

## Abstract - A Segmentation Study of Swiss Wine Consumers

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The primary objectives of this study were to develop a comprehensive questionnaire to assess wine consumption and to analyze the composition and nature of the wine market segments of german-speaking Switzerland. A number of authors have conducted studies in various countries using involvement (Lockshin et al., 1997, 2006), lifestyles (Thach & Olson, 2004; Bruwer & Li, 2007) and motives (Dubow, 1992; Charters, 2006) as segmentation variables. The present research combined all these perspectives and in addition included wine purchase behavior.

Data collection took place by means of a postal paper-and-pencil survey sent out randomly to the Swiss german-speaking population using addresses from the telephone book. For each household, the person having his or her birthday next and being at least 18 years old was asked to fill in the questionnaire (response rate = 43%). People who were buying and drinking wine were included in the analysis, resulting in a final sample size of  $N = 929$ .

A principal component factor analysis identified 17 factors with satisfactory reliability coefficients. Using factor scores, a hierarchical cluster analysis was run, and the agglomeration schedule with its clustering coefficients suggested six wine consumer segments. These segments were further analyzed and described as: 1) The *price-conscious wine consumer*, who is likely to be retired and drinks a lot of wine. Has no strong preferences for either provenance or grape variety. 2) The *involved, knowledgeable wine consumer*, around 50 years old, has the highest income and defines wine as a treasured hobby. Knows almost everything about wine and considers all available information when buying some. 3) The *image-oriented wine consumer*, who is predominantly male and around 40 years old, lives in an urban area and has the highest level of education as well as a rather high income. Regards drinking wine as stylish, classy and sophisticated. A glass of good Rioja makes him feel self-confident. 4) The *indifferent wine consumer* is rather old and might be living in a nursing home. Wine is not a central interest. Drinks out of group pressure and, if available, has some rosé. 5) The *basic wine consumer* is in her 30's and most likely of any segment to be female. Wine is not a high priority topic, but she enjoys a glass of wine with a meal. She has a clear preference for wine from the New World. With Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Zinfandel, she has also a clear preference for grape variety. 6) The *enjoyment-oriented, social wine consumer* is predominantly male and of average age, although there is a high proportion of very young people in this segment. He lives in the city and is most likely of any segment to live in a single household. Wine is fun, wine is to celebrate, and wine makes him feel good. On a single occasion he might drink quite a lot and, therefore, might get a little tipsy. Besides wine, he also likes alcopops, cocktails and, of course, beer. Implications for wine marketing are discussed.