The dangers of digital burnout

scritto da Fabio Piccoli | 14 Dicembre 2021



I'll admit it: **I'm an analog dinosaur.** I have mentioned before that I do not particularly enjoy the so called "**new normal**" previsions; I have also overreached myself in saying that we cannot consider the digital as the only solution to our wine management and communication problems. However, **this hasn't stopped me from seeing a fundamental path forward in the digitalization of wineries,** where we've sadly had some setbacks.

I must acknowledge that in the past few months of "apparent tranquillity," this anxiety has increased to the point that many authorized staff have declared: "**We can no longer tolerate webinars,** remote conversations, digital b2bs…and so on".
We're not just dealing with words here: we are dealing with a

very specific mindset that is pulling our wine industry backwards.

Nobody, not even myself, doubts that **direct human interactions will never be completely replaced by digital technologies** (particularly in our wine sector). However, stating that every event must be attended in person, that we should only recognize classic Wine Exhibitions as real Wine Exhibitions, that every conference has a function only if attended in person, **is a perplexing and perhaps hazardous step back.**

It's one thing to be physically exhausted from the amount of webinars and similar events we've attended over the past two years, but **it would be foolish to throw away all of the excellent digital habits we've developed so far.**
Furthermore, from a journalistic point of view, **the possibility to attend digital conventions and press conferences is an incredible opportunity** that allows the media to squander as little money as possible. Let's be honest: how many times have we attended or sent a partner to events that, sadly, lacked engaging and significant content? This is a big investment for the editorial staff that does not even transfer into the ability of producing interesting material.

It is clear that the digital should not push into the organization of any initiative using the excuse that "it's less expensive". **Offering important and well-constructed content must be a priority.** Unfortunately (at least in my opinion), we have a tendency to mix instruments with contents, and because we do not use the instrument (digital) appropriately, we believe we can do without it.

This huge risk is also symbolic of **our system's significant difficulties in innovating properly.** The paradox is that everyone – or almost everyone – who preaches "the world will no longer be as it was before" is simultaneously scared of even the tiniest change.

We could hear conversations about **conventional wine exhibitions not being able to meet the genuine needs of firms and buyers** until just a few days before the start of this awful pandemic. Fortunately, many b2b event organizers managed to offer interesting digital alternatives, but just a light loosening of the Covid-19 grip was sufficient to say: “Finally, we’re going back to crowded exhibitions!”.

God Forbid! Everything can be understandable if we observe it from a human point of view. However, when viewed through reasonable eyes and professional common sense, it becomes **nonsensical**. It would be an inexcusable error not to use this circumstance to encourage event organizers to follow the hybrid (in person-digital) road, and to encourage businesses to improve their digital communication abilities.

We shouldn’t be concerned that the wine industry’s digitization may eventually undermine the relevance of physical bonds. We shouldn’t return to viewing new technology in manufacturing and computers in offices as adversaries to employment.
The key was and will always be to guide change and evolution rather than resist them.