Wine tourism: why a quick response time is essential

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Sooner or later, **all wine enthusiasts are bound to turn into wine tourists.** When faced with several different options, which winery are they most likely to choose?

In most cases, regardless of what tour experiences each winery offers, prospective visitors tend to pick the one that can provide the fastest and most exhaustive reply. **This comes down to a few different reasons that we'll try to analyze together.**

First of all, a quick response time allows people to better plan their movements, and consequently, to better organize their trip. **To put it simply, it makes traveling easier and more enjoyable.**

Secondly, a quick response time gives visitors the perception of a well-organized company, **one that can assign tasks**

efficiently, has clear priorities, and cares about customer support.
Wineries should stop thinking of wine tourism as a second-rate activity less valuable than winemaking and sales.

The under-appreciation of wine tourism as a concrete business opportunity is a heartfelt matter. We have therefore decided to investigate first-hand.
We pretended to be prospective visitors and reached out to multiple wineries to inquire about a tasting tour. Our findings show that 13% of wineries took over 12 hours to get back to us. Most worryingly, 16% of wineries never replied to our emails.

These are shocking numbers that beg a question: **why do so many wineries bypass this essential aspect of customer service?**

Focusing on devising top-tier marketing strategies to attract potential visitors, creating well-structured itineraries, and training employees on the ins and outs of hospitality and guest reception. All of this is worthless if a winery can't prove its reliability through basic customer service.

Why then, are so many companies blind to the facts?

Whether one sees it or not, the first point of contact is the first impression of a business.
Wine tourism is based on social interactions that extend well past the actual tasting tour: it starts far earlier and requires quick response times, exhaustive replies, and the ability to provide potential customers with alternative options.

Our research considered each one of these factors, and the results were disappointing.
The biggest mistake is forgetting that wine tourism is – first and foremost – a sales strategy, in addition to being a way to promote our brand and wine labels.
We found that too many Italian wineries still think of wine

tourism as a quick fix to generate an additional source of income.

Surely, we'd all love a world in which we could summon hordes of customers at the snap of our fingers. What a dream it'd be to have steady streams of visitors lining up during dead time to buy our products, with no impact on the production line.

But wishful thinking will only damage a business. **Wineries must wake up to the fact that wine tourism and hospitality require a serious and well-thought-out plan, and adequate efforts.**

This is the only way Italian companies can hope to compete with international wine powerhouses. **Should they fail at this, it shouldn't come as a surprise that international tourists and wine connoisseurs will choose Napa Valley, France, or Spain as their destination**.

As Italians, we should strive to get wine lovers to praise our efficiency, our quick response time, and – of course – **spread the word about the beauty of Italian wines, landscapes, and lifestyle.**

We have no idea how many tourists we inadvertently push away by not paying the proper attention to customer relations.