

Attachment to Unit 7

Introduction

Nowadays wine labels are widely explored as their meaning for wine sales can never be underestimated. Wine label is the very important part of the purchase. There are about three seconds for consumer in the market to grab the bottle - so the label should do its best to impress the client within the shortest time.

Wine label is mostly meaningful for the first try, when the next purchase will be made only if the quality inside the bottle is trustful. Nevertheless easy and bright image on the label is more helpful to find the wine next time on the shelf than the long and incomprehensible name.

The most important the attractiveness of wine label is for neophytes who can't read wine labels, who don't have their personal wine consultant and who buy most of wine in the big shops with no explanation about the taste, the place of origin, etc. Speaking about haute cuisine restaurants, labels have lesser meaning as the staff includes wine expert who helps to understand the wine list.

There are different ways to attract customer's attention, and one of them is the use of funny animal on the wine label - so called "critter labels". The term "critter label" appeared at the beginning of 2000s after Yellow Label phenomenon. Using something bright to attract the attention and to be easily recognized, Yellow Label wine label was designed with the wallaby image on the yellow field. New Australian brand was introduced to the USA market in 2001 and it was unexpectedly sold with the huge success: from 60000 cases in June 2001 to 6.5 million cases in 2004. It was the first time in Australian wine industry to have such an increase of sales within 3 years, so the phenomenon attracted attention of marketing services.

Motivation

I've been working for longer than 5 years in wine-trading company with strong New World (especially Australia) wines presence. As I see, there's a significant growth of animals images use in wine labels design during last decade, so called "critter labels". But nevertheless the company meets the demand from the number of restaurants as they refuse to work with wines decorated by bright and funny animal images. The company had to start importing "SilverGum" as the second label from the Littore Family Wines, well known with their "Jinda-Lee" wines, decorated with native animals of Australia. Also I see that famous Australian producer d'Arenberg names its wines after animals (The Laughing Magpie, The Hermit Crab, The Feral Fox, the Lucky Lizard, etc.) but prefers not to use images on the labels. Is it on purpose to make the wines look more premium? There were a number of studies researching "Yellow Label" success on USA market, but nobody researched Russian market and the popularity of critter labels among local consumers.

The **objective** of this thesis is to research the modern perception of critter labels among neophytes. The animal images have been used on wine labels since ancient times or mentioned in the name of wines, grape varieties or properties, but we see the fast increasing of new projects both in Europe and New World with the use of critter labels - Goats du Roam, Tussock Jumper, Arrogant Frog, Fat Bastard, etc.

The goal of this study is to research the perception of critter labels by consumers in Russia – do they make unknown wine more attractive? Do they help to recognize the favorite wine among the others or they confuse, as the consumer looks for the label "with elephant", not the brand? Do critter labels suit only low-priced wines but not premium ones?

Hypothesis

1. Critter labels with funny animals look cheaper than wine labels with traditional design using animal images.
2. Critter labels are more attractive for neophyte consumers than traditional wine labels.
3. Critter label evoke the desire to buy wine without any information about the taste, country of origin and grape variety - funny creature is the guarantee of lovely taste.

The practical application of this research is revealing some features of critter labels perception, and the results can be helpful and useful for successful launching of new wines on Russian market.

Research

- Literature review – the story of wine labels, the meaning of wine labels, the use of animal images on labels. Yellow Label phenomenon, critter labels – pro and contra.

Methodology

- Questionnaire for neophyte wine lovers (26 respondents)

13 wine labels of different price categories, containing 4 short question for each label:

1. Do you like the label?
2. What do you associate with the animal on label?
3. What's the price? (There are three price categories offered.)
4. Would you buy this wine?

- Interviewing of wine professionals both using and avoiding animal images on the labels (6 people)

Pro

Dario Pierazzuoli (Toscana, Tenuta Cantagallo)

Michael Malat (Kamptal, Weingut Malat)

Littore Family Wines (Victoria)

Contra

Angeline Templier (Champagne, Lassalle)

Michael Reinisch (Johanneshof Reinisch)

Nikolai Shutov (FORT Wine&Spirits)

Conclusion

One hypothesis out of three was confirmed with this research - critter labels indeed look cheaper, than traditional ones, but it doesn't evoke the sympathy and the wish to buy. Even if critter label means cheap and approachable, classic design looks more trustful and desirable and is thought to be more expensive.

Proposed Sources:

- Books and researches
- Web sources – www.decanter.com, www.winebusiness.com, www.beveragedaily.com, www.winesandvines.com, etc.