



ABSTRACT

Keywords: *online marketing, promotion, fruit, wine.*

PhD thesis “**STUDIES REGARDING THE PROMOTION OF COMPANIES SPECIALIZED IN THE PRODUCTION OF FRUITS AND WINE IN IASI COUNTY BY IMPLEMENTING ONLINE MARKETING**” aims to study, investigate and recommend methods and strategies that can enhance visibility and create consumer attachment to fruit and wine products.

The work has been structured into two distinct parts: a theoretical part, presented in Chapters I and II and a part of personal research, detailed in Chapters III-V. The thesis also includes a summary, an introduction and bibliography.

Part I covers the study of bibliography, national and international researches on the promotion and online marketing methods used on promoting fruits and wine products.

Part I includes also the characterization of natural-organizational-institutional environment in which the research has been conducted.

In this context, synthesis bibliography includes 149 titles, of which over 45 specialized foreign literature and highlights the wine and fruit market situation at both national and European level, focusing on the promotional strategies used in Romania and in Europe also.

Also, there are addressed issues related to use of online marketing to promote wine and fruits products, focused on the need to use this new promotion method, called online marketing.

There are enhanced the advantages and disadvantages of both traditional marketing and the new methods of online promotion in the context of cultural differences, economic development and marketing education differences between Romania and other European Union member states.

Part I includes specific issues related to fruits consumption problems in Romania, the factors that make fruit consumption in Romania to be below the European level, and also the aspects that influence the decline in wine consumption in Romania.



The first chapter also highlights the results of literature studies on marketing strategies that are and should be used for wine and fruits products, the reasons why marketing strategy must be adapted to the market and the economic and social environment. In this chapter, online marketing has an important share in aspects of promotion, how it should be practiced and why it has become a must area of marketing in general, all these aspects being conclusions of the bibliographic presented study.

All the aspects detailed in chapter I, had as a purpose the knowledge of the main quantitative and qualitative parameters and the position Romania occupies compared to other European Union countries, the approach aimed at meeting the needs of our country's population consumption of fruits and wine products, in the context of belonging and trying to adjust to the European Union standards and strategies

The study of the natural conditions was made for the North-East area of Romania, the analysis of these natural conditions aiming at determining the favorable or unfavorable issues for the development of viticulture and horticulture.

Characterization of the organizational framework of the two institutions studied, Research Station for Fruit Growing Iasi and S.C. Cotnari S.A., complete the picture of the subject studied, creates further research context, which would result in the need or lack thereof in the use of modern strategies to promote wine and fruit products.

Part-II of the thesis refers to "results and their interpretation" and includes personal research, researches presented in the next three chapters.

Chapter-III refers to **"Research goal and objectives, material and research methodology"**.

In this chapter there have been addressed two fundamental issues:

- the objectives and scope of the research;
- the used material and research methodology.

Within chapter III, starting from the first two issues addressed in the beginning of this chapter and using specific research methodology, two applicative aspects related to studied companies have been highlighted:

- methods and strategies to promote wine and fruit products in Romania;



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- Specific methods and promotional strategies used in the S.C.D.P. Iasi and S.C. Cotnari S.A.

The research methodology involved the use of office and field trials, which tracked the following aspects:

- analysis of the level of knowledge for the investigated domain based on studied literature;
- establish research methods;
- the establishment of a database necessary for the interpretation of required information;
- grouping, processing and presentation of the obtained results in tables, figures, photographs;
- data analysis, interpretation, drawing conclusions and recommendations.

The methods used in the development of the thesis are classified in the category of classical methods, but there are other methods also that have been used, such as : SWOT analysis, statistical survey, case studies on the impact of online marketing on consumer's use of wine and fruits products in Iasi county.

Chapter IV presents **“The results of modern promoting methods of wine and fruits products”**.

This chapter includes practical issues concerning the importance and ways of implementing online marketing in the Iasi Research and Development Station for Fruit Growing, and S.C.Cotnari S.A. as follows:

- issues related to the importance of modern methods of promotion used by the S.C.D.P. Iasi and S.C. Cotnari S.A., issues that impact the image and the buying activity of its products on domestic and foreign;
- a case study aimed at analyzing the impact of online marketing on wine consumer's from Iasi county behavior;
- a case study aimed at analyzing the impact of online marketing on fruit products consumer's from Iasi county behavior;



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- elements that differentiate various methods of promoting the wine and fruits products, by using the SWOT analysis, issues related to the use of online marketing compared to classic promoting methods;
- the SWOT analysis of the online presence of Iasi Research and Development for Fruits Trees Station;
- the SWOT analysis of the online presence for S.C. Cotnari S.A.

Therefore, in order to determine the characteristics of online communication and of the modern promoting methods, there have been analysed the website and the social media accounts of wine producer S.C. Cotnari S.A., as well as its news portal and blogs. Also the analysis includes the website of Iasi Research and Development for fruit trees Station.

In order to draw specific conclusions for the two studied companies, to verify if the online promoting methods are correctly used and accordingly to the needs of the wine and fruits consumers, there have been applied questionnaires on a number of 133 consumers and there has been analysed the impact of online marketing use.

The investigated segment has been represented by wine consumers and fruits consumers, most of them internet users, living and working in rural or urban areas.

Each questionnaire includes a number of 16 questions with a number of 63 variables. The scope of the each questionnaire is to compare and project the perspective and behaviour of the respondents over the online promoting activity of S.C. Cotnari S.A. and S.C.D.P. Iasi.

In elaborating the questionnaires there have been taken into consideration some demands:

- the length of the questionnaires (as short as possible in order that the respondents to answer each question, but at the same time to achieve its goals and objectives);
- the type of used questions (closed, open, semi-open);
- the used language (clear, concise, easy to follow, without suggesting the answers);
- the way the information were processed (by using informatics programs specific for the approached domain).

The gathering of the information was realized by surveys, all the subjects from each studied sample (for both wine and fruit consumers) received the same questionnaire. The



analysis of the responses has been made for each variable separately, the results being expressed using percentages (%).

The thesis includes three SWOT analysis, first of which targeting aspects regarding the use of online marketing for wine and fruits products. Therefore the thesis presents the **strengths** (possibilities for last minute sales; real time information update; rapid response to market demand; combined promotion and sales; personalized marketing method; wider market segmentation and so on); as well as **weaknesses** of the online marketing (the need for a closed monitoring of the competitors; the need for a closer monitoring of the market changes; lower control over message distribution and feedback; the lack of educated consumers on online shopping and so on).

The thesis continues with the highlighting of the **opportunities** (the creation of an e-commerce culture within Romania; cheaper, easier and faster market researches; equal opportunities for promoting and so on) and the **threats** (sudden competitive changes; the lack of promptitude in continuing the campaigns besides the online area and so on).

The online presence of S.C. Cotnari S.A., as well as Iasi Research and Development Station for fruit trees are analysed by using the same SWOT method, first of all being highlighted the **strengths** (online brand identity; real time updating of website and social media accounts content; sustained online promoting campaigns that target a well identified and segmented public (eg: “Cotnari – wine for a car”); the two company websites www.cotnari.ro and www.vinuricotnari.ro that are distinct identities for different target audience, with adapted content for each targeted market (www.vinuricotnari.ro addresses to a premium market); **weaknesses** (the link from the company page www.vinuricotnari.ro does not send the visitors to a page with real time updated content and does not contains articles or posted discussions on this web address); **opportunities** (the controlled growth of the numbers of persons that like the social media page of “Casa de Vinuri Cotnari” due to relevant content) and the **threats** (the existence of a well defined online competitor market, such as *Recas Wineries, Jidvei, Vinarte, Vincon Vrancea, Husi Wine House, ICDVV Valea Calugareasca, Tohani etc*)

Further, the thesis highlights the online presence of Iasi Research and Development for fruit trees Station, from **strengths** (the presence in various specialty articles on online media; the return of 17,300 search results on Google search engine by "pomicola Iasi" keyword), to



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weaknesses (information and content displayed on the website www.pomicolaiasi.ro are not separated according to well-defined audiences (clients - individuals, wholesalers and intermediates, fruits industrial units); the existence of an English version for the website but without translated content); **opportunities** (no fierce competition, can use the website for sales and retail its products; collaborations with national and international magazines may contain links to articles published so that the public can access those articles and be aware of media activity of S.C.D.P.) and **threats** (the existence of other websites or social media accounts of other companies and private agricultural associations - eg: www.statiuneabaneasa.ro; S.C. Agrocom S.A. Strunga).

The thesis ends with the conclusions, recommendations and references.