tool not only to drive sales but also to understand, attract and engage newcomers and younger generations, knowing in the meantime that the real destination should be to guide them towards the deeper values of wine like terroir, tradition, personal connections.