

The Making of the Book

Slovenia - a Winemaking Country

Abstract

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MOTIVATION FOR CHOOSING THE TOPIC AND OBJECTIVES

In spring of 2016 I was approached by a Slovenian wine exporter specialising in China market. They needed a book in Chinese and English language that would represent Slovenia as a wine country, its wines and winemakers. I accepted the task as an author and project manager. During the project I've part with the exporter and took complete control over the making and the publishing of the book. In November 2017 the book was published in Slovenian and English language. Six months after the release I wanted to get the feedback from the readers to improve further releases. So far, the book has been selling in Slovenia only. With this thesis I also wanted to make full analysis of the profitability of the project and how to increase the sales through different channels to markets outside Slovenia.

I believe this work can be used as a case study for anyone who is considering to self-publish a wine book.

METHODOLOGY

To get a feedback about the book from the readers I created a 9 questions survey including demographic questions and three open questions. The survey was created on 1ka.si public platform which is easy to understand and is available also in English language. The survey was sent to e-mail addresses which included consumers, big accounts (companies buying several copies) winemakers and restaurants. 74 surveys were sent back

For the second objective – increasing current sales, the research was focused in three directions:

- eBooks
- Selling hard copies through eCommerce platforms (Amazon, Shopify)
- Teaming with a publisher in target markets.

To get good insight on how to create sell publish eBooks I have researched two major platforms for eBooks Amazon Kindle and Apple iBooks. Initial costs to publish an eBook and break-even points were calculated with my designer.

I have also researched how to extend sales of printed copies by means of eCommerce platforms. My focus was on Amazon Europe which can be used as sales and fulfilment platform

and Shopify.com which is a sales platform only. The research was carried out by studying Amazon and Shopify web sites and by consulting the shipping prices.

The last part – Teaming with a publisher in target markets to sell selling hard copies outside Slovenia was based on identifying publishing houses specialising in the field of wine and/or food, on targeted markets (UK, USA, Germany). I was trying to get right contacts and inquiry them about their interest in the book. Big part of this part of the research was carried out with e-mails and phone calls. I have also consulted my printers to get reprinting cost estimated.

A SWOT analysis was created to better understand the potential of the book.

CONTENT

The content is divided to several sections. After the introduction, "THE A CREATING OF A BOOK" chapter uncovers "behind the scenes" of making the book Slovenia - a winemaking country. It describes which roles in the project were needed, timing and cost calculations. It continues with sales results and break-even calculations. The heart of the content is covered in the chapters "HOW TO IMPROVE THE CONTENT – A SURVEY" and "HOW TO INCREASE THE SALES". The first chapter describes the satisfaction feedback of the readers/users of the book and their suggestions for further improving the content. In the last chapter I have showed how we plan to increase the sales through the means of selling through Amazon, eCommerce platform and by parting with publishers on targeted markets outside Slovenia.

In the conclusion I have wrapped up the summary of the thesis, which is followed by bibliography.

CONCLUSIONS

Unless you are a high-profile wine author in the range of Jancis Robinson, Hugh Johnson or Oz Clarke, self-publishing a wine book is an option author should seriously consider. Working with the publisher is much safer way but going independent might be a much more profitable journey if it includes good planning. Out there, several platforms are available to help you creating the printed version (Lulu.com), eBook (Kindle) and platforms that can help an independent author with fulfilment and sales, namely Amazon and Shopify.

Through this research I am now more aware that the book was very well received by the readers and I am aware where improvements can be made. I have also learnt Kindle, Amazon, iBooks and possibly Shopify are viable channels for my book and probably any wine book. With 100 sold copies on Kindle we can cover initial cost of setting up the book on e-platform and selling hard copies through Amazon costs nothing except for setting up an account and start selling. I am going to use these channels, straightaway to catch Christmas 2018 season.

The topic which was not covered in this these and would require more research is how to successfully advertise the published book. A good database of followers, positive reviews in wine magazines and social media come to the mind as first solutions.