Logistics and innovation strategies of stakeholders in the Burgundy wine sector

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The purpose of the communication:

Burgundy wines have a certain reputation and with the market globalization, logistics will become a major issue in the wine sector and a key to its future performance. Indeed, with the emergence of new producers and new consumer markets, the wine market is becoming more international and wine travel longer and farther. Today, according to The International Wine & Spirit Research (IWSR) (2010), 25% of the wine consumed in the world is imported and this proportion is expected to increase in the future. In Burgundy, the stakes are high as wine exports in 2012 accounted for 47% of production. Historically, however, the logistics of wine is based on the principle of “ex-cellar” sale and logistics has long been foreign to the world of wine (Réjalot, 2004). This system is translated by a loss of control of wine quality during its marketing and transportation, which can in case of problems compromise the reputation of individual actors, but also the collective reputation of the sector. On the other hand, it is essential to take into account aspects of sustainable development. These elements are not only the domain of production but also pass through better logistics control.

The aim of this paper is thus to identify the individual and collective strategies implemented in the Burgundy wine industry to manage the logistics and analyze innovations (technological, organizational, marketing) implemented by these stakeholders to address different issues and logistical problems.
**Originality of the subject**

The main idea of our research is that the physical characteristics of the products are certainly crucial, but far to explain, alone, the choice of an organization of transport and logistics. Our premise is that choice is also linked to internal competencies of stakeholders, but also to modes of coordination with other sector actors. But the organization of the wine sector, the fragmentation of stakeholders and the lack of collaboration could be a real handicap for the implementation of a performed logistics strategy. The analysis of individual and collective strategies of different stakeholders, their modes of insertion in networks as well as their ability to develop innovations allow us to identify the success factors in the implementation of efficient logistics of Burgundy wines.

**Methodology**

After a series of interviews with experts, the methodology consists of fifty qualitative surveys among different stakeholders in the sector: wine cooperatives, winegrowers, traders, and logistics. The surveys are representative in terms of size and in terms of geographical distribution between the five small wine regions of Burgundy (Chablis, Côtes de Nuit, Côtes de Beaune, Côte Chalonnaise, Macônnais). They seek to reflect the diversity of situations in terms of business strategy and logistics.

**The results**

In France, AOC wine are often considered the epitome of territorialized productions. The territory plays an important role in structuring relationships between different actors in the supply chain in Burgundy and in the dynamics of innovation. Through two examples of collectives projects sharing logistics: wine village of Santenay and Blasons of Burgundy (union of five wine cooperative of Burgundy), we see that the geographical proximity but also the organizational one, played an important role in establishing of trust, unavoidable for the development of the collective project (Brulhart, 2002; Rallet and Torre, 2004).

Based on our investigations and collected data, we develop a typology of actors according to their size and their strategies. In the "large" structures, there is a strategic thinking about the logistics. There is a mass of orders and pallet transport (with the ability to have attractive transport price). In the "small" structures we have an important development of direct selling in small lots (by mail). In the both case the export customer's care is problematic. Despite these differences, we also find common characteristics: the importance of establishing trusting relationships with transporters (the cost is not the primary criteria) and a true partnership to ensure the service quality.

**Keywords:** wine sector, Burgundy, logistics, innovations, collective strategy.

**Bibliography**


