

Eastern European Wine Industry's Two-Prong Approach to Marketing

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Purpose: *A review of Eastern Europe's wine industry suggests that two major marketing avenues are being developed: large, often government-aided, multi-tiered distribution systems and smaller, direct-to-consumer wine tourism (Hudelson, 2014). In Eastern Europe, each nation's wine industry is predominately forced to choose one of these two approaches, influenced by (1) the strength of the nation's tourism infrastructure, (2) the social-history attitudes within the wine industry and, (3) the geopolitics, and government favoritism toward certain wineries by national governments.*

Methods: *The author conducted qualitative research in twenty of the previously communist wine-producing nations of Eastern Europe. Eighty-seven interviews were conducted as well as a small, non-random survey among wine-related academics. Current metrics for the various nations and wine regions were also included in the analysis.*

Findings: *The author found that one of these two approaches offers significantly more benefits to a wine region and nation in general; however, most of the Eastern European countries surveyed lack the resources or social organization to pursue that approach successfully.*

Practical Implications: *The degree that a nation's wine industry can successfully benefit the greatest number of its citizens depends on numerous attributes, many of which are covered here.*

Key Words: Wine Tourism, multi-tiered distribution, Eastern Europe