Attracting young consumers, the biggest challenge in the wine industry

scritto da Fabio Piccoli | 30 Marzo 2022



Recently some important analysis by the Silicon Valley Bank and Wine Intelligence have come out on the wine consuming prospective.
Not so optimistic estimates have emerged and, in some measure, they represent a kind of alarm bell on the evolution of the wine consumption especially between the younger generations, Gen Z and Millennials firstly.

Very simple and direct the question which is at the base of the Silicon Valley Bank: "**If you were invited to a party and were asked to bring an alcoholic drink, what would that be?**"
Wine was highly preferred by the over 65 (49% of this age range declared that they would have chosen wine). The other

contingents obtained a score lower than 20% with the range of 21-24 years (the so-called Generation Z) which resulted as the less inclined to choose wine (only 15% declared to choose wine).

So, we can affirm that **in the USA (which, we underline, is the most important wine market in the world with its 22 million of hl consumed every year) wine is certainly not the most preferred alcoholic drink** among the younger generations and, unfortunately, we are convinced that this is a photography which is not so far from many more countries in the world.

Studying a little bit better the SVB analysis, a picture emerges which is optimistic on one hand, with a base of traditional consumers who broaden in the USA, on the other it communicates a certain chronic **difficulty in connecting wine to the values of new consumers.**

This last affirmation encloses already maybe a first answer which is that for too long now we tried to transfer the wine values to the new generations without taking into consideration their **"new values".**

The Wine Intelligence report at the end of 2020 even conducted a survey between the so called LDA (Legal Drinking Age) which highlighted that wine lost its appeal in the last decade among the youngers.
In fact, id in 2010 half of the Britain consumer LDA-34 consumes wine at least once a month, in 2020 they went down to 26% and in the USA this range went from 36% to 21% during the same period. **The only consolation is that in the same decade the wine consumer grew in the Boomer range** (55-64 y-o), but can we think that this is the only generation on which we should define marketing strategies today and in the next future?

It is clear that **this cannot be the right choice since it would mean investing in consumers who cannot grant a medium-**

long future to the wine business of our companies.
But, at the actual state, the photography is this: a wine industry at a global level that would like to talk to the younger but in reality, keeps speaking a language for the older.
The Boomer should not take offense on that since between them there are also those who write; however, **it is undeniable that the actual marketing and communication strategies keep looking, for the greatest part, only to the older generation** and this is not a great news because they do not represent the future.

If this is the analysis, in some case ruthless, **it is not simple to find the solutions for a number of reasons:** first of all, the difficulty to well understand the values of the new generations.

On this front we are bound to repeat ourselves, but according to me the essence of the serious analysis on the consumers' profile regarding wine keep representing a serious blank to the system.
Unfortunately, still today, **the analysis of the markets and of the consumers always emerge as the basic necessities of the company,** of the consortiums, of the institutions, but at the end of the day the investments on this front are truly dispiriting.
Today **we need event studied to attract the younger generations,** but it was sufficient to go to the Wine Paris & Vinexpo Paris a few years ago (which finally reopened the fair season in presence) to realize that it is always us boomer the main protagonists.

On the other hand, **how many Italian wine companies have young human resources in their marketing and communication offices?**
Also, the communication planning of our companies is largely made of people over 40.

The same social media communication, which should represent

the most “innovative” communication front, often **appears to be the transposition of old contents into a young container.**

So, I realize that **the challenge is very difficult but we cannot postpone the building of a wine consuming promotion strategy** between the young generations.
And, according to me, we should dare, breaking the old schemes, involving firstly the youngers in the definition of new ideas, projects that are able to speak a language more perceivable to the new consumers.
Let us think about the new OCM announcements on the promotion in third countries: besides reasoning about the bureaucratic aspects and on the available resources, **it should be central also to linger on concrete contents of the promotion.**