

WINE & TOURISM

collaboration outside the destination

centre for
REGIONAL TOURISM
research

WHY DO THE RESEARCH?

There has been a substantial amount of research about the links between cuisine (including food and wine) and tourism in a number of regional destinations. The research has focused on experiences offered to consumers in the destination, and the characteristics of visitors who take advantage of those experiences. Experiences have included: cellar door initiatives; food and wine trails; markets; and organized tours based on food and wine experiences. There is clear evidence that the presence of a strong wine industry is a key branding element for destinations such as: the Yarra Valley; Barossa Valley; Hunter Valley; and Margaret River region. There has been some research into what factors influence collaboration between cuisine interests and tourism interests in the destination. However, there has been almost no research into how these sectors may collaborate outside the destination (i.e. extra-regional) to help build markets for both sets of products. This research was designed to explore the opportunities for wine and tourism industry collaboration outside the destination. A young wine destination, the Canberra Region, was used as a case study.

WHAT WAS DONE?

A range of interviews was conducted with representatives of wine and tourism industries in the Canberra Region. These representatives included: industry associations; tourism operators; winery managers/owners; marketing organisations; and local and state government economic development officers. Interviews focused on what extra-regional initiatives had been undertaken in each sector; whether there had been any collaboration across sectors in regards to any of these initiatives; and whether stakeholders perceived that there were opportunities for increased collaboration in existing or new extra-regional activities. A desktop analysis was also conducted of marketing material, corporate publications (annual reports etc.), and strategic planning documents. This analysis focused on what consideration each sector paid to the other in the design and implementation of marketing projects. The data was analysed to assess: the types and levels of extra-regional collaboration between wine and tourism sectors; the factors which were seen to influence such collaboration; and the opportunities for, and barriers to, enhanced collaboration in the future.

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

Despite being at an early stage of development, both wine and tourism sectors in the Canberra Region undertook a wide range of extra-regional marketing initiatives. There was broad agreement that each sector could benefit the other through selective collaboration, however there was little history of collaborative ventures. The wine tourism strategy for the region focused entirely on initiatives in the destination such as food and wine trails and cellar door tours. The wine industry development strategy acknowledged tourism and tourists as an income source, but did not present strategic initiatives for extra-regional exploitation of this income source. Stakeholders across both sectors were able to readily identify initiatives they had been involved with which may have provided benefits for the other sector, or may have increased total benefits

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for the Region had both sectors been involved. It was recognised that each sector had resources and activities of potential value to the other, but that their planning processes had not acted on this potential. Key areas of potential collaboration included:

Tourism originating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity for the tourism marketing organisations to provide business intelligence through their research programs; • Extra-regional marketing initiatives which focused on the key sales target areas (such as Sydney and Melbourne) for wine makers and which could be linked more closely to Canberra Region produce; • The capacity for tourism operators and destination marketers to open new markets for wine products through exposing visitors to the region to those products
Wine originating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mailing lists maintained by wineries for door to door sales which might provide an avenue for direct marketing for tourism; • The clustering of wine producers provides a basis for developing new tourism product (including new styles of accommodation, restaurants, tours) based on wine experiences
Joint ventures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration may enable greater representation of the region at international wine and food shows, as well as tourism exchanges; • Further initiatives may emerge through a closer comparison of the characteristics of tourism markets and wine markets (place of residence; socio-demographic profile etc.)

It was also recognised that the Canberra Region was a young wine region, and that its tourism focus had also shifted in recent times from promoting the limited range of ‘capital’ attractions to developing a broader tourism base. Opportunities were identified which could help both sectors grow together. Importantly, there were several areas of activity which were identified as unlikely to benefit from increased collaboration, particular where the wine distribution channels were controlled by large national and multi-national corporations which did not have an interest in the region *per se*.

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HOW CAN THE RESULTS BE USED?

The results can be used as the basis for a more strategic approach to extra-regional collaboration between wine and tourism sectors. Stronger lines of communication could be opened up between those organisations who managed participation in trade and consumer shows, so that opportunities to collaborate could be recognised early in the planning process. Representatives from each sector could have an increased presence on industry associations and the like for the other sector. In addition, it was possible to build a list of cross-promotional opportunities which could be used as a basis for future collaboration. The list included (but was not limited to):

- Tourism marketing agency producing wine packs for use at cellar door
- Collaboration on tourism and wine Visiting Journalists Programs
- Collaboration on preparing collateral for trade/consumer shows
- Sourcing images and copy for wine labels
- Opportunities for Visitor Centres to display wine produce, and for wineries to display visitor information
- Engage other sector when preparing a promotion campaign to assess whether target markets coincide

Many of these initiatives rely on an assumption that consumers interested in wine product from a region would also be interested in tourism experiences in that region. The Centre for Regional Tourism Research has developed a tool for testing this assumption based on the known characteristics of both markets. Collaborative initiatives would also need to be supported by evaluation research and by a strategic commitment from both sectors to the process of collaboration.

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