

The Importance of Introducing the Quality Management System within a Great Efficiency in Terms of Wine Tourism

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Abstract

Both wine tourism and quality management have played a great role from the very beginning as a key element for creating new jobs, new international standards, new requirements in terms of investments. Globally speaking, specialists do believe that oenotourism – in terms of touristic product – has been requested very often in the last years due to the recall of wine producing and consuming countries both for the wine lovers and those who really appreciate special destinations in terms of wine regions. It is a fact that researchers claim the lack of scientific materials regarding the main behavior of a wine tourist and the main quality standards in order to assure that wine tourism is efficient. The current paper points out these issues by bringing arguments for introducing a Quality Management System on this type of tourism: past and current tendencies regarding quality are given as well as the main differences between quality and quality management, the purpose of introducing it, the steps that a winery should follow and the positive effects within this industry and economical development. Therefore, the reader may have a better picture regarding the link between quality, its standards and wine tourism.

Keywords: Wine Tourism, Quality Management System, Wine Industry.

Introduction

There has been a lot of scientific research about quality and its impact not only on the product but on services as well (Hudson and Shephard 1998; Gartner 1993; Cianfrani and West 2009; Charters and Ali-Knight 2002; Getz and Brown 2006). Practical approaches, benchmarking and know-how are some few key – elements that lead to the development of wine industry, especially in terms of wine tourism.

The current paper highlights the necessity for a Quality Management System that wineries should take into consideration so as tourists could be more confident in the touristic

services and wines they make. We do believe that these factors would be an important step in the development of wine area. Whatsoever, as Deming (1986) used to say, quality may represent a certain level of uniformity at a low cost, thus reaching to the market needs. Therefore, it can easily be observed the more or less attempt in introducing some quality management instruments especially that this new attitude obliges to efficiency, fulfilling the established objectives with the minimum effort with the lowest possible cost.

An organization, in our case a winery could be considered as a great system characterized by all the means they get in order to assure entries and goings for the external environment. As a consequence, there must be an adequate process so that wineries would adjust to all these new requirements: the customers' needs and their expectations. Anyhow, the concern for the permanent improvement within such a dynamic sector is nothing else but a positive attitude for implementing a quality management system.

Past and current tendencies regarding quality

Scientific research marks the '30s as the beginning period for the evolution of this concept due to the first publication in this field: Economic Control of Quality of Manufactured Product (Shewhart 1931). Hence, Juran (1986) and Deming (1986) are the best known authors who made some studies, the first one in implementing quality systems and the second in statistical methods. Nowadays, the International Association for Standardization suggests that quality may be represented by the all standards and characteristics of a product, reported to its capacity in meeting the known or the expected necessities (The Standard ISO 9004-2:1991). When we refer to quality we should think first about the product, about the client and other important factors such as: projection quality. There can be seen the link between the elements mentioned before in the following figure:

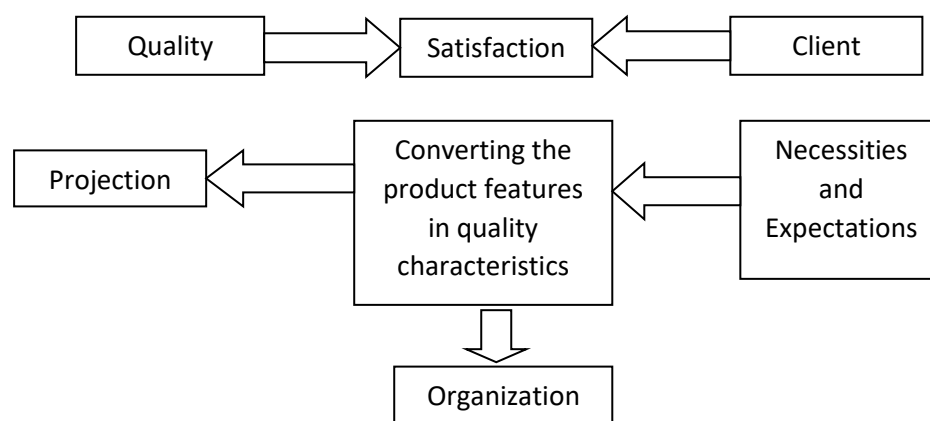


Figure.1 Projecting quality

Source: The author's work based on theoretical views regarding quality (Rose 2005)

It is very important to understand that quality implies every person within organization at anytime. It must be sustained by management – in this case, quality being mandatory for professional personnel, better to say for a successful company where teamwork, communication, motivation and respect for environment prevail. Therefore, a briefly comparison between the traditional and modern concept regarding quality is shown:

Table 1:

The Main Differences Between Quality And Quality Management

	<i>Classic quality</i>	<i>Quality Management</i>
<i>Objective</i>	Respecting standards	Getting the client's satisfaction
<i>Subject</i>	Defined by specialists	Defined by client
<i>Effect</i>	Products and services	The entire organization: the organizational structure, the human resources management, the environmental background, etc.
<i>Representatives</i>	The quality department	The entire personnel within organization
<i>Focus</i>	Stopping the errors by correcting them	Preventing – things must be done well from the very first time

Source: the author's work based on information within scientific theories regarding quality (Westcott and Russell 2003; Deming 1986)

According to the Quality Trilogy of Juran (1986), when talking about system and management, we must refer to a set of processes and activities such as: planning, controlling and mending. Whatsoever, these all look very similar in the Deming's (1986) wheel as well: plan, do, check and act. Action refers mainly to the identification of the non-quality factors. Once the errors are located, these may be analyzed and a modality through which causes may be corrected should be found. Thus, planning is strongly connected to prevention.

Why introducing Quality Management System within wine tourism?

Over the last twenty years there has been an increasing emphasize on the topic of wine tourism. Still, few have been written by academics about both wine as a product and wine industry in their attempt to define wine tourism. Approximately two thirds of wine tourism literature comes from Australia (Macionis 1997, Dowling and Carlsen 1999) and New Zealand (Hall and Johnson 1997; Mitchell and Hall 2006, Mitchell and Hall 2003, Mitchell et al. 2000), while a large amount of research comes from Canada (Hackett 1998, Williams and Kelly 2001, Telfer 2001, Williams and Dossa 2003, Hira and Bwenge, 2011) and the USA (Dodd 1995; Peters 1997, Skinner 2000). Even if, the idea itself of oenotourism is not the central message of the current paper, we do feel obliged to point out some of its most relevant features as well as the profile of wine tourist in order to understand better the wine industry and its customers' expectations in terms of quality.

To begin with, many scientific approaches regarding wine tourism encompass some important characteristics such as: an educational element, connections to local wines, food, art, embracing the whole tourism destination image as a possibility for benchmarking. Therefore, wine tourism lifestyle could be provided through many ways, some of them being of a great importance: festivals, events, hospitality, wine tours, wine tasting sessions. Nevertheless, wine producers could not reach to performance without knowing the tourist's profile. A segmentation of the wine tourist is given in literature on this topic - Hall (1996), cited in Hall and Macionis (1998). In the New World literature, three categories are

mentioned: the “wine lovers”, “the wine interested” and “curious tourists” whereas European researchers have promoted another line, for instance: “the formal wine tourist”, the tourist with an “acknowledged interest in wine” and last but not least, the “general tourist” (Charters and Ali-Knight 2002). However, the wine experience in terms of tourism depends most of the times on culture and civilization. If In Europe, the *formal wine tourist* would travel in groups, in America or New Zealand rarely this thing might actually happen (Charters and Fountain 2006; Dritsaki 2009).

Getz and Brown (2006) managed to refer to wine tourism from three points of view: a strategy by which touristic destinations may gain famous imagery, a way of customers’ behavior – wine lovers, amateurs have the opportunity to travel within their favorite regions, a possibility for wineries to understand consumers and send their products directly to them. It is about this perspective on wine tourism that this paper will focus further on.

The reliable factors that determine the need for quality are strictly attached to increasing competition, increasing the main production elements, the consumers’ expectations, law that requires new quality standards, environment and safety labor.

Generally speaking, a company, organization could prove its Quality System Management thanks to a set of good practices, rules, documents and results. In order to appreciate the quality level within an organization a standard series ISO 9000 have been launched which stress some special requirements for quality management. Thus, this approach within a winery improves substantially the way cellars work, analyze better the tourists’ preferences, define and implement by all means those procedures that guarantee satisfaction.

The arguments that could help us getting the response to our question result of the following:

- Identifying and implementing the best practices in sustainable winegrowing, sustainable tourism specially within globalization;
- Stimulating investments for the best equipment within wine making process;
- Promoting the know-how for environmental protection and conserving natural resources;
- Special training and assistance for regional and local wine community;
- Assuring on long term the wine lands and the well being of vineyards, wineries’ employees;
- Focus on waste management and those activities with a great impact upon air, water and soil, thus helping in reducing the ecological risks;
- Respect, confidence and communication between employees, neighbors, tourists, visitors, etc.
- Increasing the number of jobs, creating modern infrastructure, supporting local business, etc.

All these are designed to lead for a continuous improvement, to grab changes reliable for some sustainable measures (Figure 2).

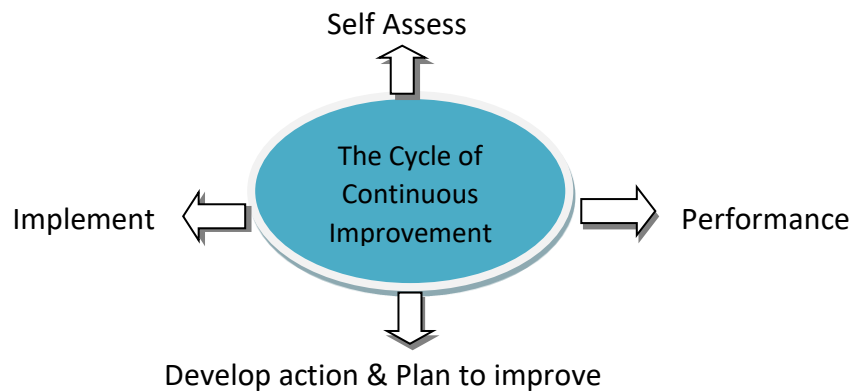


Figure 2. The Cycle of Continuous Improvement

Source: California Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Workbook

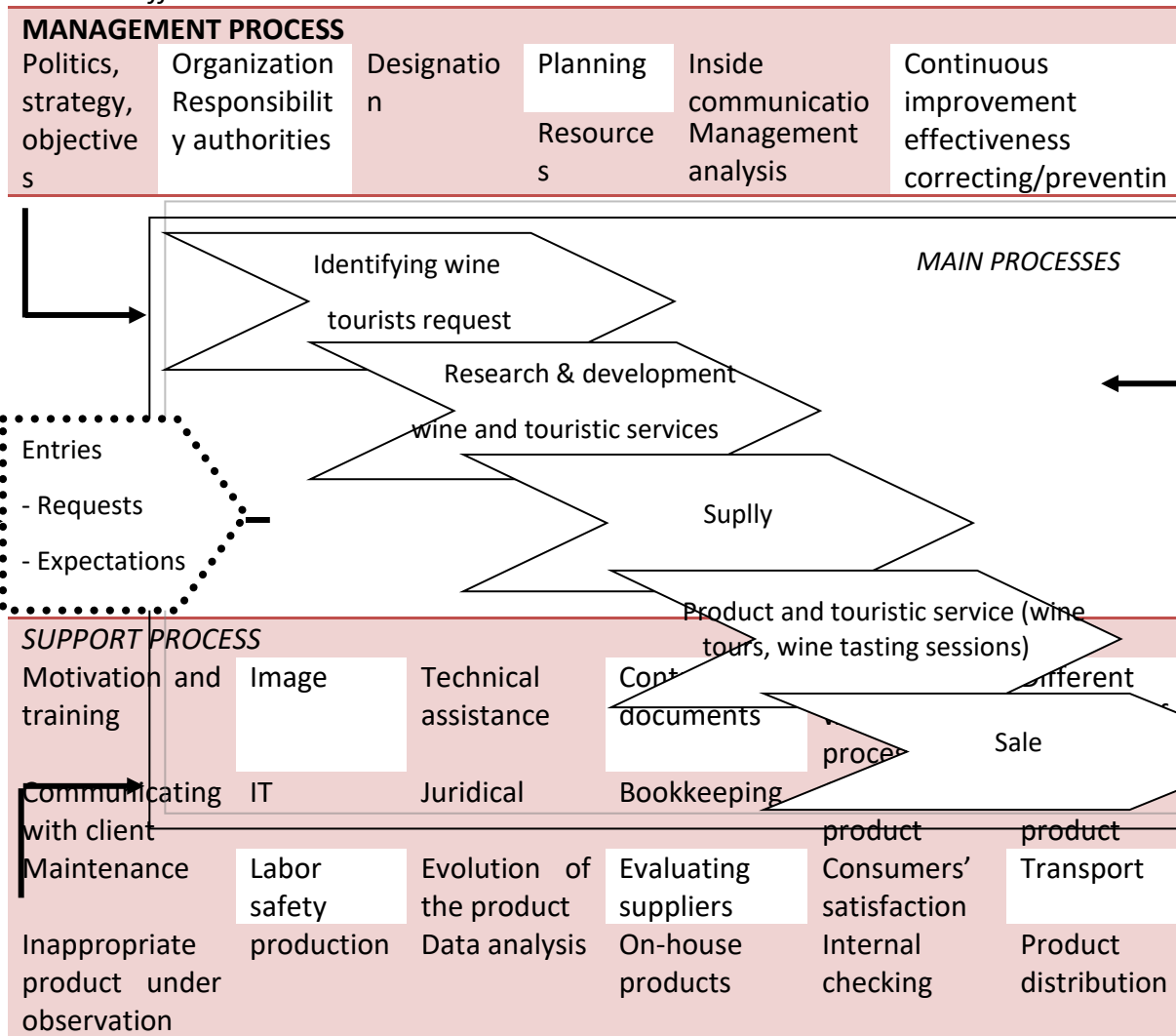
Implementing Quality Management System within wine tourism

A first concern for managers would be the continuous improvement and consequently, reconsidering all processes that have developed until the moment they are decided to focus on Quality Management. Not forget to take into consideration the fact that when mentioning about wine tourism – quality refers both the product and touristic services. Whatsoever, some stages should be followed for an accurate quality management: defining and planning (costs, hypothesis and a preliminary planning), analyzing (establish real objectives, inside and outside rules that need to be respected), defining (establish the activities for each objective, the structure for the *Quality Book*, the necessary procedures, special training for the winery staff), the effective implementation of quality management and checking.

As the reader may have discovered throughout the article, the process management could lead to a sustainable oenotourism strategy that each winery should develop bearing in mind all important elements that are involved: soil, water, pest, wine quality, ecosystem, energy efficiency, water conservation, material handling, waste management, environment, human resources, air quality, tourists, neighbors and community. A briefly “mirror” regarding the existent management processes for the Total Quality System is given in the table below:

Table 2.

The process of the Total Quality Management that should exist within an winery in order to assure an effective wine tourism



Source: the author's work based on information within international standards ISO 9001:2008 Quality management systems — Requirements, ISO 9004:2009 Managing for the sustained success of an organization. A quality management approach, ISO/DIS 14785 Tourist information offices -- Tourist information and reception services – Requirements

Having all these into consideration, a business quality strategy for wine tourism might be developed in terms of mission, vision, values with a focus on sustainability. These may apply to small wine producers, family vineyards and winery to the corporate. Its objective would allow the development of wine industry, reducing ecological and economical risk, improving their activities in terms of protecting environment while gaining consumers' satisfaction.

Conclusions

In this study it was shown that wine industry is still a dynamic sector and with a little effort from authorities, stakeholders, wine producers and even consumers, this field might actually reach to a really active wine market characterized by developed facilities and

infrastructure. It was found that the developed wine producing countries both from New World and Europe take great advantage from the benefits of wine tourism. There is a huge gap in the wine developing countries due to the lack of an adequate legislation and authorities' active involvement as well as the lack of financial resources and investments. Still, a Quality Management System does not exist in any of all these.

The profile of wine tourist, defining wine tourism, the need for quality and implementing a management system within this area may present some significant elements for the development of wine industry. Oenotourism offers small to huge wine estates especially great advantages. Nowadays, wine industry with a more focus on consumers, on sustainability manifesting itself more and more, and the number of quality indicators increasing, selling more wine through cellars and improving touristic services could enable wineries to get performance to lower costs, more exactly to efficiency within quality management.

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