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Tara Brabazon  
Mick Winter  
Bryn Gandy

# Digital Wine

## How QR Codes Facilitate New Markets for Small Wine Industries



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How QR Codes Facilitate New Markets  
for Small Wine Industries



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Tara Brabazon  
Mick Winter  
Charles Sturt University  
Bathurst, NSW  
Australia

Bryn Gandy  
New Zealand Public Service  
Pipitea, Wellington  
New Zealand

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Free, Mobile, and Useful—the Rise and Rise of QR Codes

After the credit crunch and crash, the conventional truths, maxims, and assumptions about economic development, social justice, consumerism, citizenship, industrialization, post-industrialization, and the “new economy” are in flux. Japanization—the long-term stagnation of economies—is spreading beyond the nation that gave its name to this deep, sustained, and troubling mode of financial crisis.<sup>1</sup> Cities and regions already struggling before 2008 now have even fewer national resources to build foundational or remedial infrastructure. “Top down” policy initiatives from governments are confronting a severe shortage of capital. In the United Kingdom for example, regional development agencies have closed and public sector workers made redundant, in the hope that the private sphere will provide services for health, education, and libraries on the basis of volunteerism, philanthropy, and Prime Minister David Cameron’s “Big Society” (Evans 2008). Small businesses are struggling with a decline in support services to enable entrepreneurship, local development, and consumer spending (Brabazon 2008). Yet, with all this talk of decline, cuts, retraction, and loss, there is an innovative and creative opportunity to build a profile, marketing program, and strategy to develop customer loyalty.<sup>2</sup> This application is free, easy to use, and provides local information just in time and at the right time for their customers.

This book explores the potential of this free and profoundly useful initiative and application. It is appropriate for small businesses struggling in downtown regions, sporting and leisure organizations, local farmers wishing to find a direct market for their produce, wineries specializing in direct sales, regional associations marketing

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of Japanization, please refer to the podcast by Redhead and Brabazon (2013).

<sup>2</sup> R. Mitchell and C. M. Hall report the distinctions in brand loyalty between Margaret River return purchasers and New Zealand wineries. The problem in this study is clear. Margaret River’s consumers are not generalizable to Australian wine makers more generally. One of the arguments offered in this current book on QR Codes is to avoid an easy “slippage” between national and regional allegiances, particularly in New Zealand. However, Mitchell and Hall provide a strong study that asks a key question: what happens after visitors leave a winery’s cellar door? Please refer to “The post-visit consumer behaviour of New Zealand winery visitors,” *Journal of Wine Research*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2004, pp. 39–49.



craft, art, and other products, cellar door sales, and trans-local international marketing. This digitized application combines analog and online promotion and information dissemination. While this book focuses on wine, our research is relevant and applicable for an array of industries that require a tether between analog and digital, physical and virtual (Evans 2008). We are particularly interested in considering how this application can assist the food industries and primary production.

This book focuses on wine. There is a reason. Wine is a fetish product. Money is spent on an alcoholic refreshment that once it is drunk, it loses its value. Once consumed, all that is left of the purchase is the empty bottle. Yet, through the process of drinking, an array of experiences, histories, narratives, and sensory experiences are packed into that moment. As John Varriano has realized, “wine is unique in the cultural history of food and drink” (Varriano 2010). The question is how information and knowledge about wine impacts on its purchase, consumption, and repurchase. There are opportunities for intervention in the decision-making moment between the purchase of one bottle and not another. Most consumers buy a bottle that they have purchased previously, or that has been recommended by a friend, trusted publication, waiter, or an expert at a cellar door. These are analog experiences that summon conversation, loyalty, motivation, and desire. Yet, can digital technology intervene in these analog and sensory moments of choice?

The application that may have the capacity to intervene, reshape, change, and transform is the Quick Response (QR) Code. Yet we are not focusing on software or hardware. This is a book of intervention, inventory, and opportunity. QR Codes are probed to investigate their appropriateness for wine industries and regional development.<sup>3</sup> We commence with an introduction to QR Codes, geosocial networking, and wine media, then move into a discussion of creative industries strategies, small nation, and emerging wine industries, and conclude with a case study of how Aotearoa/New Zealand wine producers deploy QRs.

This is a project of potential and opportunity. Aotearoa/New Zealand is ideal for this initial case study. New Zealand is a small nation that maintains a specialist but positive reputation in the world. Throughout its colonial history with Britain, supplying food and primary materials was its primary function in the Empire. Exporting lamb roasts and dairy products were the key economic levers in its development (Constantine 1986). Yet, through the twenty-first century, Aotearoa/New Zealand has become an important international example for buoyant creative industries. Richard Florida commenced his 2005 book, *The Flight of the Creative Class*, with the economic and social rise of Wellington (Florida 2005). While some of this profile and strategy is Hobbit-related, with Peter Jackson’s *Lord of the Rings* providing the impetus for film, special effects and tourism industries, a much wider engagement, shaping, and proliferation of modernity is taking place (Hall 2004).

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<sup>3</sup> Donna Ekart stated that, “QR Codes are often described as a bridge between mobile technology and either your physical or digital library existence,” from “Tech tips for every librarian,” *Computers in Libraries*, April 2011, p. 38.

Using the capacity of social media and the read write web, an array of New Zealand producers—from food to fashion and wine to music—is able to displace the disadvantage of analog isolation in the South Pacific, and market difference, distinction, and specificity through a flattened digitized world. It is as easy to send a file, video, or message from Christchurch to Toronto as it is from London to Manchester. Therefore, in this flat world of marketing, QR Codes provide the gateway to the rich information environment of a web-enabled world. To commence this wider study of relevance to international and regional development, the QR application is introduced.

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**Part I**  
**QR Codes: Potential, Possibilities**  
**and Trajectories**

## Chapter 2

# QR Codes and the Dialogue Between Analogue and Digital

QR Codes are an innovative extension of the standard barcode found on almost every manufactured product on the planet, as well as on foods, books and tickets. There are key differences that will be revealed through this chapter. But the most important advantage is that the QR Code can carry more information in a smaller space, because they can be read vertically and horizontally. Further, they can be read at multiple angles, with the algorithm used to create them enabling a higher margin of error (between 7 and 30 %) (Fig. 2.1).<sup>1</sup>

QR Codes (Quick Response Codes) were developed in Japan by Denso Wave, a subsidiary of Toyota, to track vehicle components. The original purpose of the QR Code was for inventory (Hoy 2011), but its potential and use extends far beyond this originating function.<sup>2</sup> This type of code contains much more information than the usual barcode, which presents information and is read horizontally. The more information it contains, the longer and wider it must be. QR Codes are read both horizontally *and* vertically and can therefore contain much more information in a more compact space (Zax 2012). Because they are read simultaneously in two directions, they are referred to as two-dimensional or 2-D barcodes. Denso has allowed unrestricted worldwide access for the creation of commercialized QR Codes, with no charge or restrictions. Importantly, they can be created with free software, often pre-installed in smartphones, and can be reproduced through a conventional printer (Dou and Li 2008).

QR Codes can also be framed within a wider production and consumption system: Kanban culture (Soon 2001). Developed in the late 1940s, it is a just-in-time inventory system that maintains high levels of production with reduced waste. The focus is actual consumption rather than predicted consumption (Lunesu 2013). Kanban ensures that signals are sent to produce goods when they are consumed.

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<sup>1</sup> “Are QR codes better than barcodes,” Mobile QR Codes.org, 2013, <http://www.mobile-qr-codes.org/qr-codes-vs-barcodes.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Intriguingly, this ‘inventory’ function is discovering new uses in reinventing ‘lost and found’ services and branding cattle.

**Fig. 2.1** Commonly used barcode



**Fig. 2.2** QR Code  
(2-D barcode)



However, this book extends and stretches this paradigm beyond inventory, and into the creation of new relationships between producers and consumers (Fig. 2.2).

QR Codes are, as Jason Coleman described them, ‘essentially pictographic hyperlinks that can be embedded in the physical environment’ (Coleman 2011). QR Codes are frequently used beyond Japan, particularly in Europe and the United States, as well as in Australia and New Zealand. Indeed, the U.S. has now overtaken Europe for the use of QR Codes.<sup>3</sup> The ability to scan QR Codes requires ownership of a mobile phone with an Internet connection, a camera and a phone application that will recognize and decode QR Codes. Almost all ‘smartphones’ currently manufactured have this ability.

In December 2011, marketing and advertising research company Nielsen released its *State of the Media: The Mobile Media Report*. Key findings included:

- The majority of 25–34 and 18–24-year olds now own smartphones (64 and 53 % respectively)
- The number of smartphone subscribers using the mobile Internet has grown 45 % since 2010.<sup>4</sup>

Up until 2013, comScore reported that smartphone adoption in the U.S. continued to trail European markets. By 2013, smartphone ownership reached 60 % of mobile phone users.<sup>5</sup>

Mobile phone users can encounter QR Codes virtually anywhere, but the most common locations include at home, inside stores and other businesses, on footpaths and sidewalks through posters, billboards and store windows, while travelling on public transportation and at work. They can form luggage tags (Fig. 2.3).

<sup>3</sup> “US Ahead of Western Europe in QR Code Usage,” EMarketer, January 28, 2013, <http://www.emarketer.com/Article/US-Ahead-of-Western-Europe-QR-Code-Usage/1009631>.

<sup>4</sup> “Report: The rise of smartphones, apps, and the mobile web,” Nielsenwire, December 15, 2011, [http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online\\_mobile/report-the-rise-of-smartphones-apps-and-the-mobile-web/](http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/report-the-rise-of-smartphones-apps-and-the-mobile-web/).

<sup>5</sup> “Mobile majority,” Nielsen, June 6, 2013, <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/newswire/2013/mobile-majority-u-s-smartphone-ownership-tops-60-.html>.

**Fig. 2.3** QR Codes on luggage tags (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



**Fig. 2.4** QR Code greeting card (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



A strong use of minimal space, the use of a QR code on an item of luggage summons the original use of the codes: for inventory. A more emotional and personal use comes in the form of greeting cards (Fig. 2.4).

When scanned, the image hooks into a website which reveals the message: I miss you. An emerging area of QR Codes use is through sound. Vocal-it One is an application that enables consumers to record a short message that is activated upon the scan of a QR Code (Fig. 2.5).

Through such 'talking labels', consumers download the 'Vocal-it One' application and then record a message that is activated upon the scan of the Code. Not surprisingly, such an application was quickly deployed for wine marketing (Fig. 2.6).

**Fig. 2.5** Vocal-it one talking label (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



**Fig. 2.6** Vocal-it wine hangers (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



The advertised uses for this product are already diverse. It can be used as a conventional gift card, with the sender recording a message for the receiver. However, there are further uses for wine enthusiasts. Wrapping around an empty bottle, the QR Code can store information and impressions about the wine for longer term use and reflection.

Through this proliferation of functions, the frequency of scans is increasing. According to digital marketing intelligence firm comScore,

20.1 million mobile phone owners (approximately 9 % of mobile phone owners) in the U.S. used their device to scan a QR Code in the three-month average period ending October 2011. Among these mobile users who used their phone to scan a QR Code, 59.4 % did so from home, while 44 % did so from a retail store and 26.6 % from a grocery store. Further, 21.4 % scanned a QR Code while at work, while 11.2 % did so outside or on public transportation with nearly 10 % scanning a QR Code while in a restaurant.<sup>6</sup>

Such data are significant when realizing that a slightly earlier study conducted in August 2011 showed that only 14 million people scanned a QR Code.<sup>7</sup> In Europe, the take up is wider. comScore reported that,

In the EU5 region (including France, Germany, Italy, Spain and UK) 4.6 % of mobile users and 9.8 % of smartphone owners scanned a QR or bar code during the month of June 2011. Among those EU5 mobile users who scanned a QR or bar code on their mobile devices in June, 57.4 % did so from home, while 22.6 % scanned while at work and 20 % scanned a QR or bar code when outside or on public transport. Nearly 18 % scanned a QR Code while at a retail store, while 17.2 % did so while in a supermarket and 5.7 % scanned while in a restaurant.<sup>8</sup>

While these national specificities are instructive, there are other sociological variables to be assessed when considering the past, present and future of QR Codes. A June 2011 comScore study showed that approximately 60 % of those who had scanned in the recent months were male.<sup>9</sup> The 25–34 age group was responsible for approximately 37 % of all scans, 35–44 for nearly 20 % and 18–24 for approximately 17 %.<sup>10</sup> The income level group from \$50,000 to \$75,000 was responsible for 19 % of all scans, \$75–\$100,000 for 18.6 % and \$25–\$50,000 for 18 %. Top scanners were those in the \$100,000 or over bracket who were responsible for 36 % of all scans.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, products and goods that market to affluent male purchasers under the age of 44 are a key target market for QR-enabled publicity for goods. Wine is an important product for this group. So are real estate marketing, cars and new technology. This profile may—and indeed will—change, but it is important to log this current consumer base (Figs. 2.7 and 2.8).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup> “20 million Americans scanned a QR Code in October,” comScore Data Mine, 19, December 2011, <http://www.comscoredatamine.com/2011/12/20-million-americans-scanned-a-qr-code-in-october/>.

<sup>7</sup> “14 million Americans scanned QR or bar codes on their mobile phones in June 2011,” comScore, 12 August 2011, [http://www.comscore.com/Press\\_Events/Press\\_Releases/2011/8/14-Million\\_Americans\\_Scanned\\_QR\\_or\\_Bar\\_Codes\\_on\\_their\\_Mobile\\_Phones\\_in\\_June\\_2011](http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2011/8/14-Million_Americans_Scanned_QR_or_Bar_Codes_on_their_Mobile_Phones_in_June_2011).

<sup>8</sup> “In eu5, more than half of QR Codes are scanned while at home,” comScore Data Mine, 12 August 2011, <http://www.comscoredatamine.com/2011/08/in-eu5-more-than-half-of-qr-codes-are-scanned-while-at-home/>.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

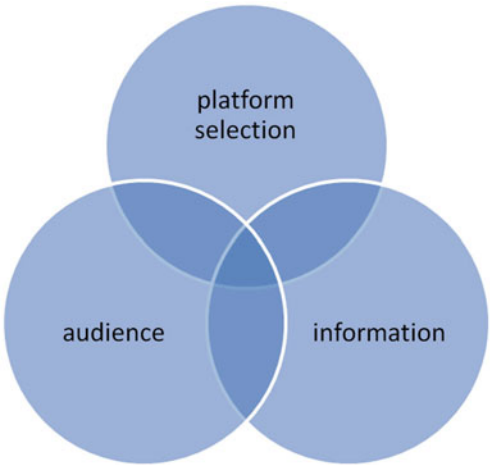
<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

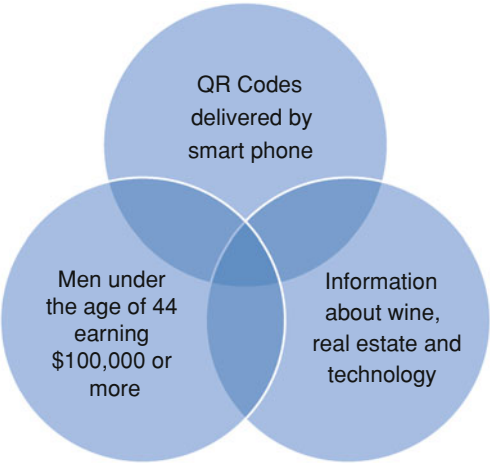
<sup>12</sup> There is an important parallel study of women in this age and income group. Their consumerist practices would be distinct to men in this group. While there have been no studies of this behaviour—which would have a role in selecting the appropriate use of QR Codes—there may be a focus on services such as holidays, concerts, health, beauty and wellness programmes. There may be a model for women’s use of QR Codes to be found in Groupon behaviours and practices.



**Fig. 2.7** Building a relationship between media platform, audience and information



**Fig. 2.8** Applying the model to QR Codes



While recognizing the match of this product and audience, the question remains: who scans, and why do they do so?

International mobile barcode company Scanbuy in its *ScanLife Mobile Barcode Q4 2011 Trend Report* stated that 2011 saw a 300 % growth in barcode scanning over 2010, and 1,000 % over 2009. *Q4 2011* saw more scans than all of 2009 and 2010 combined. Half of *ScanLife* users were between 18 and 34 years of age, with 60 % male (Trend Reports 2012). A February 2011 online survey (QR Code Survey 2011) of 415 smartphone users by marketing firm MGH in Baltimore, Maryland indicated that 53 % of scanners receive a coupon, discount or deal and 52 % scanned to get additional information. A further 33 % acted to enter a sweepstakes and 26 % signed up to receive more information. Significantly, 24 %

accessed a video and 23 % made a purchase. Another 23 % of scans were to interact with social media (QR Code Survey 2011). A *ScanLife* online survey of over 100 independent marketers reported that 50 % of marketers were currently using 2-D barcodes with 86 % planning to do so in the near future, and their top three placement choices were magazines and newspapers, direct mail and product packaging.<sup>13</sup> Marketers are correct in targeting paper and cardboard-based carriers at this stage, but QR Codes can be placed in a virtually unlimited number of places. For marketing purposes, the most common locations include store windows, in-store displays, product packaging, newspapers, magazines, flyers, direct mail, websites and television screens. Film posters can use them, linking to a video, perhaps the movie trailer (Sorensen and Glassman 2011). A comScore study reported that more than 49 % of all scans were of QR Codes in printed magazines or newspapers, more than 35 % on product packaging, and websites on a computer were over 27 %. Such a result offers particular applications for food and wine. Posters, flyers and kiosks come next with more than 23 %, and business cards/brochures, storefronts and TV were all between 10 and 15 %.<sup>14</sup> When analyzing survey results such as these, it is important to recognize that at this time there is more scanning done through certain media sources because QR Codes are created and displayed more often in these media sources. This also directly connects with *why* people scan. Results do not necessarily indicate potential, because currently people scan only those QR Codes that now exist, not the ones that *could exist* in the future. However, Andrew Wilson's question remains both relevant and generalizable: 'QR Codes in the library: are they worth the effort?' (Wilson 2012). Similarly for our project: are QR Codes on food and wine packaging worth the effort? Through this book, we evaluate the costs and the benefits, not only now, but in the future.

Conflating and triangulating these studies to date, the Top 10 Users (excluding Japan<sup>15</sup>) of mobile barcodes are:

1. The United States
2. Germany
3. Canada
4. The UK
5. Italy
6. The Netherlands
7. France

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<sup>13</sup> "Trend reports," op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> "14 million Americans," op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> Japan is excluded from most studies because it is an outlier. QR Codes were invented in Japan and that country had been using them for a number of years before they started appearing in other countries, so the percentage of people scanning QR Codes in Japan is far greater than other parts of the world.

8. Spain
9. Australia
10. Hong Kong.<sup>16</sup>

This list is important, not only in understanding who is using QRs but for international businesses and advertisers to recognize that there may be a gulf between the use of the codes in their home country and the targeted export market. For example, Aotearoa/New Zealand is not on this list, but the primary markets for their wine and primary produce are. There is a fascinating disparity emerging between the import and export market for New Zealand wine. Art Thomas realized that,

Consumers make numerous decisions about product purchases and these are influenced by internal and external factors. Manufacturer influence over some external elements can occur through packaging. In wine marketing, the packaging and labels assume an undeniable influence, forming an integral part of any wine's promotion and consumption ... New Zealand's wine industry is currently attracted to lucrative export markets and may be limiting its efforts on the home front. The home market, capable of expansion, will require a concentrated consumer research effort aimed at identifying the impact of label perceptions on consumer purchases. Such research ultimately should assist both domestic and international marketing activities (Thomas 2000).

Therefore, when decisions are made about marketing, further discussions are required about the most appropriate way to configure digitized media for the key and targeted audience. It is important to recognize that there are challenges to confront with regard not only to the recognition and literacy in QR Codes,<sup>17</sup> but also to the potential they present.

A more precise example in the use of QR Codes is the Australian winemaker Jacob's Creek. Historically, this producer held the reputation in their home country for a wine that was cheap and plentiful but lacking in quality. Through an array of acquisitions and reorganizations, including the prestigious Orlando group,<sup>18</sup> a transformation to the brand started to emerge. The brand now ranges from cheap

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<sup>16</sup> "Global growth in mobile barcode usage—Q3/2011," 3G Vision News, 10 October 2011, <http://www.3gvision.com/pr29.html>. This statistic has been intentionally left at 2011 because this appears to be the last press release generated by the organization. Therefore, to ensure that we provide the most accurate sociological profile of QR Code users, we have triangulated an array of international studies. Most are not longitudinal. Instead, they provide a snapshot of a moment, a nation or an online survey. For our purposes in this book, we collate these disparate studies and provide a shape of past and present users. The outcomes we generate on future users are tentative, but our goal is to show trajectories and potentials.

<sup>17</sup> For example, a street survey on QR Code awareness in Stockholm in 2010 reported that of the 108 people surveyed, "a large majority (77 %) did not recognize a QR Code, and 8 % reported seeing such a code before, but did not know it could be scanned using a mobile phone app. Only 15 % knew what the QR Code was, and that it could be read using a QR Code reader on a mobile phone." This finding was reported in S. Buttner, Z. Ahmet and H. Cramer, "QR Code awareness in Stockholm, Sweden," SICS technical report T2011:12, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Jacob's Creek is part of the corporation Premium Wine Brands that was formerly known as Pernod Ricard Pacific. A range of wines, spirits and non-alcoholic grape juices are part of their range.

**Fig. 2.9** Cheap and cheerful—Jacobs Creek  
(Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



and cheerful products through to St Hugo, Centenary Hill and Johann. One of the largest global brands in the world, it is an export-driven product and market. Jacob's Creek does matter to this story of QR Codes because they deploy them more heavily than any other winemaker from Australia. The key reason for their use is that this Australian firm has its key markets *outside* of Australia, particularly the United Kingdom (Fig. 2.9).

It is important to note the generic rather than Australian-based URL ([jacobs-creek.com](http://jacobs-creek.com)) and the specific UK site for responsible drinking. While their commitment to using QR Codes to market Jacob's Creek is strong, their current usage of QR Codes is not thoughtful or precisely considered. They rely on consumers to input too much information on a handset and the 'value-add' from using the code is not sufficient for the trouble. However, they are ideally placed in the market to use them—and hopefully well—considering the range and geographical spread of the product. But the digital value of the scan for consumers must be increased.

A better example comes from the Australian wine maker, Wolf Blass. With a similar international spread and a diversified range, the packaging is much more successful. Here is their higher end wine, their Silver Label Langhorne Creek (Figs. 2.10 and 2.11).

Emerging wine industries regions and the ultra-premium end of the market, such as is the case of New Zealand, can build on the example from Jacob's Creek and Wolf Blass and improve the digitized component of the scanning process. Europe matters to their international marketing. ComScore reported in January 2012 that based on a three-month average ending in October 2011, the highest percentage of QR Code users in the five countries of the EU5 region was in Germany, at nearly 15 %.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> "Connecting Europe: How smartphones and tablets are shifting media consumption," comScore, 23 January 2012, [http://www.comscore.com/Press\\_Events/Presentations\\_Whitepapers/2012/Connected\\_Europe](http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Presentations_Whitepapers/2012/Connected_Europe).

**Fig. 2.10** Silver label  
(Photograph by Tara  
Brabazon)



Germany 14.9 %

The UK 13.2 %

France 12.5 %

Spain 10.0 %

Italy 9.6 %

#### **European Average for the EU5—12.1 %**

Over the month of November 2011, Internet usage research firm GlobalWebIndex surveyed Internet users in 27 countries (including Japan) on their QR Code access. Its report indicated that 29 % of Japanese Internet users were scanning QR Codes, compared to 22 % of South Koreans and 17 % of Chinese. Much lower, at 8 %, were Americans and British. Brazilians were at 6 % and Russians at 4 % (Brett 2011).

While we have reported contemporary data, a key to our study is to monitor present trajectories and how they may transform in the future. Because Japan is so advanced in the use of QR Codes in comparison to other countries, its current usage may give an indication of where QR Codes may progress elsewhere. A study from *NetAsia Research* (via *2d code*) showed:

**Fig. 2.11** Integration of QR Codes into the wolf bliss label (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



- 76 % of Japanese know that they have access to QR Codes.
- This group scans QR Codes on an average of 1.24 per week.
- Reasons for scanning include: (1) to use a coupon (31.6 %); (2) to apply for a special promotion (22.7 %) and (3) to have more information on a product (22.7 %) (Smolski 2011).

This latter category—those seeking further information—is particularly important for the wine and food industries that are the focus for this book. There is a range of display options, including promotions in bars and restaurants. Wine can be featured (and promoted) through a card positioned on a table, naming the brand, including some details, perhaps with a special offer, but also presenting a QR Code for further information. Restaurants are complex social spaces, with a plethora of trigger points for purchases. As we discuss later in this book, it is incredibly difficult to intervene in purchasing and consumption habits with wine. But using QR Codes in a tasting environment, encouraging drinkers to try something new and source new information through the Web while they are doing so, adds an innovative context to the wine experience. This is just-in-time marketing creating new relationships between the analogue and the digital.

An intriguing question is whether or not QR Codes will follow the Japanese pattern of usage: to use coupons, partake in a promotion or gain further information. To explore whether Japan remains the exception rather than the rule, it is appropriate to summon an alternative mechanism for structuring and shaping the disparate quantitative or qualitative surveys and data about QR Code usage. Gartner, a global information technology research and advisory company, publishes regular ‘Hype Cycle’ reports on new technological innovations in a variety of industries. The cycle offers some information about how innovations are accepted or rejected. It begins with the *Technology Trigger*, moves upward to the *Peak of Inflated Expectations*, down the *Trough of Disillusionment*, up to the *Slope of Enlightenment* and finally reaches the *Plateau of Productivity*.<sup>20</sup> In the July 2011 research, Gartner’s hype cycle illustration positions QR Codes moving to the *Slope of Enlightenment*.<sup>21</sup> Gartner describes this stage as,

More instances of how the technology can benefit the enterprise start to crystallize and become more widely understood. Second- and third-generation products appear from technology providers. More enterprises fund pilots; conservative companies remain cautious.

Gartner’s analysis suggests that QR Codes still have two to five years before mainstream adoption. It is clear though that—as with all technology—if they can be embedded into the behaviours and practices of daily life, then the speed of adoption and the literacy to use them well will also increase. There is great potential. With supermarkets advertising their products with the question ‘Stuck in a wine rut?’,<sup>22</sup> the opportunity to find strategies to connect an untried product to a consumer is important in amending behavioural and purchasing patterns. Therefore, our next chapter presents the key for present and future uses of QR Codes with some comments about the best practice.

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<sup>20</sup> “Hype cycle illustration,” Gartner, undated, [http://www.gartner.com/hc/images/215650\\_0001.gif](http://www.gartner.com/hc/images/215650_0001.gif).

<sup>21</sup> “Hype cycles,” Gartner, undated, <http://www.gartner.com/technology/research/methodologies/hype-cycle.jsp>.

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## Chapter 3

# Form Follows Function: How to Use QR Codes

The Gartner research presented at the end of the previous chapter suggests that QR Codes are an application that is still looking for a function. Clearly, these functions are tethered to the proliferation of Internet-connected smartphones. Every new smartphone either comes with, or can easily download at no cost, one or more applications that scan, decode, and fulfill the instructions of a QR Code. These instructions can:

- Download text, audio, or video about an object, location, or surroundings. This is particularly useful in tourist areas, art galleries and museums, and real estate marketing.
- Place an event into a phone's calendar.
- Place information into a phone's contacts list.
- Download a document, such as an article, letter, newspaper, spreadsheet, menu, manual, ebook, coupon, or entry form.
- Place an email address into a phone's email application.
- Download photographs or other images.
- Download an application for the user's phone (a major use by phones running the Android operating system). Pine Ridge deploys this function (Fig. 3.1).
- Link to a website.
- Display a map and navigation directions.
- Enable an online payment.
- Initiate a telephone call.
- Initiate a web search.
- Find, get reviews for, and purchase a product.
- Send/receive a text message.
- See/send a social network post.
- Download a ticket.
- Provide a menu of options.
- Download an advertising radio jingle or video.
- View schedules including entertainment and transportation.
- See news, stock market, weather, sports, and traffic reports.
- View a webcam for real-time visual information.

**Fig. 3.1** Pine Ridge's use of QR Codes (Photograph by Mick Winter)



Any industry can come up with multiple uses for QR Codes. Some current marketing and customer relations purposes include product information for food and beverage products, transportation, entertainment, DVDs and CDs, vending machines, business cards, retail business, and tour information. More than 20 % of the Fortune 50 companies in the United States are using QR Codes (Burstion-Marsteller 2010). On the other end of the scale, small local businesses are also using them effectively, and frequently with greater success than major corporations. There are reasons for this success in public institutions and small to medium-sized enterprises.

- QR Codes can be created at no charge.
- QR Codes are timely. The information, to which they link, can be changed quickly and easily, allowing up-to-date and even last-minute information to be communicated to smartphone users. The QR Code can be displayed in a permanent or semi-permanent location but still lead to ever-changing information.
- Online tracking of QR Code usage provides marketing information through real-time analytics. Each time a QR Code is scanned, the business receives information on the location of the code (actual geographic location if relevant, or the

medium on which it is printed), the time and date it was scanned, the type of device and its operating system, the phone carrier service, the total number of scans, the country, and any actions taken by the phone user after scanning.

- Customers and potential customers respond to QR Codes, firstly as a novelty, later as a necessity.
- QR Codes can produce considerable savings in the costs of customer support and increased customer satisfaction.
- Businesses can make immediate sales, even during nonbusiness hours.
- Businesses can automatically add new contacts to their mailing lists.
- Businesses can provide information, which, when kept on the user's smart-phone, can lead to future sales.

While the range of best practices are clear, many businesses still do not understand the basic concepts and practice of using QR Codes. As a result, much time, energy, and money is wasted. Here are some of the basic principles about their use. Unfortunately these guidelines are often violated. The first three are the most important, and yet are the most frequently ignored.

### **3.1 Mobile Websites**

The website to which a QR Code links must be “mobile-friendly.” It must be formatted in a manner that is easy to see, read, and use on *all* mobile phones.

### **3.2 Use Only When Needed**

QR Codes should be used only when the information or service they provide *cannot* be provided in another faster and more convenient way. Do *not* duplicate what is already obvious in the phone user's location. What the QR Code provides should be unique to the moment and/or unique to the location.

### **3.3 Reason to Scan**

The QR Code must be displayed in a manner that gives the mobile phone owner a reason to scan it. An unscanned QR Code by itself tells nothing to the phone user. The QR Code must be in a context that convinces the phone user that it will provide interesting, money-saving, timely, or other useful, important, or entertaining information. Mobile phone users are impulsive. It is important to make the provided information of value, make it intriguing, make it fun, and make it very obviously worth their while to take the time to scan the QR Code.

### **3.4 Remember the Goals**

It is important to develop and maintain clear business goals. The QR Code is a portal between the physical world and the virtual world. Indeed, Andrew Walsh described their function as “blurring the boundaries” (Walsh 2011) between the physical and electronic. It is also a link between the phone user’s goal and the motive of the business. QR Codes can enable the synchronicity between these aims. The mobile phone user wants “something”: information, goods, or services. The business wants to provide that “something” to the benefit of both. The key is to deliver it in a timely and appropriate fashion. This goal may be complex, but for the QR Code to function effectively, it is important that the aim is specified and specific. It may be a “call to action” with an immediate sale, an invitation/enticement to visit a business or try a product, an addition to a mailing list, educating or entertaining a customer or potential customer, or establishing or deepening a relationship with an eye toward future business.

### **3.5 Track the Scans**

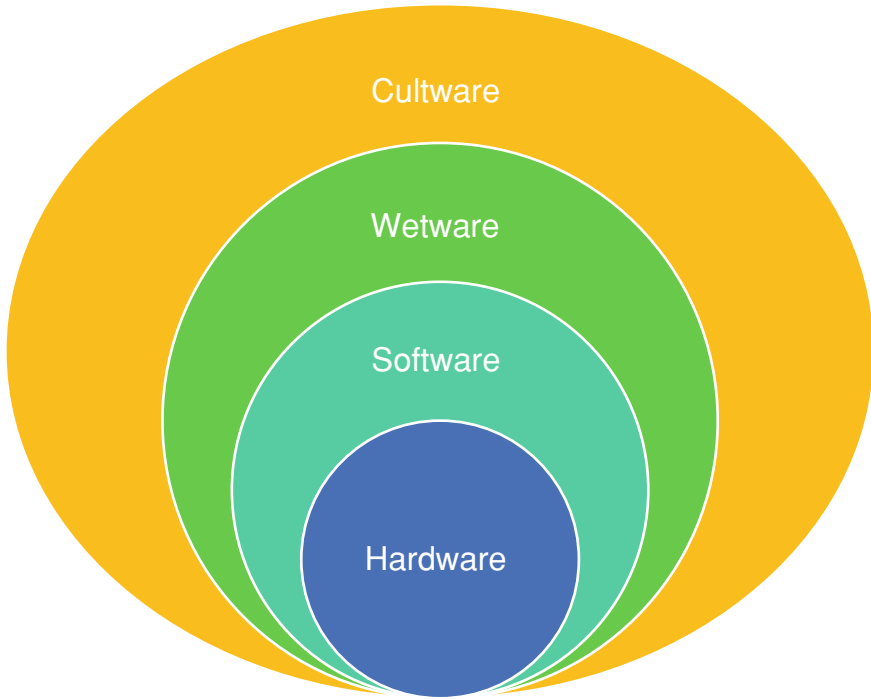
Evaluation is important when deploying QR Codes, to ascertain whether the goals for its use are being achieved or—indeed—if they are being accessed in unusual ways. It is necessary to use a tracking system or hire a tracking service to deliver the information that will present how much and how well the QR Codes are working. From this data, changes may be made in the future to increase their productivity.

### **3.6 Keep the URL Short**

Use a URL shortening service such as bit.ly or goo.gl to decrease the length of the URL. This will create a smaller and less dense QR Code, which in turn will result in fewer scanning errors. With each of these services, once the short URL has been created, place it in the web browser’s address field, add a .qr to the shortened URL, and press Enter. A QR Code will be automatically generated with the short URL encoded.

### **3.7 Check for Good Mobile Phone Service**

Not every location has a reliable, or even any, mobile phone service. Make sure that if QR Codes will be in specific geographic locations, that a good internet connection is of a high probability. Again, it is necessary to understand not only

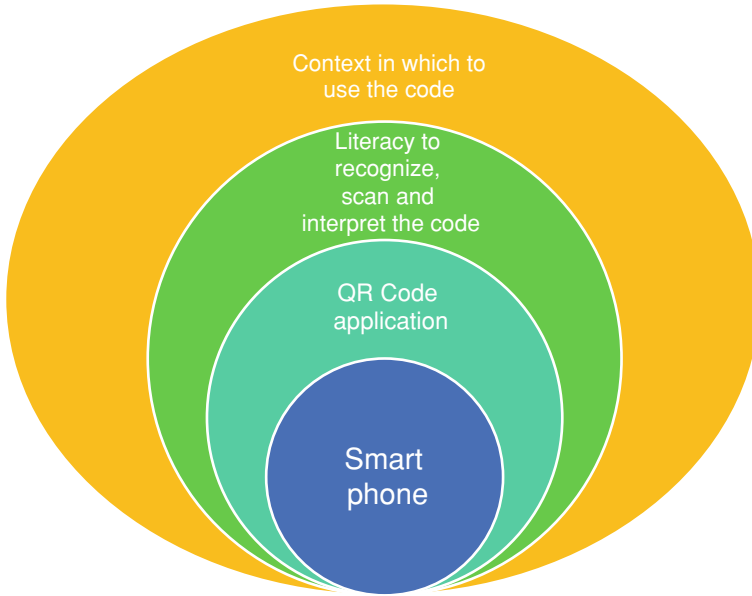


**Fig. 3.2** Hardware, software, wetware, cultware

the local market for a product or service but the location of trans-local and international audiences. QR Codes create a rich digital environment for the user, but require enabling hardware, software, wetware, and cultware (Kent 2011). In other words, hardware and software are required, but so is literacy in their use, which is a combination of digital and information literacy (wetware) and a capacity to use and apply it in a context (cultware) (Figs. 3.2 and 3.3).

### 3.8 Test. Test. Test.

Never release a QR Code for business purposes until it has been tested with a variety of the most common handsets and using the most popular QR Code readers. It is important to remember that currently in most countries, “feature” phones (which actually have *fewer* features than smartphones, although some have cameras) outnumber smartphones. It is therefore important to ensure an inclusive approach to the distribution of information. Do not give people with feature phones a negative image of a business by making them feel excluded. For those without the ability to scan a QR Code, whether because their phone does not have



**Fig. 3.3** Understanding the context of a QR Code

or *cannot* have a QR Code scanning application, be sure to also include a URL and/or phone number next to the QR Code, no matter which medium is to be used (Sorensen and Glassman 2011).

It is necessary to remain current and aware of how the users of QR Codes are transforming, but also their sociological profile. If QR Codes are to be used in some form of loyalty program, then who is using them and how they are being used becomes incredibly important. A study in Japan was conducted on the relationship between gender and the use of QR Codes. They constructed a scenario-based study of 667 consumers to explore two distinct services: banking and supermarkets. The results showed that when the QR Codes enabled and required high involvement and interactivity, “males act as competitive gamers who assume greater risk and seek attractive rewards with which to beat corporations, even under high social anxiety conditions... there is no significant difference for low involvement (supermarket)” (Okazaki et al. 2011). This study seems to be suggesting that if men are the target for a service or product, then QR Codes can be successfully deployed in challenging and competitive ways, to gain a discount coupon. However, when there is a low level of interactivity and challenge, there is no gendered difference in terms of the behavior of users. Therefore, this study confirms once more that male-oriented programs and services are important in considering the audience for QR Codes, along with a more active consumer

model.<sup>1</sup> From this foundation and to understand how and why geography and trans-localism is now integral to supposedly deterritorialized social media, we now move to the specificity and potential of embedding location-specific data into a mobile phone application.

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<sup>1</sup> Some interesting studies are emerging on how gender difference is manifested through e-commerce. Rodgers and Harris, as early as 2003, discovered distinctions in online shopping, with women expecting an emotional experience online. The consequence of this difference, according to the researchers, is that women had higher expectations of websites. Please refer to (Rodgers and Harris 2003).

## **Part II**

# **From Push to Pull Media**



## Chapter 4

# From Social Networking to Geosocial Networking

*Space is experienced through the movement of the body.*

Rotenberg (2012)

Digital and analogue spaces matter to QR Codes because they can connect them. Increasingly, our sensory and daily experiences are mediated through screens. Therefore, creating dynamic and lived connections with the environment matters socially and economically. All space is experienced through our senses. Traffic, buildings and street noise create a clash of sight and sound, touch and smell. As our bodies move through cities, our senses deliver information about threat and interest, and direct particular patterns of behaviour. Now it is possible, while on the move, to accompany this analogue cacophony with digital data in the form of text messages, Facebook updates, music, video and photography. These mixed media materials are carried via both conventional ('feature') and smart phones. Much of this information, once set up via a downloaded application, is transmitted to the user/walker. This means that users are notified of comments to their Facebook status or mentions on Twitter. Wherever the user may be, as long as a smart phone is with them, they will be bombarded with data and notification. They can receive reminders, emails or comments in response to their posts in real time.

Yet there is another way to use a mobile phone. Under-researched are the mobile applications that pull information to the walker once they activate a desire for information in a particular place and time. Part of this 'pulled information'—where a user can source location-specific information when required—is the QR Code, the focus of this book. This is just-in-time information, rather than just-in-case information. As Okazaki et al. realized, the 'QR Code exemplifies an idea behind the multi-channel marketing strategy, in that customers can "jump" directly from one media to another' Okazaki (2011). It is a clear example of conscious and careful media literacy. Citizens/consumers/users/readers do not 'set and forget' their digital lives, with minutia pushed from social networking sites with a beep at each mention. Through QR Codes, a conscious and careful movement between platforms and information sources is—literally—within the hands of the user. Therefore, users pull information to their mobile platforms. However, before exploring its specificity, the distinctions between social networking and geosocial networking will be introduced. Then the potential of geosocial networking in the provision of information, particularly when in transit, can be shown.

Assumptions about audiences, consumers and users pepper the study of digitization, the Internet, the web and social media. Now that the read write web is reaching maturity, there needs to be much more care in determining and configuring the audience for information. Statements about ‘everyone’ being online or ‘everyone’ possessing a smartphone are wrong. Not everyone is online in the United States of America, let alone in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, before decisions are made about push and pull media, it is important to ascertain the level of Internet access, the availability of broadband, the media literacy level of the group that has access to digital platforms, their lack of the skills and knowledge to use it, and the size and sociology of the community excluded from digital platforms.<sup>2</sup> The phrase ‘digital divide’ is glib, overworked and not useful in creating accurate information in configuring the relationship between audience, platform and information.

It is also important to not make assumptions about how age, gender and race-based differences manifest in the online environment. ‘Everyone’ is not online. ‘Everyone’ does not use the capacity of digitization in the same way. ‘Everyone’ will not use QR Codes. For example, the average age of users of different social networking sites is a simple but stark confirmation of these differences (Fig. 4.1).

The assumption that ‘the young people’ are on Facebook is wrong, unless being nearly 40 has now been incorporated into definitions of youth. Therefore, it is incredibly important for advertisers and businesses, alongside those wishing to provide accurate and appropriate information in good and opportune time, to understand the sociology of both the platform being used and the application being deployed. These questions are also integral to the application of QR Codes in business, education and public services. Three key questions feed this process and should commence any scoping of QR Codes use by businesses.

1. Who is the audience for this information?
2. What is the most effective platform?
3. What is the most effective mode to convey and share this information?

These questions cascade into a discussion of multimodality.<sup>3</sup> This emerging and incredibly important term, which is increasingly relevant in marketing, media

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<sup>1</sup> Internet Usage Statistics, Internet World Statistics, <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> An example of this exploratory approach is Bobeva and Hopkins (2012).

<sup>3</sup> We log Gunther Kress’s leadership in this field, exemplified by Kress (2010). Kress realized that, ‘there are times—perhaps many times—when communication isn’t really the issue, and power is. That is the crucial point to bear in mind in thinking, theorizing and writing about meaning, communication and social matters’, p. 3. He confirmed that, ‘my interest is in developing precise tools for understanding the interrelation of resources of representation and forms of knowledge; of the effects of both in shaping environment; and these in relation to the facilities, affordances, potentials and limitations of contemporary technologies of representation/production/communication’, p. 96.

**Fig. 4.1** *Source*

Pingdom.com, <http://royal.pingdom.com/2010/02/16/study-ages-of-social-network-users/>, February 16, 2010

| Name of site   | Average age of users |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Classmates.com | 44.9                 |
| LinkedIn       | 44.3                 |
| Delicious      | 41.3                 |
| Slashdot       | 40.4                 |
| Twitter        | 39.1                 |
| Digg           | 38.5                 |
| Stumbled Upon  | 38.5                 |
| Facebook       | 38.4                 |
| FriendFeed     | 38.4                 |
| Ning           | 37.8                 |
| Reddit         | 37.4                 |
| LastFM         | 35.8                 |
| LiveJournal    | 35.2                 |
| Tagged         | 34.4                 |
| Hi5            | 33.5                 |
| Friendster     | 33.4                 |
| Xanga          | 32.3                 |
| MySpace        | 31.8                 |
| Bebo           | 28.4                 |

studies and information management, probes those who construct and target information with a series of key questions.

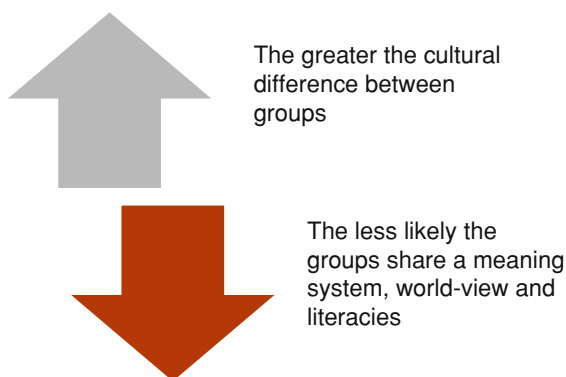
1. How much writing (written text) should be used?
2. Would images convey this information more effectively?
3. What forms of expression best enable the most effective presentation of content for the targeted audience?

Gunther Kress's recent research has been incredibly instructive in selecting the best platform to convey a specific idea or message to a particular audience (see footnote 3). The relationship between word and image, colour and content, is not only important to the success of analogue street signs, but also with digitally retrieved web pages on smart phones. The key is to have a unifying theory or approach to multimodality, asking:

1. What is the producer of information trying to achieve?
2. What mode of information is being conveyed?
3. What sort of information, in terms of tone and seriousness, is being captured?
4. Who is the target audience?

Multimodality is the key concept required to answer these questions and accomplish these goals. Because of globalization, digital texts can move easily between national borders. Yet just because something can move digitally does not mean that it should. Simply because information can be, or is, delivered on a particular platform does not mean that that platform is the best way to present information, or

**Fig. 4.2** Gunter Kress's model for the relationship between cultural difference and multimodality



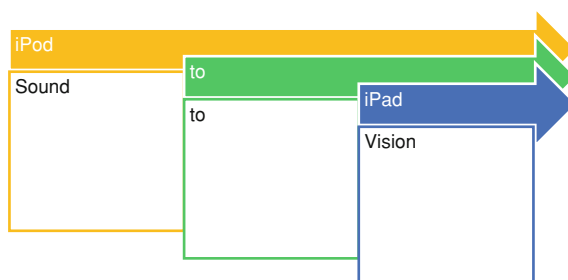
that the people to whom the information is delivered have the literacies to manage it. There are many multilingual environments in our lives. Words expressed in a particular language are not always the best option to express a message. Careful analogue or digital graphic design can create meaning through images. Therefore, knowledge of multimodality enables an awareness of when words will not work and images will function effectively. Gunther Kress suggested that the greater the cultural differences, the greater the distinctions in terms of their representational systems and literacies (see footnote 3; Fig. 4.2).

There is no rigid ranking of media modalities in terms of effectiveness. Put another way, the issue is not user generated content, but understanding a user's context to generate meaning. Most signs and meaning systems are made up of multiple platforms, sensory experiences and media. Therefore, it is important that institutions and content generators do not assume that a producer's understanding of information is shared by the consumers.

Recognizing these differences is particularly important, as hand-held communication platforms invented to receive a voice call now service a range of computing functions, including web searching, applications, social networking and games. 'Talking' and 'listening' are visualized through text. The only sound is the clicking of keypads or the beeping arrival of a message. While we seem to live in the age of sound, actually these sounds are channeled and expressed through screens. The iPad is a confirmation of this statement. The original iPod played music with a small screen to enable negotiation through music and podcasts, via a flywheel. Via the iPad, an enormous touchscreen widens the visual domain. Sonic controls are marginalized to the side of the hardware. Therefore, the key feature in the iPad is its screen. The visual not only dominates sound, but silences sonic media (Fig. 4.3).

The visual dominates the other senses in a digital age. This means that the other senses—hearing, touch, taste and smell—are configured in response and in a relationship with the visual material that is available.

The other key contextual issue to consider when framing the QR Code is deterritorialization. This term refers to the way in which particular media

**Fig. 4.3** Sound to vision

platforms and communication systems de-emphasize, de-centre and displace a person's position in real space and time in favour of a virtual space and time. Someone may live in the Barossa Valley, but have a friend in Singapore. A real-time conversation can be shared on a phone, via Skype, Google Hangout or Facebook LiveChat. Time can be shared through screens, even if a space is not. While the telephone and the satellite were the twentieth century manifestations of deterritorialization, its best and most pervasive example is the Internet and the applications that emerge from it. This book, for example, has been written by three people spread throughout the world. Mick Winter is resident in the Napa Valley, California in the United States. Bryn Gandy lives in Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand. Tara Brabazon moved between Manchester in the United Kingdom and Bathurst in Australia during the writing process of this book. Yet via very basic digital tools—electronic mail (email), Transfer Big Files (a free Internet site that fulfils its title) and Skype—a truly collective research and writing project was executed and produced. Where we live is not important as long as we share the hardware, software and information literacy to enter a deterritorialized digital space. We share a screen. Therefore, we share time.

Screens matter to such collaborations. In the early 1990s, Sherry Turkle wrote perhaps the most famous book in the early phase of the Internet: *Life on the Screen* Turkle (1995). This title captures the meaning of deterritorialization. We are no longer a physical body limited by real space and time. Instead, we live a life on a screen that connects us to a network. The mobile phone—held in our hands and enabled through applications—now solidifies this link. In her famous book, Turkle stated that, 'every age constructs its own metaphors for psychological well-being' Turkle (1995). While stability and tradition are valued in particular eras, change and fragmentation are more significant in others. With all the talk of multi-skilling and flexibility, a greater question is how an identity, allegiance, commitment and connection are constructed and performed on and through a screen.

By the mid-1990s, the Internet connected millions of computers. The original uses of the Internet were very basic: email, file transfer, bulletin boards and newsgroups. But from this very basic start, the early functions involved connection and communication through geographical space. As the Internet expanded through popular culture and daily life, behavioural patterns readjusted to this new technology. Its major advantage—and challenge at times—is the speed of digital

communication. A person who would never bother writing a letter will send a text message or email. Therefore, each day a glut of digital information is created and must be read and then responded to or discarded. Therefore, information literacy is a pivotal new skill. Being able to use the Google search engine is not sufficient. Google is simple. Managing its results is more complex. Put bluntly, there is a large amount of low quality information, and a lack of information literacy to manage and negotiate it. This key maxim is made worse because of the ‘push’ media notifications from Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and LinkedIn. Not only does more trivia exist, but it interrupts important work in the present through the beep of its arrival. A key moment in this proliferation of content creation in digital history emerged through the read write web, or web 2.0. Particularly, facilitated through the popularity of blogs created with WordPress and Drupal, the readers of websites could become the writers of websites. Suddenly, users could change what they viewed on the screen. This development initiated the social web, social media and social networking.

What that means is that right up until the early 2000s, the web was used only to read information. The arrival of blogger.com in 1999 meant that people with little skill in html could start a blog and create text, images and ideas that they and others could read on the screen. Consumers became producers and more active in their construction of media and mediated environments. This content generation proliferated through the early 2000s, with millions of people keeping an online diary that combined words and images. From that point, social networking emerged, through MySpace, YouTube, Facebook, Flickr and Twitter.

This moment is often termed the arrival of user generated content. For organizations, businesses and individuals, this moment presents both opportunities and challenges. As Ahmed Karam and Nader Mohamed realized, ‘the advent of Web 2.0 and social networking applications caused a social phenomenon on the Internet, offering an unprecedented opportunity for a wide variety of real-time applications’ (Karam and Mohamed 2012). The key realization made by Karam and Mohamed is that applications such as Facebook and Twitter were popular with users and successful because they were workable by those with little experience or expertise in other online applications. When combined with mobile phone usage, communication became faster, more direct and more convenient. The World Wide Web was literally delivered to the hands of users. Yet the ‘comment culture’ that resulted from the read write web also created a normalization of abuse, defamation and ridicule. Speed of response became more important than thoughtful commentary composed with care.

While there is much talk about ‘everyone’ being online (or at least on Facebook), it is also incredibly important—particularly when attempting to target, refine and encourage QR Code usage—to remember that there are millions of people who are disconnected from digitization. The screen is also a barrier that cuts away those without sufficient money or digitized literacies. Those living analogue lives, and potentially suffering injustice, are invisible to those whose ‘life is on the screen’. It is a provocative but useful maxim to remember that those in power have always gained the most from technological change. Those with

empowered and multiple literacies extend their reach through technological innovation. The read write web only extends this trend. Those who have plenty of money for computers, web cameras and microphones now have an even greater opportunity to share their views with the world through smart phones. Those locked on the other side of the screen cannot even read a web page, let alone write one. So while the digital divide remains, the consequences and social impact of exclusion are much greater. Fewer may be left behind in Europe, North America and Oceania, but the gap between the web literate and the illiterate is more serious. Importantly, for prospective users of QR Codes, it is necessary to recognize the social makeup of current users (affluent men under 44) and recognize that awareness campaigns are required to extend the use of this free application beyond this group. Its uses are many, but currently—and ironically—even though this is a free application, it is the wealthy (those who can afford a smartphone) who are gaining the most use from it.

The promises of freedom, peace and financial stability are attractive, as is the thrill of the new. Progress is collapsed into technological change. Yet progress and technological change are different. Obsolescence and a fascination with the new have had profound environmental consequences with the disposal of supposedly redundant hardware. In this book, we are arguing for the strong use of already existing applications on already existing hardware. We focus on the useful, rather than the new. QR Codes, in new media terms, are ‘old’. But they gained a purpose and profile through the arrival of new hardware: smartphones. Before the smartphone, they could be read only by dedicated QR readers. In effect, without smartphones, QR Codes were—and are—useless to the general public. Their usefulness has now increased, through the availability of hardware and QR Code Reader applications. Those without this hardware, software, literacy, time and motivation are locked into the local environment, with few opportunities to discover digital information on the move.

The digitized screen specifically disconnects our physical body from an identity summoned for the consumption of others online. It separates our analogue existence from the digital performance. In other words, the read write web enables a conscious and active construction of an identity, disconnected from our bodies and our actual space. The web has delocated and dislocated users from their physical environment. A person could live in Dublin or Dunedin, but can exist in and share a deterritorialized digispace of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, chatting, watching and participating with other users around the world. This is a two way movement.

1. The Internet, web and read write web deterritorialize (disconnect) an audience from their physical environment.
2. The Internet, web and read write web reconstitute us as an imagined online community, sharing interests rather than geography.

The best example of these two tendencies is found in mobile phone use. Whenever a person disconnects from an actual event—a conversation, dinner or meeting—to take a call or to read a message, then that is an example of deterritorialization.

A digispace has been prioritized over analogue—real time and real space—communication. Such behaviour is thought of as rude because we are yet to develop rules, protocols, guidelines and manners for mobile phone use.<sup>4</sup> There is an unstable compromise between new and old ways of organizing space and identity. Text messages beep their interruption through analogue time and space. The positive consequence of this is the geographical spread of our communication reach. Deterritorialization is one of the great benefits of digitization. It enables and facilitates an array of other social movements and reconfigurations of the movements in identity and information. Yet a series of chaotic and unstable ruptures in analogue space and relationships are being created. The nature of ‘push’ media is that materials are pushed into our lives in real time, regardless of inconvenience. The use of QR Codes is a much more integrated, careful and conscious way of dialoguing between analogue and digital realms. The citizen/consumer can choose the moment to hook into digital space in a way that is respectful, appropriate and convenient. When used well, QR Codes also build the links between disintermediation and reintermediation, the topic of our next chapter.

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<sup>4</sup> A fine attempt at such guidelines is Infoworld (2000).

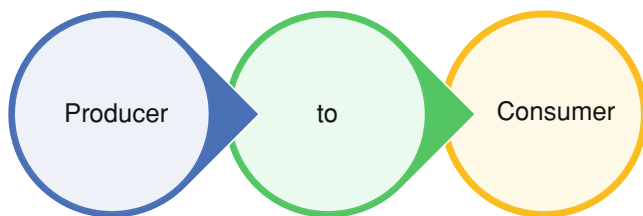


## Chapter 5

# Disintermediation and Reintermediation: From Professional to Amateur to Professional

The search engine Google enabled the explosion of user-generated content. Content creation is useless unless it can be found. Google made the Internet understandable, manageable and searchable. However, Google's early algorithm assembled its ranking through the number of links that go into that website and the number of links that fan out of that website. Therefore, right from the start of Google's rise, there was a confusion between importance and popularity. However, this ideological confusion between importance and popularity made space and built the justification for user-generated content. A culture of equivalence was created between sources, creating what one of the authors of this book described as, 'the Google effect' (Brabazon 2006). This phrase refers to the inability to discriminate between poor and high quality information because of the sheer scale of data that is available. Yet the key historical point in the Google story from a user's perspective is that the web became easier to use, but there was also a transformation in the understandings of 'quality', 'popularity' and 'usefulness'.

Through the early years of the 2000s, the production of media content became easier. Word Press and Drupal meant that the users of websites could become the writers of websites. Blogging meant that anyone with a point of view, web literacy and some writing or photographic skills could upload their views for others to read and offer feedback. Cheap and good quality sound recording equipment and software, and video recording equipment and software, meant that reasonably high quality sound and vision can be created in the home. As mobile phones gained more functions in developing sonic and visual materials, more information—of highly variable quality—was available to be circulated on the web. Podcasting is part of user-generated content as well. Just as blogging shook up publishing, podcasting shook up radio. Anyone with a point of view, hardware, software and basic digital literacies could record and upload a sonic file. Therefore, user-generated content refers to blogs, social networking sites, discussion boards, news sites, customer review sites, photo, video and music sharing sites. Examples include Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube and Wikipedia. While user-generated content was an amateur process and practice, it is now being both harnessed and delivered by businesses and corporations. So Amazon and Apple's iTunes enable 'feedback'



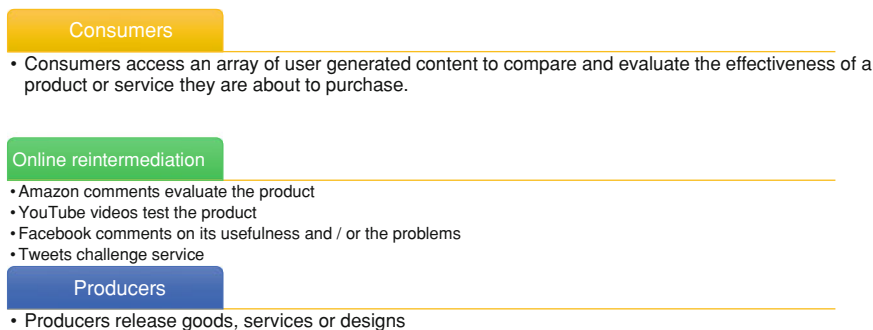
**Fig. 5.1** Disintermediation—the removal of links in the supply chain

that is integral to the purchasing decisions of consumers. It is user-generated content, but has a commercial imperative.

The consequence of user-generated content, of digitized citizens uploading and downloading prose, images and sounds, is that it flattens the relationship between producers and consumers. Disintermediation describes the process through which links are removed in a supply chain between producers and consumers. In conventional business models, multiple layers and roles are involved in designing, creating, branding, marketing and retail selling of a product. In other words, the person who sells lipstick did not develop the chemistry to make it. The person who designed a chair did not build it or sell it. But in the online environment, many of these layers between producers and consumers are either collapsed or removed. In analogue, pre-web 2.0 environments, a musician used to write a song. It was recorded in a professional recording studio. The music would be stamped onto a vinyl platform. A marketer created an advertising campaign. The product was shipped to a retail store. The CD or vinyl would then be sold to a consumer via a retail assistant. Through the last decade of digitization, user-generated content and disintermediation, a musician writes and records a song in their house, mixes it with software resident on their computer, uploads it to iTunes and it can be purchased by consumers. Therefore, content originators and businesses can deal with customers directly without mediation of wholesalers and retailers. Competitive and transparent pricing often results (Fig. 5.1).

Disintermediation has transformed the music and publishing industries, alongside stock trading and the purchase of hardware and software. Some industries remain wedded to an analogue supply chain. Real estate, for example, still has real estate agents. However, clients searching for a property may conduct preliminary viewings online. Further, QR Codes can connect a viewing of a house in a street with a website and then click to a real estate agent's contact details to arrange a viewing. This is disintermediation in practice: newspapers, magazines and brochures are no longer required to advertise the availability of a property.

Yet while disintermediation may seem to be the characteristic of modern retailing, it is actually declining. The read write web enacted reintermediation via the portal. This means that at the point of sale—or at the point where a search is conducted—a range of comments is available to view on a topic, idea or product. So what could be a direct relationship between searcher and idea or item, is now reintermediated through comment culture.



**Fig. 5.2** Reintermediation via user generated content

So we enter one of the Amazon sites—rather than the local bookshop—to buy a book (disintermediation), but our query is greeted by an array of amateur reviews about it, thereby reintermediating our response to it. This reintermediation adds layers between producers and consumers via user-generated content. What then occurs is that these comments are appropriated and used by corporations to sell products. At the point where it was possible to purchase goods directly from producers, new middlemen arrived, offering new services such as product evaluation through web 2.0 comment culture, a ranking of search results like Google, or—via manipulating metadata—directing what could be a specialist search to generic and basic tertiary information, such as Wikipedia. Google, Amazon and Apple—to name a few obvious corporations—are the new gatekeepers and reintermediators. For example, it is possible for authors to sell books directly to readers, particularly through a range of epub applications. However, this retail process is more effective when conducted by Amazon. So the ‘middlemen’ of bookstores has been lost or—in effect—collapsed into a single distribution link in the chain: Amazon (Fig. 5.2).

Another form of reintermediation is the emergence of middleware. As social networking gained popularity in parallel—indeed in tandem—with the popularity of the mobile phone and smart phone, an array of third-party developers started to create applications for Google’s Android, Blackberry and Apple’s operating system. However, particular difficulties emerged for hardware through this disintermediation of software. Karem and Mohamed logged the challenges of ‘limited energy, low memory capacities, limited processing power, scalability, and heterogeneity’ (Karam and Mohamed 2012). Therefore, the development of middleware for mobile social networks, such as Mobisoft, MyNet and MobiClique, manages these challenges. However, it is also transforming the disintermediation of hardware (the availability of mobile phones that allow the production, consumption and sharing of content on the move) with adding layers of ‘management’ through software. This is another mode of reintermediation.

The dream of the read write web was that a specialist would construct a blog, offering expert interpretations of law, human rights or gardening, and it would be

available for free to whoever would read it. There was no need for businesses or corporations to be involved. A more direct relationship between readers and writers could be formed. But through reintermediation via Apple, Google and Amazon, information is shaped, directed and organized in the interests of corporations, rather than users/consumers. But disintermediation also presents some disadvantages. If consumers slam into the glut of information, products and ideas, then that is disintermediation. If we create a scaffold to frame, shape and structure the engagement with production, ideas and information, then that is reintermediation. The ideal situation is disintermediation, but where users hold the information literacy to match information to their environment. A better reintermediation occurs when expert users guide less experienced users through the information. While deterritorialization, disintermediation and reintermediation are transforming digital communication, it is important to see how these abstract ideas are applied. Without these three movements, social networking would not have emerged and along with it the popularity of the mobile phone for functions beyond telephony.

Therefore, retailers and businesses operating in the post web 2.0 environment need to grasp the impact of

- *Deterritorialization* Ideas, products and money move through space, while consumers create new communities through sharing time.
- *Disintermediation* Links are lost in the supply chain between producers and consumers through digitization.
- *Reintermediation* New ‘middlemen’ have been created, like Amazon and Google which now shape how producers reach consumers.

Recognizing the three cultural and technological shifts that have proliferated through the last decade means that the role of time and space—synchronous and asynchronous media—is transforming for both producers and consumers. The strength of the QR Code is that consumers can scan the code in their analogue time and space—of their choosing—yet can gain deterritorialized, digitized information at a key moment in the purchasing cycle. The QR Code can also re-establish disintermediation, as producers can directly engage with their consumers in a way that is appropriate to the business and product. The next chapter adds the impact of social media and social networking to this discussion.

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## Chapter 6

# Social Networking: Moving Beyond Space and Time

To understand how QR Codes can reintermediate the relationship between producers and consumers, it is first necessary to understand the state and scale of social media. The objective of communication in its many forms is to create human connection. Digital communication is part of that desire for connection. Technology is just technology. Computer networks are just networks. QR Codes are simply QR Codes. But how they are used to build human relationships provides the foundation and basis for social networking and social media. A website, platform or online service enables the development of social relationships between people that share interests, hobbies or occupations. Within these networks, users construct a version of themselves that can be activated and performed through emailing, uploading and exchanging photographs and video, instant messaging and commenting on the posts of others. These social media are digitized, web-enabled and mobile. The applications built on user generated content provide opportunities for interactivity and dialogue. For example, consumers can contact firms directly via their Twitter account.

The key moment in the developmental history of social media was when the smart phone enabled uploading and downloading, sharing and commenting while on the move. Information could be delivered and shared while at work, in leisure or in transit. What is remarkable is that mobile phones were originally developed to accept and make voice calls. Very quickly, a minor function of mobile phones—their capacity to send and receive text messages—started to become significant. After this surprising innovation, the next wave of change emerged through global positioning systems. Smartphones revealed the capacity to locate, position, identify and find the user in real space and time. This moment enabled the movement from social to geosocial networking.

Social networking continued the deterritorialization of the internet, web and the read write web. Wherever we are in the world, we can share ideas in a globalized, digitized space. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Flickr, Scribd, GoodReads, Snapchat and Google+ provide new modes of connection, intimacy and relationships. Social networking is not a disconnection from our real, physical analogue lives, but it is an augmentation of the real. The analogue and the digital dialogue, intertwine and shape each other. But who we are *on* Facebook is different from the

person we are *away from* Facebook. The key difference in these modes of identity is the deterritorialization we introduced in the last chapter, where we can communicate with friends and families from all over the world. We are not confined to the local environment. The assumption advanced by Sherry Turkle in her book *Alone Together* is that the screen and social networking have isolated us (Turkle 2011). Her fear of social atomization is intriguing. Certainly intimacy, connection and communication are changing. The degree of emotional investment varies. Is a friend on Facebook really a friend? What is the extent of the relationship between the followed and the follower on Twitter? There is a widening portfolio of intimacy and expressions of connection.

Importantly, with regard to QR Codes, a mobile phone user in a specific location can pull location-specific information to their smartphone when required. This practice offers new and innovative relationships between analogue locations and digital data. The greater question is who and what the QR Codes connect. Most frequently, a link is created between an individual and a business or organization. Therefore, it is not a community-building application. Instead it provides just-in-time and location-specific information to the user. Often digital data interrupts analogue practices. Mobile phones ringing at funerals and reading text messages in a lecture or over dinner are two inappropriate examples. QR Codes—because they are a pull rather than push application—enable users to be more delicate, appropriate and considered in their connection between analogue and digital time and space. The default settings (and interruptions) of social media are questioned. A narrow and focused relationship is constructed between consumer and product.

The ambivalent consequence of deterritorialization and disintermediation is that many of us can be ‘away’ from our present most of the time, in a digitized mobile space of denial and displacement. Users build a social network of friends and distribute content to them. This content is comprised of photographs, video and words. Very little—and often a complete absence of—programming knowledge is required. Users can express themselves through one-click publishing. Because social networking is public, the textual and visual displays confirm both connection and popularity. This is an odd cultural movement. Millions of people are now prepared to share very personal (and political) information. A wider cultural movement that we still cannot assess—that is relevant to the future prospects of QR Codes—is the impact of millions of people now awaiting and expecting immediate gratification and delivery of ideas through retweets and Facebook ‘likes.’ While social networking and social media are now part of popular culture, the criteria by which we assess its effectiveness and usefulness are yet to be determined. So the last five years have seen the rise and popularity of social networking and social media. They are easy to use and easy to use badly. There is a large amount of cultural noise, interruption and reintermediation from amateurs, rather than experts (Carr 2010). However a key and emerging area that adds both economic and cultural value to social networking is geosocial networking.

The question is how strategies for geosocial networking may enable economic and social development through a reinvestment in place.<sup>1</sup> The digitized screen specifically disconnects bodies from performed identity. As we type an email, Facebook update or Tweet, we consciously configure a version of ourselves for the online environment. There are different modes of living and portrayals of the self, both online and offline. While the body may be limited in its physical connections, digital ‘followers’ can be much more widely distributed and discovered. As shown in this book, users can be living in Singapore or Auckland, the Napa Valley or Luanda, but can gather in a deterritorialized digispace of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, chatting, watching and participating with other users around the world. A fascinating but also unstable compromise is emerging between new and old ways of organizing space and identity. Geosocial networking—returning geographical specificity to deterritorialized social networking—is not only part of decentralized and reterritorialized digitization, but offers a fresh pathway through urban environments. Again, QR Codes can be pivotal to this digital reinvestment in analogue places.

QR Codes are special and distinctive in this discussion of ‘new media.’ They pre-date social media and social networking. They are specific, distinctive and targeted. There is intent, planning and consciousness in both the construction of the code and the desire to scan it. Yet with the proliferation of the smart phone, this pointed and precise information in an era of scattergun attempts at ‘finding’ an audience online, may have found its time. The hardware—the mobile phone—is associated with social media. With a QR Code application, it is possible to shut out the noise, ambiguity and ‘the Google Effect’ of social media and deliver locationally relevant information to a consumer at the point they are making a purchase. QR Codes can be part of geosocial networking, rather than social networking.

A collision of social, political, technological and economic imperatives has meant that an investment in the local, particularly in small cities, can have profound consequences for the development of businesses, social life and identity. John Quelch and Katherine Jocz, in their outstanding book *All business is local: why place matters more than ever in a global, virtual world*, (Quelch and Jocz 2012) recognize the cost of businesses and advertisers stressing the global over the specific when thinking about production and consumption. They realize that there are not only diverse modalities of place, but distinctive modes and renderings of place, including the geographical, physical, psychological and virtual. Digitization must now be considered when imaging or re-imaging a city or, indeed, any form of marketing.

The Internet has transformed marketing communications and also democratized the brand knowledge and expectations of consumers around the world, by

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<sup>1</sup> While a precise definition of ‘geosocial networking’ is made in the pages that follow, a preliminary definition will be presented here. Geosocial networking augments the deterritorialized nature of social networking, where users’ geographical location is irrelevant. Instead, geosocial networking allows users to discover information and make connections digitally in a way that logs, notes and enhances their geographical positioning.

accelerating the spread of word-of-mouth and viral advertising, even more so than with television (Quelch and Jocz 2012, pp. 9–10). There is now a rapid dialogue between the diverse modes and meanings of place, a fast transference between local to regional, physical to digital, past and present. Quelch and Jocz realize that consumers have shown a desire and willingness to purchase goods online, even entering their credit card details into a portal. However, hyper-local advertising remains crucial, often delivered by supposedly globalized websites.<sup>2</sup> They ask that marketers “be intelligently local” (Quelch and Jocz 2012, p. 18). Perhaps the most intelligently local application is QR Codes. They are the mechanism to connect intensely local and physical spaces to just in time digitized information. In this way, new connotations and associations can be hooked from digital environments and into a precise physical location.

Geosocial networking logs the paradox of social media. While it is possible to contact and build relationships with users around the world, the bulk of ‘friends’ on Facebook are located within 50 km of a person’s geographical location. Similarly, mobile phones can connect users to anyone with another mobile phone. Yet address books are filled with those in close spatial proximity. In other words, the platforms and applications that have the potential to reach every city and nation on the planet are deployed to communicate and share in local mode. Therefore with the deterritorialization and disintermediation possible through the web and social media, it is remarkable how often social networking is actually geosocial networking: mixing with people within a restricted geographical area.

Geosocial networking is a subfield of social networking, using the geographical features of mobile devices called global positioning systems (GPS). A phone, mobile tablet or computer recognizes a user’s location and is able to situate a personal digital object in real space and time. Geographical applications include geocoding and geotagging. The goal of these processes is to ensure that social media users can share their location with others. The means by which a location can be determined is via the internet provider being deployed, the email address being used or self-disclosure, where users inform Facebook of a geographical location. Mobile phone tracking can reveal this information automatically. The combination of wireless delivery and geographical positioning software navigation combines to create an accessible and useful combination of technology, mobility and geography. Such applications as Google Maps and Google Earth offer great detail about cities. These relationships matter in the history of the computer. As Vassilis Kostakos confirmed, “the relationship between computers and space is a topic that has persisted throughout the various advances in computer science (Kostakos 2010)”. Creating a positive and productive relationship between

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<sup>2</sup> They state that, “Supposedly, the ability to make new friends and connect to people anywhere, regardless of their physical location, is one of the appeals of social media and social networking. However, one study found that half of Facebook friends are in the same metropolitan area; for teenage users, as many as 90 % of friends are in the same area ... People use Facebook more to solidify existing or geographically near relationships than to initiate or continue geographically distant ones,” (Quelch and Jocz 2012, p. 105).



physical and digital spaces remains a challenge, but the mobile phone and QR Codes are the conduit for its negotiation.

The mobile phone is an odd object: personal, portable, customized by sound and vision through ring tones and wallpaper, individualized and creating a huge dependency on it from its owner. With the GPS chip in smartphones, location-based applications can suddenly search for data derived from their location. Such applications and functions like QR Codes allow this information to be directed—narrowcasted—to a particular website rather than the roulette wheel of Google.

Geosocial networking is not merely a digital tagging of people and locations. When a series of geocoded or geotagged places is created, then web maps are built. Therefore, interventions can be enacted in the memory maps of users and their meaning system anchored to a place. Geosocial applications use these webmaps with the goal of logging group activity in a place or around an event. There are many consequences of these applications. There are security issues, so that if a person logs their position, then others become aware of that location (Jagtap et al. 2011). For example in February 2010, a site called Please Rob Me was launched. Please Rob Me sourced data from Foursquare check-ins that were pushed to Twitter. The intention of Please Rob Me was to show the cost of releasing too much information. One clear cost of geosocial networking is privacy (Carbunar et al. 2012).

Geosocial networking allows groups to coordinate their actions, so flash mobs, riots and protests can be organized. There are modelling studies that explore the correlations between ‘new’ and ‘historic’ check-ins, or how users negotiate their environment to discover new places or return to the familiar (Gao et al. 2012). Examples of geosocial networking services include Yelp, Gowalla, Facebook Places, Groupon<sup>3</sup> and FourSquare.<sup>4</sup> Yelp enables a local search of the web with attention to particular cities. Gowalla is a location-based social network that enables users to check into ‘spots’ or log ‘trips’ in a local community. Facebook Places arrived quite late in the social network’s development, in 2010. Users checked in via mobile devices. Groupon is a group coupon that offers deals from local companies. Women in particular are the market for Groupon, with many ‘deals’ for health, fashion, beauty, fitness and food. FourSquare is the largest geosocial networking site. It was based on the success and expansion of smart phones with global positioning systems (West 2005). Users ‘check in’ via an application resident on the device. This ‘check in’ released points and badges for the user. Tiers of achievement on the basis of these locations are achieved, including becoming the ‘Mayor’ of a FourSquare location. The advantages of geosocial networking are that deterritorialized social networking can become specialized so that local users can share their interests in real space and time. But there are also major uses for local businesses (Evans 2011). The great strength of geosocial networking is that even when we do not know where we are, the smart

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<sup>3</sup> Groupon, <http://www.groupon.com/>.

<sup>4</sup> FourSquare, <https://foursquare.com/>.

phone or tablet does, and enables the discovery of geographically relevant information and services. In any location, FourSquare can be opened with listings (and comments, reviews and photographs) of tourist sites and businesses. Basically social networking + localism = geosocial networking. A major value of geosocial networking is commercialization. While social networking builds personal relationships, geosocial networking constructs relationships between consumers and businesses. Significantly, very few businesses throughout the world have instigated a consolidated, reflexive and connected geosocial marketing strategy. For areas that are facing economic uncertainty, these strategies are important. While there may be challenges with infrastructure and a lack of money for marketing, these free or freemium services can source consumers to businesses.

QR Codes occupy the space between social and geosocial networking, reintermediation and disintermediation. They can provide hyper-local information, connecting the physical location with just-in-time digital data. So a walker can scan a code for a restaurant or shop and discover opening hours, ingredients, sourcing information or reviews. The local is linked with the digital. However the QR Code can also be used the other way. A reader can be flicking through print-based publicity materials and discover digital information by scanning the code. While walking, door hangers can be observed and scanned. Therefore general analogue enquiries can be focused and localized through digitization. Basically QR Codes are the glue that can tether the analogue and digital.

As discussed earlier in this book, the key challenge with QR Codes is that they currently remain an application without a purpose. They provide web-enabled information in an analogue location or from print-based sources. The question is, what action is enabled, encouraged and generated through scanning the code? A new use is emerging that occupies physical space via the print media but enables an action—a purchase—via e-commerce. This is a key moment of development. The company creating these advertisements is Point and Pay (<http://www.pointandpay.com.au/>) and they describe themselves as a m-commerce enterprise. Moving from electronic commerce (social networking) through to mobile commerce (geosocial networking), Point and Pay provides the software development to not only embed QR Codes into print-based advertising, but to enable point-of-reading sales. Their slogan—“Making Media Transactional”—creates a direct purchasing method from advertising. An example of disintermediation, Point and Pay (m-commerce) removes wholesalers and retailers from the supply chain, with the QR Codes becoming the method to link product and consumers (Krotz 2012). Therefore, impulse purchases increase, with the mobile phone-enabled QR Codes acting as the conduit between geosocially-located consumers and goods, and the digitized connection between them. The type of goods where this strategy is operating includes ticketing, fitness and sporting equipment, technology purchases and alcohol. The next key strategy is to enhance the quality of advertising design in print-based publications so that the QR Codes and their attendant m-commerce strategy are embedded and integrated into the overall branding agenda.

Recognizing the key spaces and opportunities between social and geosocial networking, QR Codes are revealing two key advantages. Firstly, they can direct data to an individual user in a specific location via a smart phone. Oral histories can explain an historic location. Menu information can be provided to a prospective restaurant customer. Libraries and librarians can be linked to mobile users (Hoy 2011). Therefore, digital information can accompany an analogue walk, narrowcasted through QR Codes. But secondly, reading analogue brochures, advertisements, newspapers and magazines can result in a direct purchase from the print-based materials. Therefore these two uses deploy the advantages of deterritorialization and disintermediation, while recognizing the benefits and specificity of geography and location. Certainly there are issues, challenges and problems as social networking is absorbed into geosocial networking. Geosocial networking is part of the long term movement to transform the internet and web from a freely available public service into an individualized, customized, oversharing, business-led, shopping-enabled, e-commerce hub. The gift of the internet was deterritorialization. People could and can communicate from around the world. Citizens with disabilities can create new opportunities and communication options via a life on the screen. Racism and sexism can be questioned and managed in new ways as physical attributes are disconnected from a textual identity. Currently, geosocial networking is creating location-aware applications so that residents in a particular place can receive discounts, find their friends in a restaurant, or check-into a place and become a FourSquare mayor, a title without purpose, authority or status (or rationale). Therefore, one way to commodify the internet and world wide web is to align place-specific information to it. But there are alternative ways to see this transformation. Geosocial networking can provide “the location history of individuals” (Doytsher et al. 2012). This can be studied in terms of “life patterns” and “time patterns.” This is a mobile, accelerated history,<sup>5</sup> jammed with comments, photographs and check-ins that can provide a powerful array of data, enlivened through unobtrusive research methods,<sup>6</sup> that reveals networks of relationships and lived engagements within an environment.

Social media are fragmented media. They often create dynamic clusters, collectives and subcultures. The online future is perched somewhere between hyper-individual oversharing and global retweeting. Perhaps a less corporate shared localism is a better option, using the web to amplify social relationships within a

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<sup>5</sup> We log the influence of Steve Redhead’s MANC project here: Mobile, Accelerated, Non Postmodern Culture. Please refer to <http://www.steveredhead.com>.

<sup>6</sup> While unobtrusive research methods—also termed non reactive research methods—are often very subtle, Sandro Bauer, Anastasios Noulas, Diarmuid O Seaghdha, Stephen Clark and Cecilia Mascolo described this process as “mining mobility data associated with LBSNs,” from “Talking Places: modelling and analysing linguistic content on Foursquare,” from IEEE International Conference on Social Computing, 2012, p. 1. The richness of the data from location based social networks not only requires subtle methods to interpret them, but also ethical considerations in the use of this data set. An oral history interview would not be ‘mined’ of content. Therefore, using FourSquare checkins requires careful theorization of research methods.

particular space, place and community. QR Codes can service both these functions. They can provide locational information about art, libraries, education and history. Innovative uses are emerging. For example, a QR-coded periodic table enables mobile learning (Bonifacio 2012). There are also tentative, if under-designed, QR-facilitated m-commerce opportunities for local businesses. The positivity of geosocial networking in urban environments is that mobile platforms can transform the relationship with the analogue environment, creating a walking and walkable city. Considering all the often desperate policies for urban regeneration, city transportation and deserted downtowns, using the capacity of QR Codes to enliven dead or dying spaces and places is an easy and free initiative.

Much of the slow food movement supports buying and consuming local produce. Geosocial networking enables this imperative. Ironically digital applications may provide a great boost to the next stage of the Slow movement. Slow Food 2.0 will mobilize the capacity of QR Codes and geosocial networking by creating new understandings of the local, the rural and the regional.<sup>7</sup> But QR Codes also provide information about a city. Through linking physical location with web-based information (Winter 2011), QR Codes provide opportunities to invest in our cities and provide our downtowns with strategies to add interest and value to their streets, shops and public art. They then become walkable and more sustainable. Digitization enables a richer analogue experience. This is the creation of a digital urban infrastructure that can overlay, manage and hopefully correct analogue challenges, weaknesses and inconsistencies. Through geosocial networking, a first moment may emerge where digitization can reinvest local places with meaning, and return history to cities.

Place—location—remains important to people. This creates a paradox. Workers are expected to move anywhere and communicate with anyone in the world. The combination of a global growth in mobile communication and the domestication of hardware and software mean that understandings of both time and place are transforming (Green and Haddon 2009). Yet a greater point needs to be explored. The strength of these mobilities is still being developed. Can geosocial networking be used to reinvest neglected places with meaning? As John Quelch and Katherine Jocz realized, “City planners are concerned with the ‘legibility’ of places—that is, people’s ability to comprehend public places and to form mental maps that help steer them through these spaces” (Quelch and Jocz 2012, pp. 33–34). One way to render locations legible is to use the resources of geosocial networking to offer digital stories of physical locations. Canada’s *murmur* project provides many examples of this strategy.<sup>8</sup> If digital media are tethered to the landscape via software, hardware or applications, then the built environment can use digitization to return history to specific places. Geosocial networking maintains particular

<sup>7</sup> The project to reconfigure the notion of the rural is an important one. Please refer to (Marsden 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Murmur, <http://murmurtoronto.ca/>, Ryan C (2006) Listen to the [Murmur]. Surface and Symbol 18(5). <http://web.archive.org/web/20060806051832/>, [http://www.scarborougharts.com/sac/surface\\_symbol/july06/july06\\_murmur.html](http://www.scarborougharts.com/sac/surface_symbol/july06/july06_murmur.html).

characteristics: portability, networked, deployment of global positioning systems and location conscious computing devices, and information and media literate individuals who add content and context to a place. Cities were designed to keep the poor from the rich and restrict the rights of some citizens to full participation in work, leisure, education and health services. But by retrofitting analogue cities, to provide information about the lived experience of our environments, the injustices of the 19th and 20th century may not be healed, but at least can be addressed. A desire for social change may be enabled, not through shopping, but thinking. Not driving, but clicking while walking.

Now that we have discussed the use of social media in building connections and relationships beyond geographical limitations and boundaries, and the re-emergence of geography and location through geosocial networking, we will now return the discussion of space, time and media to the marketing and promotion of wine. Wine media is an expansive but under-written field. Yet the role of QR Codes in the future marketing and promotion of wine is an important area to consider. It will also provide the foundation for a wider discussion of the use of QR Codes in the broader primary industries, particular food production and consumption. This book is a first key contribution to this study. After placing QR Codes into this new history of social networking and geosocial networking, which emerged after their invention, we now enfold wine, wine media and regional development back into this history.

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## **Part III**

# **Integrating Wine Media**

## Chapter 7

# QR Codes and Wine Media

*Wine is a tease: it makes you want to talk about it and then a lot of what you say is nonsense ... That is one reason why some wine-talk still aims not to describe tastes and odours but metaphorically to evoke the pleasure they give.*

Shapin (2012)

QR Codes are a good fit for almost any product, but for wine they have a particular benefit. When buying a bottle of wine, many consumers do not simply buy the product on the shelf for its particular use; they buy its *heritage*. Importantly, considering the arguments made in our last sections about matching the correct platform with the appropriate information and the precise audience, these ‘customers’ or ‘people’ who purchase wine must be carefully located and analyzed. In the United States it is more often a woman. Indeed, women make 55.4 % of wine purchases in that country.<sup>1</sup> But the information used to make these decisions about wine is complex. The customer is often interested not only in the wine’s *future*, whether they will want to enjoy drinking it that evening or the coming weekend, but in its *past*—the variety of grapes, the vineyard, the winemaker and winery and the process the wine underwent before it arrived in front of the consumer. Most of all, they want to know they are getting value for money, that they are purchasing a wine they can enjoy at home and confidently serve to friends. Few products, and even fewer food products, spark this kind of interest—and concern—in a consumer.

Placing all this information in printed form accompanying, or on the label of, a bottle of wine is an impossible task. Wine bottle labels are valuable spaces. There is a particular wine bottle real estate. Indeed, there is a wine bottle geography. There are spaces on the bottle that align with spaces in the environment. Many wine purchases are impulse buys. Therefore, it is remarkable how often the spatial iconography used on the labels is simplistic and frequently naive.

This iconography summons English pastoral myths. This is seemingly appropriate because of the naming of ‘Sussex Vale’ (Fig. 7.1). But it is a Western Australian wine, so summoning this mode of Englishness offers odd messages and meanings. The question is if this label offers a sharply branded location and

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<sup>1</sup> Lifestyle release: Fascinating facts about California wine, *Wine Institute*, <http://www.wineinstitute.org/resources/lifestyleandtravel/article501>.



**Fig. 7.1** Sussex Vale wine label: complex geography (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



expresses the distinctiveness of the wine and prospective drinking experience. Again, a QR Code could offer a clarification on region and identity.<sup>2</sup>

An example of this strategy is deployed by Devil's Lair (Fig. 7.2). The brand and location are clear. There is no confluence or confusion between geography and branding. A QR Code solidifies this link (Fig. 7.3). The QR Code enables a wider branding strategy, linking to Devil's Lair's website and enabling 'membership'. This connection allows to company to gather email addresses to announce both events and new products.

Innovations in packaging can also be highlighted. Mad Fish is a winery that integrates an array of perspectives and narratives. With a front label design inspired by Maxine Fumagalli, Noongar Elder, artist and writer, the packaging is not only respectful of indigenous land, but also of sustainability (Fig. 7.4). The bottle is lighter and therefore more caring of the environment. The QR Code is part of a fascinating and fresh strategy to combine old and new, tradition and innovation, wine and technology (Fig. 7.5).

Ensuring a clarity of message and an integration of ideas is crucial. Iconography matters because taste is almost impossible to capture in language. This creates both a danger and challenge: without precision in language, ambiguity and confusion

<sup>2</sup> There are many studies of the difficulties in developing regional tourism and development through wine, particularly in geographically dispersed environments like Australia, Canada, South Africa, and the United States. A sample of these studies include Beames (2003), Bruwer (2003), Deneault (2002) and Williams and Kelly (2001).

**Fig. 7.2** Devil's Lair and Margaret river (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



results. Influential and considered language and marketing can make a difference, but the capacity to describe a taste is difficult. There is an intriguing parallel between the descriptions deployed on perfume cards and wine bottles<sup>3</sup> (Saunders 2004a). There is a reason.

Our sense of sight is our most developed sense and literacy. That means, what we see has a much more precise and exact translation into words. Often forgotten is that reading and writing are part of a visual literacy. As shown earlier in this book, there is an empire of the senses (Howes 2005), and our vision is the most dominant. Sonic, taste, touch and olfactory literacies are underdeveloped. It is particularly difficult to place into words the taste of food or wine, or the smell of perfume. Therefore, particularly in the case of wine and perfume—products that are often excessively priced and not required in either daily life or for survival—the language used to describe them frequently enters both metaphor and hyperbole. There is no reason to buy perfume or wine. They are by the nature conspicuous consumption and—as Veblen realized when he coined this phrase over a century ago—the purchase of such products requires a performance of waste, that a group

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<sup>3</sup> A fascinating study of this language is Saunders (2004a).

**Fig. 7.3** Mapping place  
(Photograph by Tara  
Brabazon)



or individual has so much money that they can waste it on goods that are not necessary (Veblen 2005). Therefore, wine labels must summon a life of extravagance and deploy language that disconnects from daily life, moves beyond the basic vocabulary to describe taste—salty, sweet, bitter and tart<sup>4</sup>—and activate an experiential journey away from the tongue, and towards visual experiences of landscape, location and produce.

Wine labels are iconographic (Caldewey and House 2003). They add art to the science of wine. Most importantly they must defamiliarize the ordinary experience of eating and drinking, providing a narrative and story to taste. The wine label and bottle are much more than packaging. They anchor the context of the grapes and winemakers into the experience of drinking the product. They have a history and wine labels do change. The rights of consumers are now represented through legal requirements, but it is important that the sense of taste that is conveyed through wine is first introduced through the eyes. We read words and images to frame the impact of the wine about to be drunk. Tanya Scholes stated that, ‘besides the actual taste of the wine, the wine label is the most important variable in the success of a wine as it provides an upfront sensory stimulus prior to its actual enjoyment’ (Scholes 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Umami may increasingly be added to this list.

**Fig. 7.4** Mad fish and a respect for indigenous tradition (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



That is why wine labels do contain a distinctive language (Saunders 2004b). They contain both required and non-required elements through law (Reynolds 2011). This is where QR Codes are incredibly useful, and where other digital media such as Facebook, Twitter, Yelp, Groupon and Foursquare can provide valuable support. Importantly, QR Codes and social media are not only useful at the point of sale. There are many types of wine media which can, and should, be used to target the wine purchaser—or to create *new* wine purchasers. The reason for QR Codes' presence and intervention in wine media is clear. As Schamel and Anderson realize, 'Many consumers, especially when they are new and inexperienced, are looking for guidance before purchasing wines. Often they are unsure about the quality of a wine they intend to purchase and turn to the published ratings of wine experts for guidance' (Schamel and Anderson 2003a). These include wine industry trade journals, food and wine magazines, lifestyle magazines including fashion and arts regional magazines, food and wine sections of newspapers, television programmes on wine and food, tourism programmes and business journals. It is important to recognize that all of the print outlets have their sister websites and blogs, or equivalent outlets, on the Internet. In many, if not most, cases, the digital versions can be more useful to the marketer than the print versions, and it is equally important to remember that there is an entire digital-only world of wine online that has never, and will never, appear printed on paper.

**Fig. 7.5** Tradition and technology (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



Thus, the opportunities for promoting wine and wine regions are great when using QR Codes in conjunction with Point of Sale (POS) and traditional print and broadcast media, or when using the many forms of digitized social media. The time is right for this digital differentiation. An early study of the period 1992–2000 found that in the Australian and New Zealand wine industry, ‘regional reputations have become increasingly differentiated through time’, with ‘cool-climate regions...becoming increasingly preferred over other regions in Australia’ (Schamel and Anderson 2003b). While this study showed that the regional differentiation was higher in Australia and New Zealand than other international industries, there was a legal rationale for this difference. In 1993, Australia passed legislation to permit registration of ‘geographical indicators’ such as regions (Schamel and Anderson 2003c). The reason for the introduction of this law was so that Australia could fulfil the requirements of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations with the European Union.<sup>5</sup> From these negotiations in the early 1990s, by the Council Regulation (EC)

<sup>5</sup> Australian-European Commission Ministerial Consultations, February 23, 1994, Exhibit EC26, [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2004/may/tradoc\\_117126.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2004/may/tradoc_117126.pdf).

No 510/2006 from March 2006,<sup>6</sup> the European Union enforced a three tier strategy to create:

1. Protected designation of origin (PDO);
2. Protected geographical indication (PGI); and
3. Traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG).

Such agreements aimed to protect and develop the regionality of food and affirm an ‘authenticity’ for consumers buying products.<sup>7</sup> The problem was and is that there was an assumption that non-European goods were not ‘authentic’ and ‘inferior’ to the European goods.<sup>8</sup> To provide one example of the consequences of these agreements, Houghton’s White Burgundy, first vintaged in 1937, had to change its name because ‘Burgundy’ was a PGI. Therefore, the product was renamed White Classic. The question remains: is Burgundy more than a region in France, but also refers to a style of wine making?

From this legal basis, the importance of regional marketing—and marketing of regions—is clear. The legal restrictions on the use of ‘champagne’ and ‘burgundy’, to name two examples, have expanded into the food industry, where ‘protection’ of particular regional foods has emerged. Stilton cheese<sup>9</sup> and Cornish pasties<sup>10</sup> are two examples. However, such policies and laws must favour older nations and regions. Is Welsh Lamb better than New Zealand lamb? Is there ‘something’ in the Welsh countryside, grass and air, that produces better meat?<sup>11</sup> The longer the history, the more intricate and interesting the story. The ‘story’ of Stilton or Cheddar cheese is much more interesting than King Island cream. However, this ‘protection’ of particular places and regions has some disturbing colonial overtones.

The nature of colonization is that there is an imposition of language, religion, traditions and history, to the detriment, loss and displacement of indigenous languages, religions, traditions and history. There is also a marginalization of the development of independent and distinct settler histories. Therefore, it is important to note the neocolonial imperative of the EU’s initiative. To claim particular words and styles and tether them to a region now, after indigenous practices and

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<sup>6</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 of 20 March 2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs, March 20, 2006, [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/internal\\_market/businesses/intellectual\\_property/l66044\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/internal_market/businesses/intellectual_property/l66044_en.htm).

<sup>7</sup> An outstanding thesis on this topic is Oskari Rovamo’s *Monopolising Names?* Faculty of Law, Helsinki University, 2006, <http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/julkaisut/oik/julki/pg/rovamo/monopoli.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Such legislation did provide an opportunity for non-European markets to unify into a more overarching strategy, Wine Australia, <http://www.wineaustralia.com/en/Production%20and%20Exporting.aspx>.

<sup>9</sup> Stilton Cheese, <http://www.stiltoncheese.co.uk>.

<sup>10</sup> Cornish Pasty, <http://www.cornishpastyco.com>.

<sup>11</sup> The controversies and consequences of such assumptions are explored in *Do Geographical Indications promote sustainable rural development?* Masters of Natural Resource Management and Ecological Engineering thesis, Lincoln and BOKU Universities, 2007, [http://researcharchive.lincoln.ac.nz/dspace/bitstream/10182/585/1/williams\\_mnrmeec.pdf](http://researcharchive.lincoln.ac.nz/dspace/bitstream/10182/585/1/williams_mnrmeec.pdf).



behaviours have been marginalized and ridiculed for two centuries, is cheeky at best and disgraceful at worst. It is both brutal and unnecessary to draw an historical line and to state that when ‘we’ introduced a language and behaviour in the nineteenth century that was acceptable in the interests of empire; but now that ‘we’ no longer hold that power, the former colonized nations must ‘invent’ their own practices after 200 years of injustice. Therefore, with protected areas, labels, regions and trademarks in place in the former imperial nations—reinforced by the economic clout of the EU and the common market that preceded it—new strategies must be found for these ‘new’ nations and regions.

New nations and regions can use new media to tell their old stories. While the old colonial powers use laws and trade restrictions, it is possible for former colonized nations and economies to deploy the principles of free trade and cut through legal restrictions of old Europe with new stories, narratives and marketing methods. QR Codes offer new spaces and strategies to share these innovative narratives. The challenge is to find a space to intervene in taken-for-granted patterns in walking, shopping, thinking and visiting.

Currently 70 % of the US shoppers refer to product reviews before purchase, and 79 % say they use smartphones to help with shopping (Lecinski 2012). Consumers are increasingly using Internet searches to determine their purchasing choices *before* setting foot in a retail outlet. They are *pre-shopping*.<sup>12</sup> The growth of online grocery shopping, often with a virtual wine cellar attached, is part of this movement. If consumers are pre-shopping, then wine makers and retailers must also be *pre-selling*, by establishing a relationship with them at the *beginning* of their search, not just at the point of sale end. QR Codes can be one way of accomplishing this relationship through information.

There are many categories of wine media. All are useful to the industry and can deploy QR Codes in new ways. We refer to *external media* as those media that are beyond the winery’s, or wine region association’s direct control. They include Point of Sale (POS) locations (although the winery will produce the POS *material*), print media, broadcast media, film and World Wide Web sites and applications (other than a winery’s own web locations).

## 7.1 Point of Sale

The wine purchaser can be reached at two primary times: the moment of purchase decision, and at *any time* prior to that decision. Similarly, there are two locations: the retail outlet and *everywhere else*. Point of Sale (POS) is the most essential immediate location. Twenty-seven percent of respondents in a study reported that they consistently shopped in the one store, while another 28 % reported shopping ‘in one primary chain’. This would indicate the importance of targeting retailers as much or more than consumers (Thach 2008). Yet, such a strategy is complex. Shelf space is a

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<sup>12</sup> Lecinski, p. 17.

scarce commodity. Wineries and distributors fight for, and often purchase, their bit of space on the shelves of a wine shop or supermarket. Simply gaining shelf space is a victory. Having a wine appear at eye level is even sweeter. There is seldom, if ever, room for literature as well. The solution then is to place any desired information on the bottle, either on the back label or on a neck hanger. Back label space is limited, particularly after including the required governmental text. Neck hangers can be cumbersome and at additional cost, while offering minimal extra space for text. The POS solution is a QR Code, sometimes on the front label but more often on the back. A swathe of specifically targeted digital information can be concentrated in a small analogue space on a wine bottle.

With all POS materials, the QR Code should *never* interfere with the primary purpose of the materials: to visually convince the customer—without using *any* technology—to buy a product. Traditionally, POS materials offer discounted prices, ratings and recommendations or other information, which marks the product as special. A QR Code can support this, but not replace it. As with all uses of the codes, QR Codes should be a convenience for the smartphone user, but not an *inconvenience* for the non-phone user.

Scanning a QR Code while in a retail store is an impulsive act, an act of the moment. The customer wants something, which he (or more likely she) hopes can be obtained by scanning the code, or *sees* a reason (which at its best the winery has written as text next to the code) why it would benefit her to scan the code. As the scan is likely impulsive, the information found must meet the impulse by triggering a feeling in the person that has scanned the code. Give them a financial reason to feel good, such as a coupon or voucher. They would not have scanned the code if they had not already felt a desire to buy the wine, so provide a justification that confirms that desire by showing them positive reviews from ‘experts’. Promise them a new experience by showing them a short video that promises a unique regional taste. Assure them that their friends will be impressed, because they have found a unique, small-lot wine, which they may not have another opportunity to purchase. Explain food pairing and cooking options via a YouTube video.

One of the most common uses of barcode scanning is for price comparison. A quick scan of a product’s barcode (the standard UPC barcode, not a QR Code) can lead a potential customer to websites that will tell them where else they can buy that wine and more particularly, where they can buy it more cheaply. This information is of value to the consumer, but not to the retailer or wine maker. They do not want to help a customer buy a wine cheaper at some other location. Give the consumer a QR Code (on a label, on a neck hanger, on a shelf talker) so that they may scan it and go directly to a website with information in control of the producer.

A study of 203 primarily California-based wine consumers, part of a joint effort between 10 global universities (for a total of 2,757 surveys), showed the primary factor for the purchase of a particular wine in a retail store was that they had tasted the wine before (54 %). This was followed by the wine being recommended by a friend or someone at the store (33 %), and the third most important factor was the variety of the wine itself (18 %). Origin and brand (both 9 %) were in fourth and fifth place. Back/front label information and shelf information were only in



9, 10 and 11th place (although 47 % did say that they had read the back label before purchasing the wine) (Thach 2008). Price was not included in the survey as other studies had already found that price was a major factor. Unpublished research into wine shoppers in Australia found that ‘the average time in front of a shelf in a retail outlet was less than a minute,’ with a total browsing time in the store about 4 min. A minority of ‘involved’ shoppers spent up to 15 min.<sup>13</sup> This is an extraordinary finding. Accelerated culture—literally speed shopping—is integral to the purchasing of wine. It is an impulsive decision. Therefore, the only information that may be provided to the consumer must be delivered at speed, in the minute before a decision and purchase is executed.

There are alternative—and slower—modes of wine consumption. For example Mitchell and Hall explored the impact of wine clubs and wine cellars (Mitchell and Hall 2001). However, such analogue experiences remain special and unusual: more tourism than shopping. The key moment of purchase is quick and falls back to the familiar. The issue is whether a quick code and a quick scan can add value, information and momentum for a change to this process.

## 7.2 Shelf Talkers/Shelf Tags

Shelf talkers provide an obvious space for a QR Code. Include a QR Code link to very brief product information, to a short (30–60 s) video, or to an ‘Ask the Winery’ phone number (if the winery’s staff allows). Even better, if allowed by local liquor laws, automatically download a discount coupon to the person’s phone, which they can then show to the store salesperson. Do not use the entire shelf talker space for a QR Code; always make sure that immediately useful information is provided to those who do not have the ability or desire to scan the code. They will *always* be in the majority.

## 7.3 Case Cards

Case cards give wine producers more space than a shelf talker, so it is easy to include QR Codes. With the additional space, it is much easier to provide more information on *why* someone should scan the code, but more importantly, also more space to convince them on the spot to buy the product without scanning the code. Again, do not forget that the QR Code is secondary to the printed message. Always.

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<sup>13</sup> EBI Ehrenberg-Bass Institute for Marketing Science (2007), “Understanding wine shoppers’ purchase decision process and behaviour in store”, unpublished research report as referred to in “How does shelf information influence consumers’ wine choice?” Simone Mueller, Larry Lockshin, Jordan Louviere, Leigh Francis, Patricia Osidacz Wine Marketing Group, *Ehrenberg-Bass Institute for Marketing Science*, University of South Australia.

## 7.4 Print Media

Print publications offer producers and wine makers the opportunity to reach a potential customer *prior* to a purchase decision point. People read print publications when they have the time to peruse them and give their contents some thought. If they have *that* time, then they likely have the time to reach for their smartphone and scan a QR Code should something they read arouse their curiosity enough to seek out supplemental or more timely information. A quick scan can lead them to the specific information they want, or to a menu of options, which also offers additional information.

## 7.5 Magazines and Newspapers

Print publications can be wine-specific, general interest or somewhere in-between. Target publications include wine industry journals, wine magazines, food magazines, food and wine magazines, cooking magazines, lifestyle magazines, regional magazines, tourism magazines (particularly those provided in hotels), general interest magazines and in-flight magazines. Another area, often overlooked, is wine newsletters and even local wine interest group newsletters not connected with a specific winery. Another often underestimated source of information and publicity are wine club newsletters. For all of these publications, an advertisement or (press release-inspired) article would include a QR Code. Keep in mind that for print publications, as for television or blogs, the initial target is not the ultimate recipient of the information (the consumer), but the gatekeeper: the journalist, editor, blogger or publisher who will make the decision whether or not to disseminate your information to his or her audience.

## 7.6 Books

Books are long-term marketing outlets, but it is useful to contact publishers that specialize in cookbooks, food and wine books and travel books that cover the relevant region. It is also possible to publish a small book, booklet or brochure on the winery or wine region, to be provided free through the publisher when someone buys a tourist guidebook to the area. The booklet would naturally include a number of QR Codes.

## 7.7 Tourist Guidebooks and Maps

Send information about a winery/association to any publisher or author of guidebooks and maps that covers the geographic area of the winery or association. Contact them first to learn their publishing schedule—particularly their updating of

current titles. Make sure that several QR Codes of an appropriate format for their publication are included. Because the books or maps may be in service for a long period of time, be sure that the QR Codes link to URLs, which can always be redirected to new information whenever determined to be necessary.

## 7.8 Broadcast Media

As QR Codes are by their nature visual, the only mass broadcast medium that is appropriate for them is television. This can include product placement in general interest programming but much more often in programs on wine, food and tourism. Short marketing video segments can be provided by a winery or winery association to television stations, as well as B-Rolls for inclusion in news stories and features on wine and wineries.

Because of the ever-changing images on a television screen, there are few opportunities to make use of QR Codes, but there are some. For example, a several-minute segment on a particular wine, winery or wine region can have a small bit of text and a QR Code at the bottom of the screen. The code and text can appear during the entire length of the segment. With proper enticement ('Scan now to win' or 'Scan this for immediate savings,') television viewers have sufficient time to grab their smartphone and scan the code. Always make sure that there is also a simple URL that can be spoken (several times) and printed in text on the screen, in addition to the QR Code. Also, it is important to be proactive and show programmers the use of QR Codes in and for wine. One way to increase the scale and scope of usage of QR Codes in the industry is to be an advocate for them and to encourage programming to explain their use.

## 7.9 Film

On October 24, 2004 the movie *Sideways* was released in the United States. The film's main character, Miles, was a Pinot Noir fanatic and spent the entire movie praising that grape variety as he visited wineries in Southern California's Santa Barbara County. Between the day the movie was first released and July 2 of the following year, sales of Pinot Noir in U.S. supermarkets increased 18 % over the same period a year earlier.<sup>14</sup> Although Pinot Noir sales had already been on the upswing prior to the movie's release, the dramatic rise in that increase left little doubt that the movie had been the cause of much of the 18 % increase. The relatively low budget film (estimated cost US\$17 million dollars) grossed US\$109

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<sup>14</sup> "California Pinot Noir", *Wine Institute*, undated, <http://www.wineinstitute.org/resources/winefactsheets/article95>.

million worldwide (\$71 million U.S.).<sup>15</sup> Not only did sales of Pinot Noir increase but so did visits to the Santa Barbara wine country. The Santa Barbara Conference and Visitors Bureau and Film Commission stated that as a direct result of the movie's popularity (Bone 2005), 'Today the bureau offers a free downloadable map that leads tourists to every key location in the movie'.<sup>16</sup>

There were no QR Codes involved with the film (QR Codes were not even in use in the United States at that time), but the film's success—and particularly Pinot Noir's success—gives an indication of the potential power of movies to promote wine. The capacity to incorporate a QR Code on a film poster offers strong cross-industry support and marketing. Wine tourism has equally great potential for increase due to film, thanks to the travel phenomenon of 'setjetting': travelling to locations that appeared in films. An article in the journal *Annals of Tourism Research* stated that, on average, a location featured in a successful film could expect to see visitors increase by an average of 54 % over the next 4 years (Baker et al. 1998). The Santa Barbara organization forecasted a 15 % increase in tourism over the next 4 years for its region.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, providing timely information on an array of popular cultural publications can feed into this process. It may also increase its sustainability. Such a project holds important resonance for Aotearoa/New Zealand. The *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and the subsequent return to the Hobbits means that a remarkable exposure to the New Zealand landscape, technological expertise and creativity are reaching a vast international audience. The capacity to add value to this process is possible, creating horizontal links with other industries. This strategy will be discussed later in this book, with QR Codes as the enabling link.

## 7.10 Restaurant Menus/Wine Lists

The Thach research previously mentioned in this book indicated that prior tasting was the prime reason for selecting a wine in a restaurant. Pairing with food was the second. Third was to 'try something different', followed by suggestions made by another person at the table (fourth) or by the waiter (fifth). A way to enable these tasting options is for waiters to offer a taste of a wine. Intriguingly, selecting a particular region was inconsequential at eighth place (Thach 2008). Therefore, it is this final category that can develop, particularly through digital means. Thach's study was also a global survey. With occasional national exceptions, the study showed that overall the two most important influence factors were prior tasting experience and recommendations. Only in France and Italy was region a significant

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<sup>15</sup> The Numbers, 2005, <http://www.the-numbers.com/movies/2004/SWAYS.php>.

<sup>16</sup> Santa Barbara Conference and Visitors Bureau and Film Commission, Sideways the Map, [http://www.santabarbaraca.com/includes/media/docs/Sideways\\_Map-Apr10-web.pdf](http://www.santabarbaraca.com/includes/media/docs/Sideways_Map-Apr10-web.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> Sideways Case Study, Santa Barbara Conference and Visitors Bureau and Film Commission, undated.

factor (Thach 2008). This differentiation therefore feeds into and is reinforced by European laws that protect such place branding. But interventions are possible.

Knowledgeable restaurateurs are now including QR Codes on their food menus (for source and nutritional information) and on their wine lists (for reviews, recommended food pairings and winemaker interviews). Wineries can help restaurant and bar managers by providing digital QR Code images that they can use for this purpose. Some restaurants are also starting to offer patrons *digital* menus, for example on an iPad. On a tablet a customer who can simply touch the screen will not need to see a QR Code to link to a winery website, but the winery can provide the restaurant with the URL that a QR Code would link to. This may be a gimmick at this early stage, but restaurant dining is performative and aspirational. Therefore, a digital intervention in the selection of wines from the list at this point may be highly valuable and useful. Consumers cannot return to their customary favourites as they are probably not on the list and will try something new.

## 7.11 The Web

Although QR Codes are connected to the digital, as we have mentioned above, they have limited use on a computer screen such as a restaurant's digital menu. The reason is that the key element of the World Wide Web, the factor that made it such a success, is the concept of the *hyperlink*, whereby simply 'clicking' on a link (a web address) immediately displays a web page elsewhere on the Internet. A QR Code is a *virtual* hyperlink, so it is (usually) redundant on a digital screen. However, QR Codes on a computer screen at work or home can be scanned with a smartphone and *saved*. It is the *saving* that is important.

What might someone want to save? Certainly something that saves them money, such as a discount coupon displayed on the phone's screen, which can be shown to a wine merchant or store clerk. Other information someone might wish to save on their phone for later use includes a winery's web address or visiting hours, or directions to the winery. It could also be a virtual tour of the winery, a talk by the winemaker, or a series of winemaker notes on the newest releases. We mentioned a map. It is very easy to link a QR Code to a map. Here is an example. Using Google Maps, go to <http://maps.google.com> and type in the address of a winery. When the map of the location appears, viewers will see a 'link' icon near the top left of the Google Maps page. Click on the link icon to see and copy it, then use that link as the target address when creating a QR Code.

## 7.12 Blogs

Blog journalism is an opportunity to get a message across and expose a QR Code. Obviously QR Codes on a personal or business blog are crucial, but there are benefits in reaching out to other bloggers who write about wine, food, lifestyle and

tourism in your area. Suggest to bloggers that they run an article/press release as is, or offer more information for a personalized tour of a winery or wine region.

## 7.13 Social Media

A study of consumer choice in international markets (Australia, the UK, China, Germany and Israel) indicated that the most important influence on consumer choice was having tasted the wine previously. In China only, this was in second place, slightly below brand name. The second major influence was ‘someone recommended it’ for Australia, the UK and Germany, with recommendation for fourth place for China and third place for Israel (Goodman et al. 2007). These results indicate the value of providing a wine experience prior to purchase decisions, and of the potential value of using social media to disseminate recommendations, either peer-to-peer or from expert to consumer.

The movements in social media with regard to deterritorialization, disintermediation and reintermediation are discussed elsewhere in this book, but it is useful to mention some of the key players to enable this movement. All of them support and encourage peer to peer discussion and information exchange. A study of visitors to the Finger Lakes wine region in New York State showed that 59 % used word-of-mouth to decide which wine region and wineries to visit (Liz Thach and Bruwer 2012). Social media can greatly assist this word-of-mouth dissemination.

Use Twitter to send short bursts of text and links (a tweet has a maximum of 140 characters) to those who follow a Twitter account. Twitter provides a valuable opportunity to conduct back and forth conversations with customers and potential customers. An innovative Twitter idea has come out of Sweden. @sweden is the Twitter address for Swedish citizens who tweet about their life in Sweden. Each week a different person becomes @sweden. As their website <http://www.curatorsofsweden.com> says,

This is @Sweden. Every week, someone in Sweden is @Sweden: sole ruler of the world’s most democratic Twitter account. For 7 days, he or she recommends things to do and places to see, sharing diverse opinions and ideas along the way. After that, someone else does the same—but differently. Follow all nine million of us. Welcome to Sweden.<sup>18</sup>

Although individual wineries could do something similar, perhaps alternating between various staff members, the concept would be ideal for a regional wine association. Each week a different winery could be @wineassociation. A QR Code on the regional website (and each member winery’s website) would automatically let people follow @wineassociation through their smartphone.

The most dominant social media application is Facebook. Linking to a business page brings a customer to all information they might need about a winery and its wines. Equally important, it gives them the opportunity to ‘like’ your Facebook

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<sup>18</sup> Curators of Sweden, <http://www.curatorsofsweden.com>.

business page and connects them with others who are also interested in a winery. The more customers who talk to each other, the greater the community of ‘fans’. Of course QR Codes can be displayed prominently throughout the Facebook site.

Google+ lets businesses create their own page and provide images (including QR Codes), text, video and audio information about a winery and its products. Of particular interest are Google+ Hangouts. With them, businesses can conduct real-time video conversations with their customers, with as many as 10 people online at the same time (and many others watching). During the video conversation, documents can be displayed from Google Docs and YouTube films so that everyone participating can view them simultaneously. A QR Code link lets people follow the video on their smartphone and, if they have a front-facing camera, lets them participate actively.

Pinterest is becoming increasingly important in social media because it is extraordinarily—remarkably—visual. It is a content sharing site that is, in effect, a digital pin up board. Users ‘pin’ images and videos to their board. Women dominate Pinterest and it is not surprising that key categories and topics are cooking, beauty and weddings. Innovative wine imagery and photographs would be ideal for Pinterest, particularly focussing on the label. But there are opportunities—through the label—to re-present the QR Code on it. This would naturalize the QR Code and increase awareness about it. There is no doubt that at the moment the wine industry is under-using Pinterest. All that is required is an account and innovative photographs and designs.<sup>19</sup> The re-pins will then commence. It is important to note that the artistic—and sometimes nonfunctional—QR Codes are emerging through Pinterest, with the square box becoming the foundation for innovative designs.<sup>20</sup>

Yelp, Foursquare and Groupon, as discussed earlier in this book, are geosocial networking applications. They are reliant on the GPS in mobile phones and tablet computers to locate the user’s platform and ‘check in’, providing information, user-generated content reviews and promotional information. The relationship between QR Codes and geosocial networking is complex. The key for QR Code usage is to ask what value the QRs add to the geosocial networking experience. Particularly, the shaping of producer-led information to consumers and the supplying of coupons are significant uses. There may be a more general—and difficult to track—use in terms of brand awareness. Photographs of QR Codes could be uploaded by users or the businesses themselves to provide an awareness of another website. But as argued here, it is easier to use a simple hyperlink for this function. The only caveat to this argument is that the QR Code is more visual and still unusual, so it may render this social media marketing distinctive in these early stages.

<sup>19</sup> A fine example is “Wine Bottle QR Code,” <http://pinterest.com/pin/241294492507209979/>.

<sup>20</sup> “QR Codes,” Pinterest, <http://pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=QR+codes>.

## 7.14 Internal Media

By *internal media*, we refer to media that are generated and directly disseminated by a winery or wine region association. These media include press releases, brochures, release sheets, winemaker notes, trade kits, direct mail, email newsletters, business cards and wine bottle labels. Internal media also include websites and other digital media materials.

## 7.15 Press Releases

Any press release sent out by a winery should have a QR Code leading to a contact person's information. This will place that person's name, phone and other information directly into the scanning smartphone's contact list, making it easy for a journalist or editor to have contact information at hand for future use. If a press release mentions the winery's use of a QR Code (for a video, perhaps), then that particular QR Code must also be on the release so that the press release recipient can see for himself or herself the winery information to which it links.

## 7.16 Direct Mail

Wineries send out regular newsletters to email lists of customers, suppliers, distributors, restaurants, buyers and other interested parties. Make sure that each newsletter (whether hard copy or digital) includes one or several QR Codes. Codes can let a customer automatically sign up for a free webinar, be reminded by text message when a new wine is released, receive a list of retail outlets in their area that carry your wines, be notified of your winery's next event in their area or join your 'smartphone friends of XXX winery' club.

## 7.17 Business Cards

QR Codes on business cards allow people to quickly download contact information onto a smartphone. Try to keep the QR Code as small as possible, but test it carefully to ensure that it is readable by a variety of smartphones.

## 7.18 Labels

Labels on a wine bottle are the prime location for placing QR Codes. They can be easily seen when holding the bottle, and can be scanned at point of sale, in the home or at a restaurant. Bottles are mobile. So are phones. The information to



**Fig. 7.6** Innovative modes of wine packaging  
(Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



which the codes link is a natural extension of the brief information presented on the bottle. Wineries report that the optimal size for a QR Code on a wine bottle label is between 0.5 and 0.8 inches, large enough to be easily scanned but small enough for the scan not to be distorted by the curvature of the bottle. There is an important corrective and limitation to note for the United States' wine market: the 'TTB' (Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau of the US Department of the Treasury), which approves all wine bottle labels and their text, states that 'Any information retrieved from 2D barcodes must be in compliance with all applicable advertising regulations'.<sup>21</sup> In other words, all information (text, video, audio) *linked to* through a QR Code on a wine bottle label or other collateral material must meet the same compliance standards as claims and information on the label itself.

It is also important to acknowledge the diversified packaging of the contemporary wine industry. Cylinders can encase not only a bottle of wine (or port), but also widen the space available for a QR Code. The limitations of the wine label are reduced. When the space encasing the wine increases, so does the opportunities or design innovation (Fig. 7.6).

<sup>21</sup> Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau of the *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, Application for and certification/exemption of label/bottle approval, OMB No. 1513-0020 (03/31/2012), <http://www.ttb.gov/forms/f510031.pdf>.

## 7.19 Front Label

Some wineries are placing QR Codes on their front labels. The codes can present a design challenge in this location, but the benefit is that potential customers can immediately see that a bottle on a shelf has a QR Code without needing to turn the bottle to see the back label.

## 7.20 Back Label

Most wineries using QR Codes on labels place them on the back. The code can provide in-depth information about the wine, its source vineyards, the winemaker, ageing, recommended foods and reviews. It can link directly to a webpage (through a URL that is redirectable at any time), or to a menu that lets a person choose the information that he or she wishes to see *at that very moment*—including discount coupons. A study on the influence of back label information indicated that ‘overall winery history, elaborate taste descriptions and food pairing’ provided the most valuable information to a group of 331 Australian wine drinkers (Mueller et al. 2010). Such information is difficult to place concisely on a label, but perfectly suited to be provided through the use of QR Codes. This information may be nationally or regionally specific, depending on the markets. An interesting use of back label QR Codes has been done by Twisted Oak Winery (<http://www.twistedoak.com>), which printed incomplete text on the label. To see the rest of the text, a person had to scan the code. According to the winery, it proved very effective.<sup>22</sup>

But the question remains once the QR Code is deployed on a bottle, what online information is linked to it? As a test, here is an example for Sandalford Margaret River 2011 Classic Dry White (Fig. 7.7).

This wine is at the cheaper end of their range, with Element the budget brand (at approximately A\$14 a bottle) and Prendiville Reserve Shiraz at A\$90 a bottle. At just under A\$20, Classic Dry White is a solid drinking wine for what the company describes as, ‘the mid tier price bracket’. The back label has deployed a QR Code (Fig. 7.8).

This QR Code links to generic information about Sandalfords. The question is—and it is debatable—is this the best link for this bottle? One option may be about this specific variety and bottle, including food pairings and appropriate drinking years. However, the justification for a generic link may be firstly to acclimatize consumers to the code. A secondary reason is that the QR holds a role in brand awareness. In other words, Sandalford is using one of their lesser brands to increase the awareness of their upper echelon products and also their wider

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<sup>22</sup> “Case Study: QR Code adds interest to Twisted Oaks winery packaging,” *Food and Beverage Packaging*, 29 November, 2011, <http://www.foodandbeveragepackaging.com/articles/84212-case-study-qr-code-adds-interest-to-twisted-oaks-winery-packaging>.

**Fig. 7.7** Sandalford classic dry white (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



**Fig. 7.8** Sandalford back label (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)



events and cross-application awareness through Facebook and Twitter. However, this use must evolve through time. The examples and strategies in this book show the options available, beyond a link to their generic website that has not been precisely configured to be read on a mobile device.

## **7.21 Neck Label/Neck Hanger**

Some wineries are experimenting with QR Codes on the bottle neck, either on a neck label or on a neck hanger. This remains an option, particularly if producers feel the front and back labels as designed are not appropriate for adding a code.

## **7.22 Etched Bottle**

QR Codes can be etched into bottles but the cost may be prohibitive and the quality less than desirable. Talk to a bottle supplier and/or a local glass etcher. While a bottle-etched QR Code may have a certain caché, including a QR Code on a label rather than on the glass itself is likely cheaper and easier.

## **7.23 Tasting Sheets/Winemaker Notes**

This is a profoundly useful and cheap intervention in the purchasing decisions of a wine buyer. Each document should have a QR Code linking to more information about the wine and even to a short audio or video interview with the winemaker about that particular release. If desired, include a QR Code linking to the winery's home page or menu. Customers can download copies of winemaker notes to their phones to read as they are drinking the wine.

## **7.24 Brochures**

Every brochure should have a QR Code prominently displayed. Although several codes can be included for various purposes, the simplest solution is one code that links to a menu, not simply to a home page. From the menu, the customer can choose what he or she is specifically seeking; whether it is a home page, contact information, directions to the winery, an order form or audio/video/text information about the wines and winery.

## **7.25 Videos**

Videos uploaded to websites such as YouTube and Vimeo are an excellent opportunity for producers to entertain, inform and sell to a customer or potential customer. The video can feature the QR Code prominently throughout the length of the programme. To connect and sell the region and its products, videos can

provide a virtual tour of the area including wineries, the landscape and other attractions of interest to tourists. As people enjoy a wine from that region, they can view—and recall if they have visited it in the past—the countryside, its people and its wineries. Also, for vineyards without cellar doors, QR-enabled videos can create an m-commerce link from a video tour of the winery. An example where such a strategy may be useful is in areas of historic vine growing, such as Bathurst in New South Wales, Australia. When the Blue Mountains were crossed in the early 1880s, vineyards were established in Saltram, on the northern side of Bathurst. While these vines died of frost and mildew, a new industry is now emerging as ‘cool climate’ vineyards.<sup>23</sup> Close to Sydney and the Blue Mountains, a range of wineries—including Casey’s Vineyard, McGrath Wines, Mt. Panorama Wines, Vale Creek, White Rock, Winburndale and Winooka Park—are offering cellar door sales. But many of the wineries—Badger Brush, Bunnamagoo, Grass Parrot, Hamlat, Renzaglia, Stray Goose, Stockman’s Ridge and Three Views—are not open to the public. Their wines can only be bought in bottle shops and by mail order.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, QR Codes on videos and also their printed publications can create a ‘region’ of wine that will assist all the businesses, but also facilitate sales for the wineries without public access.

Winery-focussed videos have a variety of subjects to choose from including specific releases, winemaker, owner, vineyard manager, winery chef, a guided tour of the winery itself and the winery’s location. You can also produce a short guided tasting video. Customers when at home or out with friends can open a bottle, start the video on their phone and be led through a tasting of a particular wine. It is important to recognize the point of the programme: to sell wine, not to simply entertain. The entertainment component establishes a visceral connection between a customer, wines and winery staff.

## 7.26 Reviews

A QR Code can lead to existing reviews of wine and/or it can allow someone to provide a review. The concern is that this online comment culture—which is a part of the user-generated content introduced earlier in this book—can return mixed results. If the reviews are positive, it can be very helpful for someone to read them. If they are mixed, they may not activate the desired marketing outcome. The same applies when allowing someone to *give* you a review. The interaction gives them a feeling of being involved and connected with a business and a product. The hope is that this involvement is to give the wine a positive review.

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<sup>23</sup> *Wines of Bathurst*, Bathurst Regional Vignerons Association, 2012.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

## 7.27 Website

A personal or professional website is the prime location for providing QR Codes that help visitors download information to their smartphones. Anyone who visits an organization's website is already interested in a product, idea or person, and this website (as do all websites) already provides hyperlinks to other locations. Scanning QR Codes with their phone can, however, allow them to download information, which they might need in the future or which they would prefer to watch or read on their phone at another time. This can include contact information, winery visiting hours, maps, videos, order forms and release notes. Customers can also download images of labels to assist them when seeking out wines in retail outlets.

## 7.28 Webcams

A link to a live webcam gives the viewer a direct, even visceral, experience of the winery. The webcam view can be whatever the winery chooses, and it can adjust the view depending on the time of day or season. Webcams can be placed in vineyards, ageing rooms, production facilities during harvest, or even in tasting rooms (recognizing that tasting room webcams should be placed in a manner which ensures that, for privacy reasons, visitor faces are not clearly shown).

## 7.29 At the Winery

Wine tourism research is an emerging field, combining the disciplines of tourism, marketing and more specialized studies of the 'winescape'.<sup>25</sup> Explorations of technology are minor areas in this scholarship. There are reasons. Surveys have shown that prior tasting of a wine is the most important reason for its purchase in a restaurant or retail shop. There is no better venue for this experience than a winery's own tasting room where a winery has total control over that experience. If that experience is positive, the winery has the opportunity to create a long-term customer, one who will buy and recommend its wines in the years that follow. This is perhaps the greatest benefit to a winery of wine tourism. Secondary, but very important, are the purchases of wine or wine paraphernalia, which are encouraged by winery staff in the tasting room and/or sales room.<sup>26</sup> A visitor to a winery is also strongly encouraged to join the winery's wine club for special access to future

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<sup>25</sup> For examples of this research, please refer to: Carlsen (2004), Carlsen and Charters (2006a) and Charters and Ali-Knight (2002).

<sup>26</sup> For examples of this research, please refer to: Carlsen (2004), Carlsen and Charters (2006a) and Charters and Ali-Knight (2002) and Differentiation, and direct marketing in Torres and Momsen (2011).

releases, discounts, special tastings, tours and wine dinners. It is not surprising that wineries and wine regions encourage tourism.

Thach's research (Thach 2008) concluded that since the top reason for choosing a wine was that the customer had tasted the wine before, it is important to provide potential customers with an actual wine-tasting experience (Thach 2008). Methods for doing this, other than at a winery's own tasting room, are conducting wine tastings (and classes) through local non-affiliated wine clubs, at retail outlets including wine shops, restaurants and hotels (and encouraging restaurants to offer its wine by the glass), and through organized groups of the winery's own private club members ('Bring a friend to our next tasting in your town'). Combine prior tasting of a wine with a 'recommendation by someone else' (the second most common purchase decision influencer) and it is clear that social media, such as Twitter or Facebook, can be persuasive for the purchasing decisions.

### 7.30 Check-Ins

In a tasting room, feature posters with several QR Codes. One says 'Scan here to follow us on Twitter and tweet your arrival at our winery'. Others may say 'Scan here to check into Foursquare' or 'Scan to Like us on Facebook'. Do the same with all other relevant social media. Some wine regions are offering visitors 'passports', a card which can be stamped at each winery visited.<sup>27</sup> If a certain number are stamped, the visitor receives a benefit or gift of some sorts. This can be simplified by simply having a 'passport' QR Code displayed at each winery. The visitor scans the code and is immediately checked-in at 'passport centre' as having visited a particular winery. The behind-the-scenes process can either be an email or text check-in, or a region might have its own special smartphone application for check-ins as part of an overall phone application with maps, winery listings and other useful and interesting information. For emerging wine regions attempting to develop a profile or brand, this unifying strategy reveals great benefits. Strong candidates for this function may include the new ranges of Kent-based English wines, secondary wine markets in Australia, such as the Swan Valley or non-Marlborough New Zealand wines.

### 7.31 Self-Guided Tours

If a winery does not provide guided tours, audio or video recordings can be posted, accessible via QR Codes, at key locations on a self-guided tour route. The codes can provide both information and navigation and work in conjunction with actual signage. They can also provide information in multiple languages.

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<sup>27</sup> This is a great strategy for geographically dispersed wine regions that require collectivized brand awareness. A great example of this type of region is the Swan Valley in Western Australia. Lacking the branding of Margaret River and yet within a 20 min drive of the CBD, a 'passport' would be an outstanding initiative.

## 7.32 Vineyard Signs

Place signs on country roads that pass by, or drive through, vineyards so that visitors can *safely* scan QR Codes on the signage for information on the vineyard's current status, opening hours, special offers or releases and any other information of value. Visitors should be able to see the range of the vineyard's grape varieties on the sign *without* using a phone.

## 7.33 Weather Reports

Serious—and often not-so-serious—wine buyers have a strong interest in the seasonal, and even day-to-day, weather in a particular area. Wineries and associations can provide QR Codes, which link to the current weather, the weather forecast and brief information as to the conditions in the vineyards, how the grapes and vines are faring and what activities are taking place by those working in the vineyards.

## 7.34 International Languages

For international use, QR Codes are an essential tool. On printed material, they can offer translation into a number of different languages. Consider having a code link to a menu listing a variety of languages, which in turn link to a number of videos, documents and other downloadable materials in each language. The codes can also provide information on how to obtain these wines in other countries. For wineries that focus on export—particularly in New Zealand—the ability to translate languages, experiences and shopping into new environments is valuable. At a winery, visitors can read or hear information about the winery in their own language simply by scanning a QR Code with their phone. On videos, this can be done with audio in various languages, or with subtitles. The key in the use of QR Codes on wine bottles is digital information; it can follow the analogue product and engage with consumers.

## 7.35 Other Products

Wineries that are producing food products other than wine, such as olive or grape seed oil, jams and jellies and various other wine-related products, should recognize that QR Codes are just as useful with those products as they are when marketing wine itself. Indeed, while the focus of this book is wine, our goal is to develop an integrated strategy of QR usage through primary production. As sustainability



**Fig. 7.9** Support the Planet  
(Photograph by Mick Winter)



(Carlsen and Charters 2006b), food security, obesity,<sup>28</sup> health and fitness become more urgent goals for many nations, the ability to recognize and value the food being eaten, logging its producers and means of production, is a crucial method to assist (and stabilize) the farming economy and also create more knowing consumers. Grand Vin de Bordeaux combines all these initiatives and imperatives (Fig. 7.9).

The Napa Valley also offers examples of such thoughtful economic and social interventions. For a number of years, the Mustard Festival<sup>29</sup> ran each February and March as a way to increase the tourists visiting restaurants and filling up accommodation during the ‘slow’ months for the wine industry (Winter 2007).

<sup>28</sup> A discussion of the obesity ‘epidemic’ is beyond the parameters of this book. However, we wanted to log the impact of the booming diet and fitness industries after the Second World War that too easily aligned fitness and diet with particular body shapes. We log LeBesco and Braziel’s recognition of the costs and consequences of notions of ‘fatness’ being framed by discourses of health and beauty. Please refer to (LeBesco and Braziel 2001). They particularly stress the impact of ‘disordered eating.’ One hope for this book is that QR Codes will provide consumers with information about the food they are eating, to enable conscious choices and decision-making.

<sup>29</sup> The Mustard Festival, <http://www.mustardfestival.org>.

This has been replaced by other off-season events, including music festivals and a “Napa Valley Restaurant Month.” Such food or culinary tourism (Long 2004) is a clear example of the horizontal integration of industries. Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis and Cambourne took this topic as a research focus, exploring how food can be developed, managed and marketed (Hall et al. 2003). Hall and Liz Sharples explored the consequences of marketing experiences with food, developing a “tourism of taste” (Hall and Sharples 2003). They realized that,

Food is one of the essential elements of the tourist experience. Yet, it is such an integral part of the experience that it is only in recent years that it has become a subject of study in its own right ... Food, just like tourism, was for many years a fringe academic discipline, and was frowned upon as an area of research by students of more ‘serious’ disciplines (Hall and Sharples 2003).

Food media has increased in its profile, with cookery programmes proliferating on radio and podcasts, television and other screen-based platforms. Travelling and sourcing ingredients have become a part of the media narrative. Authentic experiences are marketed as part of the production, preparation and consumption of food. As shown throughout this book, the pairing of food and wine is important for consumers. It is also incredibly significant for producers. QR Codes can provide the spatial, economic, social and regional links between these industries.

## 7.36 Tracking

Wineries should not forget that QR Codes were originally designed to track auto parts. They can be used in a similar fashion inside wineries on documents, barrels, cases and any other object or location where they can offer links to more detailed information for the use of employees.

## 7.37 Interactivity

QR Codes are not simply a one-way channel for sending information from a winery to customer. As indicated by the popularity of social media, people want *interaction*. Use QR Codes to enable a customer (or potential customer) to easily phone a winery with a question, sign up for a mailing list, join a wine club or even order wine via m-commerce. Customers can give feedback on a particular bottle of wine, arrange for a future wine tour or ask for the nearest location to buy wines. With the increasing use of videophones and smart phones that enable video through Skype or Facetime, a winery can conduct video conversations with customers that are launched with ease by a QR Code. This would be an excellent example of immediate personal interaction.

### 7.38 Other Technologies

While some writers in the literature have suggested that QR Codes will be replaced by Near Field Communication (NFC), Image Recognition, “bumping” or Augmented Reality, these other platforms, applications and technologies serve different purposes. NFC provides exchange of data between two electronic devices (not between a phone and a printed image) that currently must be within four centimetres of each other. Augmented Reality creates/displays computer-generated objects that can be seen by an augmented reality-enabled smartphone, but does not currently initiate actions or download information. *Bumping* involves two smartphones bumping together to exchange data and Image Recognition can discover other similar or even identical images and link to pre-established information relevant (but not necessarily specific) to those images. None of these technologies gives producers or businesses the total control to direct the actions or destination of a person’s smartphone that is possible when consumers scan a QR Code.

### 7.39 Wine Regions

There is no doubt that a key area of future growth and—indeed—perhaps the most important potential use of QR Codes is in the food and wine industries. To summarize current and potential uses of QR Codes within the wine industry include:

- Video tour of the winery.
- Self-guided tours *at* the winery, with either audio or video recordings at key locations on the tour.
- QR Codes on back labels that let customers find out more about the wine, its source vineyards, the winemaker, recommended foods and reviews.
- Promotional information, discounts and specials for smartphone friends of the winery, wine club membership offers, local wine shops carrying the wine, winery forum invitation, events that include wine tastings in the phone user’s area.

Many of the actions recommended for wineries apply also to marketing for wine regions. The obvious difference is that *many* wineries must work together to present a united front to potential consumers and visitors, as the goal is to both sell the region’s wine and to bring tourist dollars, euros, pounds or yen to the region. A well-known example of a strongly branded and successful wine region is California’s Napa Valley. What is less known is the relatively small budget that the region as a whole had available for marketing—until recently. Several years ago, led by the wine industry, other members of the tourism industry and local government officials united to create a Tourism Improvement District that adds a 2 % surcharge to all lodging (Franson 2011). This quickly increased the annual budget for attracting tourists tenfold, from \$450,000 to \$4.5 million.

Tourism in Napa County generates more than \$1.3 billion annually with visitor spending affecting 196 different industries in that county, and generating \$125 million annually in tax revenue. The ‘visitor serving industry’ employs 17,500 people and generates over \$500 million in annual payroll. One study demonstrated that, ‘for every \$1 invested in targeted destination tourism marketing, visitor expenditures are increased by \$8 to \$10.’<sup>30</sup> According to a 2006 survey, the top three sources of information most sought and used by visitors were friends and relatives (25 %), the most popular automobile club (AAA) guide and tour book (14 %), and the Napa Valley Visitor Bureau (now known as Visit Napa Valley.<sup>31</sup>) (11.9 %).<sup>32</sup> About 50 % of visitors reported using websites when they initially searched for information on the Napa Valley. The primary search (44.8 %) was for lodging information, wineries and wine (35 %) and food (17.5 %).<sup>33</sup> These figures indicate the importance of digital media and, specifically, social media.

A 2008 study found that 55 % of visitors came from within the state of California (primarily Northern California) and the rest from across the United States. Visitors were older, more educated and with a much higher household income than the US and California averages (Stonebridge Research Group 2008). The study recommended that the Napa Valley visitors organization feature ‘cultural events, sports and fitness, and gourmet cooking’ and focus media efforts on ‘higher-end travel media and comparable websites’ as well as ‘gourmet cooking publications and the higher-end food cable programs’ (Stonebridge Research Group 2008). It is likely that these findings and recommendations apply to many other wine regions as well. The key is to create horizontal integration of industries. This means that there is a network of connection between the industries of a region. So if an event is held, tether an array of other branding opportunities to it. Connect sport with tourism, with education and primary production. Generate a coherent marketing approach to regional development that takes advantage of the great opportunities that may be presented to a city or region (Hall et al. 2000).

QR Codes can be integrated into almost all communications media including brochures, newsletters, tasting sheets, newspapers and magazines. They can be displayed on bottle labels, posters and in-winery signage, on retail shelves, websites or food and wine menus. This versatility makes them a valuable tool in any

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<sup>30</sup> The Napa Valley Destination Council, Tourism is everybody’s business in Napa County, <http://www.visitnapavalley.com/userfiles/file/1%20The%20NVDC%20and%20the%20Importance%20of%20Tourism.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> [www.visitnapavalley.com](http://www.visitnapavalley.com) (The organization’s name has transitioned from the Napa Valley Visitor Bureau, Napa Valley Destination Council, and Legendary Napa Valley to its current Visit Napa Valley.)

<sup>32</sup> Napa County Visitor Profile and Economic Impact Studies Executive Summary, March 2006, p. 9, [http://www.legendarynapavalley.com/docs/cats/1%20Napa%20County%20Visitor%20Profile\\_%20Economic%20Impact%20Reports.pdf](http://www.legendarynapavalley.com/docs/cats/1%20Napa%20County%20Visitor%20Profile_%20Economic%20Impact%20Reports.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> Napa County Visitor Profile and Economic Impact Studies Executive Summary, March 2006, p. 10, [http://www.legendarynapavalley.com/docs/cats/1%20Napa%20County%20Visitor%20Profile\\_%20Economic%20Impact%20Reports.pdf](http://www.legendarynapavalley.com/docs/cats/1%20Napa%20County%20Visitor%20Profile_%20Economic%20Impact%20Reports.pdf).

wine, or wine region, marketing campaign. The codes alone are not in themselves a marketing campaign, but they can be an important element of any campaign. They are the mortar between the bricks or—to change metaphors—the glue between the analogue and the digital. QR Codes activate mobility and are useful to customers at the breakfast table,<sup>34</sup> in restaurants, on public transport, in stores, watching sport, or strolling through a shopping area. They are about the moment, providing useful and interesting information at the click of a smartphone button.

QR Codes are not a fad, any more than placing a winery's web address on a label or marketing materials is a fad. QR Codes are shortcuts to information provided to customers and potential customers. Will the novelty of QR Codes wear off? Yes. But their *usage will increase* as they gradually integrate more and more into everyday life and everyday marketing. They will easily, inexpensively and effectively benefit any winery or wine region marketing campaign.

Now that the general principles and maxims for the use of QR Codes in an era of disintermediation have been established, we will enter the proactive and focused area of the book. We will show the possibilities for an interventionist deployment of QR Codes in the New Zealand wine industry. The next chapter presents the marketing actions and opportunities for emerging wine regions.

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<sup>34</sup> Although our focus in this book is wine, there is no doubt about the wide usage and appropriateness of QR Codes for food and other beverages. Coffee in particular is a key target market. Providing information about fair trade, sustainability and the business conditions of the farmers—all presented on a coffee jar or bag—offer a way to connect production and consumption in a way that focuses on social justice and equitability, as much as the quality of the coffee.

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## Chapter 8

# Mark(et)ing the Bottle: Using QR Codes to Build New Wine Regions

Wine is based on making, remaking and marketing a particular type of history and heritage. Like a liquid history, years, vintages, droughts, frosts and named wine-makers are bottled with the wine. These narratives are shared and drunk with the wine.

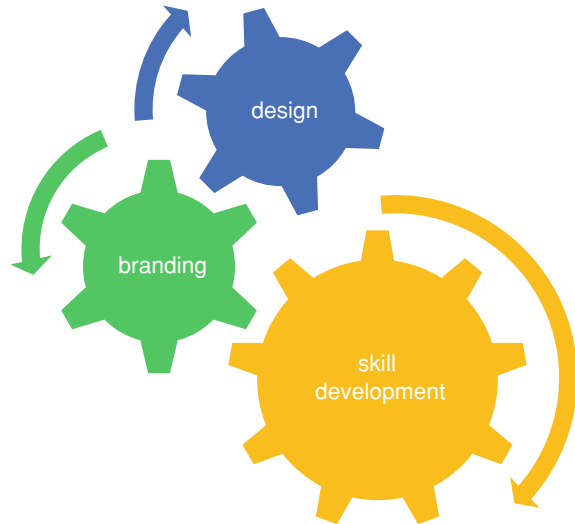
The challenge in such a wine discourse is how to create space in such a crowded market for new regions, wines, tastes and flavours. Competing with Burgundy, the Napa Valley, Marlborough, the Barossa, Clare Valley or Margaret River is difficult. As discussed earlier in this book, most wine purchases are on automatic. Buyers purchase what they have drunk in the past. This book is about creating an intervention in that micro-moment between desiring the purchase of wine and executing that purchase. It also desires to create a longer term marketing strategy where the analogue stories of wine are shared digitally, creating a distinctive purchase upon the next visit to the cellar door or supermarket.

The argument to be offered in the final third of this book is that new wine can use new media. Speed and mobility matter. But there is a wider strategy being pursued in this book. QR Codes and a range of social and geosocial media are quick and simple to generate. They can be triangulated between a YouTube channel, podcast, Twitter feed and Facebook page with ease. Therefore, for those emerging—or commencing—wine regions, how do they compete with the established wineries? The answer is to use digital resources to complement an analogue heritage.

Part of this project is enfolded into the creative industries and city imaging portfolio of interests. In the early and key work of creative industries—*Living on Thin Air* (Leadbeater 2000)—Charles Leadbeater located three elements to the creative industries (Fig. 8.1). The argument of his book is that the development and commodification of ideas are the future of the new economy. He suggests that the primary (agriculture) and secondary (manufacturing) industries are no longer the engines of growth and development. Instead, the knowledge economy is the powerhouse of the economy (Fig. 8.2).

Much of this creative industries development, from Charles Landry (Landry and Bianchini 1995) and Richard Florida in particular, is based in cities and aims to ensure that urban environments attract a ‘creative class’ and bohemians that generate the impetus for branding, skill development and design. Universities are

**Fig. 8.1** The creative industries relationship



**Fig. 8.2** Layers of the economy



crucial to this project. But there are flaws in such an argument. The Global Financial Crisis showed that economies based on finance capital were much more vulnerable to the vagaries and instability of capitalism. Clearly, the complex economies that can enable all three tiers of the economy (primary, secondary and tertiary) and—most importantly—build links between them will be immune from the instabilities of the ‘new economy’.

Importantly, the branding, design and skill development in the tertiary sector have a profound role in the other two tiers. This book captures the project to apply the techniques and strategies of the creative industries, the knowledge economy and city imaging to agriculture. How can the initiatives from digitization, internationalization and mobility operate in the hyper-local industry of wine? How can a local industry—in Burgundy, Napier or the Swan Valley—operate in a trans-local and globalized environment? (Campbell and Guibert 2007). The QR code is able to position a physical product—a wine bottle—into a digital wine marketing campaign. The potential of the online environment for wine is highly underconsidered at the moment. Wineries have set up basic websites and use social media in predictable ways. Yes, wineries have a Twitter account or a Facebook page. But how are these



social media options being triangulated? How is the story of wine—this digital story of wine—being told?

Wine is an ideal case study for this integrated creative industries project, to then enlarge for other industries. Wine is a global and globalizing industry. But it is also hyperlocal, reliant on a relationship between soil, climate and the skill of vignerons and wine makers. So this localism must be celebrated and recognized for a global audience. Therefore, this localism must be mobile. It must be digital. The way localism becomes trans-localism is through applications that enable the movement of digital information through disparate locations, thereby connecting producers and consumers.

QR codes are ideal in bringing the threads of social media into alignment. They require careful thought about brand recognition, active marketing of a region, media selection and targeted audience. For larger wineries with hierarchical brands that increase in both price and quality, QR codes provide an ideal opportunity to promote each slice of the market with specificity in a way that can increase the likelihood of a purchase of a higher end product.

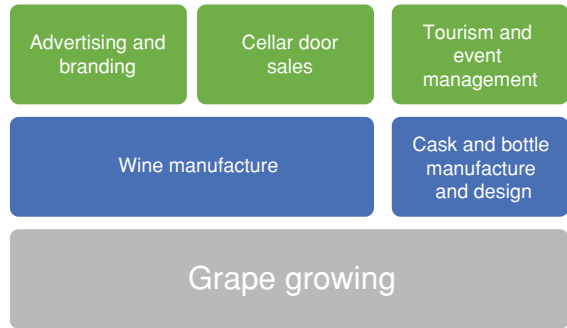
For new wineries that are creating a brand from scratch, the development of an integrated social media plan, with QR Codes as the pivot, is important and possible. There is an example of a new winery that integrates design, skill development and branding with great care and innovation. Therefore, the next section of this chapter investigates the specificity of wine, regional development and the creative industries.

## 8.1 Creative Wine?

While much of the attention in the late 1990s and early 2000s probed the global and the local, alongside the unfortunately connoted ‘glocal’, regionalism and regionality have potential to create an integrated and balance economy, particularly for primary industries. Wine industries—and specific brands of wine—are cyclical. Deery, O’Mahony and Moors described this as a ‘lifecycle typology’ for wine (Deery et al. 2012). They describe the four stages as emerging, growing, maturing and rejuvenating (Deery et al. 2012). The mode for managing and intervening in this cycle is regional development. Wine industries are—mostly—small and medium sized enterprises. It is a horizontally integrated industry, aligning the growing and picking of grapes, the making of wine with the attendant industries of cask manufacture, cask management and bottle design and production, alongside tourism-related industries such as tours, eateries and cellar door sales. There are also industries that feed into the profile of wine, including advertising, magazine and book publishing, and website and applications development (Fig. 8.3).

This is a creative cluster encircling wine. Yet digital wine requires a careful marketing of (analogue) product and landscape. It is a unique amalgamation of the tangible and intangible, living on the land and living on thin air. Yet this clustering

**Fig. 8.3** Primary, secondary and tertiary industries



and regional branding is urgent. The Winemakers Federation of Australia reported as early as 2005 that,

Unless many regional winemakers diversify their winery activities to develop additional income streams through a commitment to winery tourism, then their chances of growing and even their very survival could well be at risk (Winemakers Federation of Australia 2005).

Small and medium sized enterprises are more vulnerable to changes in the market. Our recommendation to increase the horizontal integration with other industries is a key requisite. But so is the building of links between the wineries, tethering the smaller wineries into an integrated trip. The Swan Valley in Perth, Western Australia particularly, has problems in creating these alignments. The poor public transportation connections to the Valley—even though it is only ‘30 min’ drive from the CBD—and the dispersed nature of the wineries means that creating a wine culture and cluster is difficult. There have been some attempts at branding (Fig. 8.4).

Perth’s ‘Valley of Taste’ offers a reminder of urbanity, food and wine. A range of craft-based enterprises also dot the region. But the challenges of branding—living on thin air—and the more concrete problems of managing an alcohol-fuelled industry while reliant on private transportation are very serious. The other attempt at branding attaches the Swan Valley, an under-recognized region for wine internationally, with Margaret River. At this stage Sandalfords, a winery with vineyards in both regions, is using QR codes, but only as a link to a generic website. Yet the tourist connections to the wineries in the Swan Valley and Margaret River are successful, with bus tours, river cruises and event management featuring popular music concerts. The question remains—how could digitized marketing and a QR code be functional in this industry? The answer is perhaps for the Western Australian Wine Industry Association to build a suite of videos on YouTube and a Facebook page, and market these stories of wine via QR codes on printed publications. A regional solution is also required to align a disparate food and wine ‘trail’. The capacity of a wine industry—located less than a ‘30 minute’ drive from the CBD of Perth—has incredible potential for tourism. Therefore, if



**Fig. 8.4** Swan valley and marketing taste (Photography by Tara Brabazon)

the Swan Valley produce—that includes wine, beer, fruit, chocolate and nougat—deploys QR Codes in the packaging then not only can awareness of the region be created, but so can the ‘value add’ of tourism.

The challenge is that each wine region is distinct. The strategies that work in one may not function in the other. As Doloreux and Lord-Tarte realized, ‘A key lesson that can be stressed is that generalization about the development paths of wine clusters is difficult to make’ (Doloreux and Lord-Tarte 2012). Therefore, what is required is a documentation of the differences, distinctions and specific and digital strategies to assist particular challenges, regions, domestic and international markets.

The proliferation of wine regions in Australia, while noting the predominance of the Barossa Valley, is highly distinct from the specialist and small wine regions, of which Canada is an example (Banks and Sharpe 2006). The Canadian wine industry is not only small, but highly geographically clustered in British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario. Canadian wine has a huge advantage. It is known internationally for the rarest of wines: ice wine. It is exceptional, challenging to grow and pick, but also offers an evocative story for consumers around the world. As Saunders confirmed, ‘vineyards tend to be established near lakes and oceans to minimize some of the effects of the cold’ (Saunders 2004). Grapes are frozen on the vine. Such a process intensifies the sugar in the grape, but reduces the water content. In this circumstance, a QR code or a bottlehanger would be ideal. It is an expensive wine, and the reasons for that expense are the conditions in which the grapes are grown and the complex and risky processes under which they are picked. Importantly, the bulk of Canadian wines are sold in the domestic market (Doloreux and Lord-Tarte 2012, p. 521). Perhaps—considering the small scale of

the yield—that is appropriate. Yet researchers are arguing that a period of growth and export is emerging. Doloreux and Lord-Tarte realized that,

New organizations are needed to serve firms in the growing wine cluster such as support organizations, specialized education establishments, and business associations. These organizations act as intermediaries that influence the local labour supply, which is the social foundation underpinning the production system. These organizations also enhance the competitiveness and performance of the regional wine industry (Doloreux and Lord-Tarte 2012, p. 520).

There are myriad challenges for the Canadian wine industry, beyond the weather. The wine regions are widely dispersed. Ontario alone has four wine regions: the Niagara Peninsula, Lake Erie North Shore, Pelee Island and Prince Edward County. Similarly, a range of varieties are produced: Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Gamay Noir, Merlot and Pinot Noir. The problems remain in the sphere of production. The wineries are small and family owned. The audiences are domestic. Growth is difficult to initiate because of the low volumes produced. Building a relationship between the families, varieties, regions and provinces is complex.

While there are some challenges with the Canadian wine regions, in terms of marketing and the lack of international consumers, there are some enormous advantages. These arch back to Leadbeater's three-tiered strategy to 'live on thin air': branding, design and skill development.

The involvement of a number of actors, such as producers, wine-makers, universities, colleges, research centres and various governmental departments favours the creation of social capital which fosters the circulation of information and knowledge among the different actors and helps coordinate the economic activity within the cluster (Doloreux and Lord-Tarte 2012, p. 521).

Social capital in this context refers to the organizations and individuals that can enable growth and horizontal integration of wine with attendant industries. So while the Australian wine industry is large, complex and export driven, requiring QR Codes to value add to the entry level wine and create brand awareness of the premium purchases, Canadian ice wine has an opportunity to develop export and ultrapremium status. Because QR Codes can link to specific and targeted digital content, these distinctive functions and goals can be met.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There are a range of videos showing how to make Canadian ice wine. Therefore a link to the specificity of this process and product would enhance an export-driven market. There is an array of already existing videos on Canadian ice wine that could be linked to a bottle via a QR Code. For example O'Leary T, "Canadian Ice Wine," YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzBfBcbt89g>.

**Fig. 8.5** Charles Sturt University 'Letter series' (Photograph by Kevin Brabazon)



## 8.2 A Wine University?

The challenges in developing the creative industries are that they are based on a well educated, affluent and mobile 'creative class' that continues to partake in skill development to enable personal and professional innovation. But how universities and the wine industries align (tertiary and primary industries) is difficult to track as few institutions of higher education teach the wine sciences and arts. A fine and recent example of a university developing this relationship between the creative industries and the knowledge economy is Charles Sturt University. This institution is composed of a set of regional campuses in inland New South Wales, Australia and delivers and graduates a series of degrees in wine making. As an adjunct to the degrees—and not surprisingly—wine is produced. The campuses in Orange and Wagga Wagga are ideally placed to cultivate grapes, and their differing climate enables a range of varieties. This integration of higher education and agriculture is linked by design, branding and technology. To provide one example, the bottles display an extraordinarily distinctive design. It is perhaps no surprise to readers of this book that this innovative and unusual mode of production and consumption features a QR Code on the bottle to inform consumers about the special story of

**Fig. 8.6** Rose  
(Photographed by Kevin  
Brabazon)



the wine and its development. This series of wines is termed the ‘Letter Series’ (Fig. 8.5).

The specificity and distinctiveness of this design is used to market the bundling of the wine. Termed the ‘Letter Series,’<sup>2</sup> the front label is distinctive because of its lack of information. The back label enables this stark presentation because of the presence of a QR code that can fill out the digital information lacking in the analogue presentation. Significantly, they also use a Stelvin screw cap to seal the bottle (Figs. 8.6 and 8.7).

This is new wine, from a new winery. The website (<http://winery.csu.edu.au>) is professionally presented, well illustrated and linked with the winery’s Twitter account (@CSUWinery). Online purchases are possible, and the QR Code tells the history and story of the winery and the wine. Certainly, there are heritage vines in Wagga Wagga, with a vineyard planted in 1894. But the University commenced its wine science and viticulture programmes in 1976. Awards have followed (CSU News 2013). There are many disadvantages confronting CSU wines. Inland Australia—and regional Australia more generally—is lacking in infrastructural

<sup>2</sup> Letter Series, CSU Winery, <http://winery.csu.edu.au/brands/Letter-Series.html>.



**Fig. 8.7** Tempranillo  
(Photograph by Kevin  
Brabazon)



development. Broadband and wireless access is limited. Further, a university wine science programme may seem to be a winery in training. Yet with startling design and a high-quality product—alongside an effective online delivery system—a successful winery has been created. New media enabled new wineries. The next chapter takes these specific initiatives to align the creative industries with primary production to create digital wine and applies them to New Zealand.

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**Part IV**  
**New Zealand and the Potential of QR**  
**Codes in Regions and Small Nations**

## Chapter 9

# World Famous in New Zealand

Our final focus on Aotearoa/New Zealand is not accidental. New Zealand is not a minor player in the wine industry, nor is it insignificant in the international creative industries. Yet this success is recent and of a scale that has moved the industry into the ultra-premium branding. New Zealand has all the characteristics required for a successful QR-enabled campaign for international wine marketing.

1. Well-developed knowledge economy and creative industries.
2. Small nation that is technologically enabled and digitally literate.
3. Well-educated citizenry and workforce.
4. Local, regional and national politicians aware of the value of international marketing.
5. Reliance on the export market.
6. A high quality niche wine market.
7. A capacity to build horizontal relationships between the food and wine industries, alongside film, fashion, music and sport.
8. A strong, worldwide brand—100 % Pure New Zealand.

But there is a wider branding of the nation, initiated through the creative industries. Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* created opportunities for film tourism that can be value-added by other industries. As discussed earlier in this book, the film *Sideways* was not only a surprise success, but led to a range of tourism operators capitalizing on wine tours of central California, offering a slice of difference and separation from the more famous Napa Valley. Although odd, in this case, film matters in relation to the marketing of wine (Risling 2005).

The New Zealand wine industry is also profoundly successful. Between 1984 and 1995, New Zealand had a tenfold increase in its volume of exports (Harfield 1999). This is a statistically anomaly as this growth emerged from a low base. The varieties are also specific: Sauvignon Blanc, then Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Merlot. There are huge advantages managed by New Zealand in terms of branding and marketing. It is a small industry, with definitive clusters and regions.

Marlborough 58 %  
 Hawke's Bay 20 %  
 Gisborne 16 % (NZWG 2005).

Also a few varieties dominate export. But the economic challenges are clear and share the challenge of the Canadian wine industry. Most New Zealand wine industries are small, selling less than 200,000 litres of wine per year (Dana and Winstone 2008). Like Canada—but not as extreme as a northern winter—New Zealand's climate means that the seasons impact on the viability and timing of harvests. While the weather impacts on every wine region, these specificities and challenges pose particular opportunities for the building of digital wine branding. Two questions remain. How is a digital difference configured? How is regionality and localism activated for a local market?

There is economic volatility when managing small to medium sized enterprises reliant on an export market. Cooper read such a challenge as early as 2002.

The history of wine in New Zealand can be portrayed as an industry embarked on a century-old rollercoaster ride, soaring and plunging through successive periods of growth and optimism, decline and disillusionment ... Now faced at home with a tidal wave of imported wines, the industry at last focused seriously on export, planting extensive new vineyards in Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay (Cooper 2002).

Indeed, Rupert Tipples referred to 'the fragile link between a medium sized New Zealand wine business and a major overseas supermarket chain' (Tipplés 2010a). The European Community makes managing such a relationship even more complex. Even in a supposedly digital age, geographical distances remain problematic. To make the New Zealand wine industry—and other export markets—function requires, 'some of the longest supply chains in the world' (Tipplés 2010a). The question is how—through this distance—a relationship between producers and consumers is formed. Creating intimacy and a connection through digital means is an obvious solution. As explored earlier in this book, the management of disintermediation (reducing or removing links in the supply chain) and reintermediation (inventing new links via new gatekeepers such as Google, Amazon and Apple) is a key concern for businesses in a Web 2.0 environment.

For New Zealand wine producers between 2006 and 2008, the Global Economic Crisis had an enormous impact. The strength of the New Zealand dollar against both the US dollar and British pound had a detrimental impact on the competitiveness of the product. An example of reintermediation breaking down was the severing of the relationship that Cottesbrook Wines had with Thierry's Wine Services and Tesco, the major supermarket in the United Kingdom (Tipplés 2010b). The disagreements over price caused the relationship to end. What had allegedly transpired is that Tesco began working with the producers directly (disintermediation), to absorb the agent's fees as profit. Through such instability, the question is how demand and brand recognition can be sustained.

Certainly, the New Zealand wine industry has moved through the same process of trade liberalization and neoliberalism that has impacted other creative industries (Barker et al. 2001). But the lesson from its success is clear. Popular cultural

tourism is increasingly common. From Concord, Massachusetts, the site of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, through to Manchester's *24 Hour Party People*, popular cultural spaces and narratives inform and inflect the modern and the urban to create marketable tourist locations (Shiel and Fitzmaurice 2003). The success of Wellington in refashioning itself into a creative hub was built on the long-term formation of a New Zealand wine industry, fine dining and Te Papa, the national museum.<sup>1</sup> These successes then fed back into the branding of a modern and urban gateway to the filmic locations of Middle Earth.<sup>2</sup> Publications such as *Off the Menu* and Wellington's *Modern Dining Magazine*,<sup>3</sup> reinforced this reputation. While Auckland is known for its Fashion Week and sports tourism, Creative New Zealand<sup>4</sup> launched a whole-of-government approach to creative industries development that aligns the specific industries and cities of Auckland and Wellington with their attendant regions and adventure tourism in the South Island. The key now—from this very effective broad stroke branding—is how specific industries and region can slice through the national iconography.

New Zealand's rapid and aggressive engagement with the international market economy has generated a range of remarkable initiatives that go beyond a 'case study' or a footnote in a wider policy revolution. It is an important place to think about new relationships between producers, consumers, regionality and technology. Hesmondhalgh and Pratt realized that, 'in many respects, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have developed more coherent approaches based not only on a recognition of the economic value of the cultural industries, but also on the importance of the construction and defence of a national culture. These approaches, at their best, respect aboriginal rights, high culture and, to a lesser extent, "new cultural forms"'.<sup>5</sup> Significantly, all three nations were formerly colonized by the United Kingdom but deploy divergent and complex methods to configure indigenous rights, settler populations and new migrant communities. Simple or glib answers to questions about identity, colonialism and economic development do not function in such nations. Particularly, considering how the New Zealand agricultural economy was organized to service Britain, and then was displaced at

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<sup>1</sup> Te Papa, <http://www.tepapa.govt.nz/pages/default.aspx>. What makes this city unusual in the creative industries literature is that this revival started with a museum. The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act of 1992 established a national museum. This was a decade before Richard Florida 'discovered' the checklist for creative cities and promoted the Bohemian Index. Opened in 1998, Te Papa, Maori for Our Place, has its critics, but it is a profound museum-led reconfiguration of colonial history. It provides a focus—a reason—for other New Zealanders to visit Wellington beyond seeing the parliamentary architecture of the Beehive. From this basis, the Absolutely Positively Wellington campaign was able to build a tourist portfolio to not only rejuvenate but re-image the capital city.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to Creative New Zealand, [www.creativenz.govt.nz](http://www.creativenz.govt.nz), [www.industrytaskforces.govt.nz](http://www.industrytaskforces.govt.nz), and [www.thebigidea.co.nz](http://www.thebigidea.co.nz), [www.nzte.govt.nz](http://www.nzte.govt.nz).

<sup>3</sup> To review a full study of the changing city imaging of Wellington, please refer to (Brabazon 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Off the Menu also has a website, [www.offthemenue.co.nz](http://www.offthemenue.co.nz).

<sup>5</sup> Off the Menu also has a website, [www.offthemenue.co.nz](http://www.offthemenue.co.nz), p. 1.

speed when the UK joined the common market, there is a form of economic, political and social justice (or revenge) in using digitized applications to slice through national and trans-national borders that were assembled to block agricultural markets from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States and an array of African nations producing a wide range of foods and beverages.

‘Buy local’ campaigns are one way for the empire to strike back, reinforcing national borders against other markets. One of the profound and disturbing consequences of the ‘buy local’ campaigns is that they may generate profound damage to emerging economies. The global food system is unequal and unjust. Currently, 25 % of the world’s population is underfed with another 25 % being overfed (Albritton 2009). The resultant problems from this inequality are then intensified by pollution, depletion of a stable and secure water supply, and low or unstable incomes for farmers and farm workers. Albritton expresses the imperative for a food system that is more ‘sustainable, healthful and just’ (Albritton 2009). One attempt to create this system has been the ‘buy local’ campaign. Farmer’s markets, farming cooperatives, slow food organizations and school meal advocacy have been part of this movement. When they are based in a particular local community, it can seem difficult to argue against such strategies. Like motherhood, how can we argue against the benefits of localism? One researcher does argue against it, and for clear economic and social reasons. DeLind queries ‘our current romance with local food’ (DeLind 2011). Like most romances, becoming a locavore enables people to avoid more difficult and complex issues, like equality, sustainability and building the economy of a region. DeLind realizes that the local food movement is based on one premise: ‘what is wrong with the world ... can be addressed through personal behaviour’ (DeLind 2011). But touting localism can be another form of marketing. After all, Walmart also ‘supports’ local growers.

The question is how to transform this belief in the local into a bigger project: trans-localism, or how to apply local values to geographically dispersed communities. How do we ensure that the socially important narratives of local development extend beyond a conversation at a farmer’s market? The answer to that question is the use of QR Codes. Localism is important, but enabling it to move to enable e-commerce and m-commerce—via deterritorialization and disintermediation—creates a much more intricate social, economic and political matrix. This is trans-localism at its best. This is consumption with a tether to production, increasing the consciousness of food economies and contexts.

One strategy to intervene in such inequality is to provide the history and information of the food being purchased. To provide one example: coffee in Ethiopia. Coffee is the second largest and most valuable commodity in the world, following oil. Coffee is Ethiopia’s primary export industry. Yet even with ‘fair trade’ initiatives, the country’s producers remain poor.

“The main reason for poverty is trade,” said Tadesse Meskala, Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union’s general manager. “It is not a lack of natural resources but the formulation of trading mechanisms that makes us poorer and poorer (Ethiopia 2012)”.

Buying local will not help Ethiopian coffee producers. Paying more for their crop will. But the question is how to create a mechanism for food justice amidst the celebration of ‘the local’. Obviously, the ‘Buy Local’ movement is not the font of injustice for Ethiopian farmers. The deeper question is whether such a strategy is assisting Ethiopian farmers to overcome multi-layered injustice.

Another strategy to intervene in such inequality and unequal distribution is to provide the history and information of the food being purchased. Indeed, Boot reported that, ‘If Ethiopia could do a better job in selling its unique story...it could make significantly more money for farmers’ (Boot 2012). An obvious strategy to enact this storytelling function is to present a single, clear QR Code on coffee packaging that provides this information to consumers. While many consumers will continue to be guided by price—wanting cheap coffee by any means—the opportunity should be available to select coffee that is grown, produced and consumed under different conditions. Celebrating localism (‘buy local’ as opposed to ‘buy local qualities of other localities’) does not help Ethiopian coffee producers or Chilean wine producers or Tongan vanilla bean farmers. Culinary tourism is based on providing context around food (Everett 2011), rather than merely shopping locally. For example, a focus or interest in Ethiopian coffee can be connected to a wider understanding of Ethiopian cuisine and culture. In other words, coffee is positioned in relation to a larger history.

There also has to be a careful and thoughtful discussion about the relationship between local, quality, fresh, organic and free trade. The key is to think about not only primary production, but what happens next after the food is grown. What is the impact to the economy, social systems and our bodies? Put another way, Slocum asks, ‘What difference does race make in the fields where food is grown, the places it is sold and the manner in which it is eaten (Slocum 2011)?’ Too often, the food of immigrants is granted the label of takeaway food: Chinese, Indian or Mexican.<sup>6</sup> There are ‘trade routes of food’ (Slocum 2011).

The question is how consumers make ethical decisions about their consumption practices. Information—particularly with regard to the multiple meanings of a place—is required. Part of this project to enable ethical consumption in cities and regions emerged through the New Zealand government-commissioned document released in 2000, *Heart of the Nation* (Heart of the Nation Project Team 2000). Although many of the findings were rejected (Volkerling 2000), there was a significant shuffling of cultural categories and audiences. The result is a heady mix of economic, social and cultural development. One way to understand New Zealand’s place in international creative industries is to apply an oddly appropriate advertising slogan for a local beverage. On first view, the soft drink seems quite ordinary. It has bubbles and some flavouring. What makes the product remarkable is its slogan. The drink—L&P (Lemon and Paeroa)—mobilizes a marketing campaign that works off a series of archetypes about laconic Kiwi masculinity,

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<sup>6</sup> French food—which is often labelled through the affluent double-barrelled noun ‘French cuisine’—is an exception to our maxim.

including the capacity to fix any of life's emergencies with number 8 fencing wire. The slogan that has stayed with the company is World Famous in New Zealand (2009). This phrase captures the paradoxes, confusions, irony, disappointment and confidence in and with the country. A tiny place can be world famous—in New Zealand. In the context of international creative industries though, New Zealand is simply world famous. There is a reason why this small place is significant.

Bryan Gould, in reviewing the international transformations of capitalism, realized that New Zealand is important, 'not because the country is a particularly significant part of the world economy in terms of its size, but because it offers an instructive example to the rest of the world of how policy and practice concerning globalization and monetary policy have developed over recent years' (Gould 2006). Intriguingly, a research team from Competitive Advantage New Zealand used the L&P slogan to tell 'the story of how ten of New Zealand's finest companies became world-class competitors' (Campbell-Hunt 2001). Yet Peter Jackson, his company Weta Digital, and the *Lord of the Rings* film series are not mentioned in the book. Richard Florida, creative industries marketing consultant, has not been so reticent in welcoming hobbits and recognizing their almost immeasurable value in New Zealand marketing and branding. The question unaddressed is the role of agriculture and primary industries in this narrative of development. Such an absence—a lack or deficit model of development—perpetuates the rural as a site of problems, issues and challenges with economics, social structures, health and education (Bonner et al. 2009).

How do wine industries fit into such a policy suite? Education has also been integral to these developments. Wellington's Institute of Technology launched a Centre for Creative Industries in 2000. After completing a two year diploma qualification, graduates could study for two more years to obtain a Bachelor of Creative Industries. Victoria University of Wellington runs an 'Organizing Creative Industries' course in their Management School. Te Papa housed the Second International Conference on Cultural Policy in January 2002 around the theme Cultural Sites, Cultural Theory, Cultural Policy. The universities also support wine and food development, with wine and food sciences taught and supervised at the University of Auckland, and wine, food and molecular sciences at the University of Lincoln.

The key in all these strategies is sustainability. The success of the Beatles in Liverpool was remarkable, but continuing the reputation, support and venues for a music city is complex. Cities, regions and nations can experience a popular cultural windfall of music, food, film or dance culture. But like all popular culture, this fixation and moment in the global sun will pass. The question is how to create sustainable social and economic development from this moment. The potential for a policy intervention is often based on the windfall of a remarkable cultural event like Manchester's Hacienda and Liverpool's Merseybeat. *Lord of the Rings* was the moment that thrust New Zealand and Wellington into visibility in the international creative economy. Weta Digital, based in Miramar, only fifteen minutes from central Wellington and five minutes from the airport, continues this profile not only through effects, but with merchandise, and even a chainmaille company.

In June 2008, Weta Digital completed the full circle and commenced tours through ‘Weta Cave,’ and an affiliated mini-museum. Weta is a part of a considered building of relationships between diverse sectors. They are a model for other industries to note and consider. Particularly, this integrated ‘value add’ approach is applicable to wine regions.

A key argument in this book is about more than just QR Codes. It explores the nature of regional development, with particular attention to the primary industries. While the glamour of film, music and fashion has dominated the creative industries literature, if there is a lesson from the crunch and crash of 2008, then it is that a balanced economy—between agricultural, industrial and finance capital—is the most secure strategy to enable a stable development of cities, regions and nations. Part of our project in this book is to offer cheap—and frequently free—opportunities for small business to create trans-local links. New Zealand—located deep in the south Pacific Ocean—has few geographical advantages in terms of local trade. Therefore the specific successes in its marketing programmes have a very wide resonance.

New Zealand remains incredibly important in this history of the new economy, knowledge economy and creative industries. Both through top down and bottom up initiatives, public and private, a productive integration of industries and sectors is taking place. New Zealand has many advantages in leading the world in new forms of development. First, it is a small nation, geographically and in terms of population and scale of economy. This means that policy initiatives can be instigated with greater speed and effectiveness. Also, the ruthlessness of the British disconnection from New Zealand’s agricultural industries in the 1970s meant that new economic solutions and relationships had to be found—and quickly. An export-fuelled economy was necessary. This meant that politicians were open to new ideas. New Zealand therefore had to think about regions and regionality, with Australia and the Pacific nations. Technology was part of this strategy to move an analogue experience into digital markets (Bird 2004). Therefore, when considering a case study for a strong use of QR codes in industries such as wine and food, New Zealand is an obvious and productive example that can lead the way for other regions and nations.

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## Chapter 10

### 100 % Pure New Zealand

New Zealand's wine industry is export driven, and rightly so. As New Zealand has only a small population, the creative industries policies have been enacted to develop export markets for film, design, tourism, and music. Wine is incredibly important to this narrative. From 2000, scholars recognized the power and value of this external brand management of New Zealand Wine. Art Thomas realized that,

Consumers make numerous decisions about product purchases and these are influenced by internal and external factors. Manufacturer influence over some external elements can occur through packaging. In wine marketing, packaging and labels assume undeniable influence with packaging forming an integral part of any wine's promotion and consumption... New Zealand's wine industry is currently attracted to lucrative export markets and may be limiting its efforts on the home front. The home market, capable of expansion, will require a concentrated consumer research effort aimed at identifying the impact of label perceptions on consumer purchases. Such research ultimately should assist both domestic and international marketing activities (Thomas 2000).

New Zealand makes the majority of its revenue from exports of primary goods and produce. This is a competitive market, and one in which New Zealand is often efficient. But its advantage cannot always be on the basis of price. New Zealand is an isolated country, with one of the world's most volatile exchange rates, and the cost to ship goods to market means it cannot rely solely on price or the cost of labor to be successful.

New Zealand producers and the New Zealand Government have been deliberate in associating the country's exports with values, derived from a constructed sense of New Zealand as "pure" and "green," that are worth investment by international businesses and consumers. This is especially the case with highly priced discretionary items like wine. Here, quality is difficult to be both judged and quantified and is not the only factor that is weighed up before purchase. Once a picturesque vineyard is summoned, how could buying wine from it be wrong, debatable, or subjective? The more vivid that place is, and the closer it is brought to each purchaser, the greater the odds of success in creating loyalty from a consumer or changing their buying practices. Therefore, after introducing some of the specific conditions and initiatives within Aotearoa/New Zealand, it is important to focus on their current strategies and the role of QR Codes in such an initiative.

*Blue sky. Gleaming sunlight. Blue water. Pure.*<sup>1</sup> The New Zealand Government, through Tourism New Zealand (a government agency) invests in an on-going campaign “one hundred percent pure New Zealand”.<sup>2</sup> This campaign is not targeted on behalf of any industry in particular, but at disseminating the components of a national brand and creating a strong sense of New Zealand place that can itself be exported. The question that we ask in this book is important for small nations. Should they focus on a singular clean brand—as has emerged in New Zealand—or should there be a secondary strategy to enable regionalism through QR Codes and other social media application? In other words, is there an opportunity to create a series of special and specialist terms, ideas, and association that work off national creative and cultural industry policies and yet signify distinctiveness and distinction?

The horizontal integration of industries discussed in the previous chapter is discernible in most of the New Zealand marketing materials. In the campaign cited above, the caption—“See wizards turn water into wine”—demonstrates how filmic success moves into the wine industries. This integration of industries capitalizes on one area of expertise and frames and brands it into another.

In 2001, respondents in international target markets were asked if their impression of New Zealand matched the values articulated by the “one hundred percent pure New Zealand” campaign.<sup>3</sup> The “yes” results were:

Australians—84 %

North Americans—83 %

British—82 %

New Zealand products are apparently quite successfully mediated through this constructed image of the nation. For example, Chinese mothers value New Zealand’s image so greatly that New Zealand baby formula goes for inflated prices, four times the price it is sold for at home, with suggestions that it is smuggled from Auckland and Australia across the Chinese border (Smuggling of kiwi milk into China targeted 2013).

This national profiling matters because there is a distinct shape and mode of New Zealand industries generally that is particularly relevant for food and wine. New Zealand’s economy remained highly insulated well after other western economies had started to liberalize and remove controls over their current accounts. This isolationism was challenged by a series of serious shocks in the 1970s that reinforced the reality of New Zealand’s connection with the international economy. Many of these, like oil shocks, were shared with the rest of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Pure as: celebrating 10 years of 100 % Pure New Zealand*, Tourism New Zealand, 2009. <http://www.tourismnewzealand.com/media/106877/10%20year%20anniversary%20of%20100%20%20pure%20new%20zealand%20campaign%20-%20pure%20as%20magazine.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> *One hundred percent Pure New Zealand*. <http://www.newzealand.com/us/>.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*.

world. But in 1973 the United Kingdom, for which New Zealand was a food basket economy, became part of the European Economic Community (EEC). As part of the EEC, the UK introduced agricultural subsidies and reduced its trade with New Zealand. The incoming 1984 Labour government saw no option but to devalue the New Zealand dollar and start a sweeping program of reform. An open economy demonstrated the fact that New Zealand's industrial infrastructure was highly developed, but noncompetitive.

This reform coincided with a share market boom, and the 1980s became a period of fundamental economic transformation, as New Zealand moved from being an atypically closed entity to a leading edge open economy. Accordingly, the deregulation of the New Zealand economy coincided with the development of the business expense account (Rowland 2010), onto which were loaded fresh local ingredients and freshly imported foreign wines and delicacies. A local fine dining industry put to work a supply of fresh local ingredients that the British no longer wanted, as many Kiwis returning from cheaper, easier to access international travel brought with them new and exotic cuisines. New Zealand's own national cuisine would come to embrace and combine the most successful parts of these.

There were also international movements that created a gap for New Zealand wine, particularly in the European market. The reason for this gap can be captured by one word: Chernobyl. Barker, Lewis, and Moran demonstrate the impact of the nuclear "accident" on the wine industries.

A key example is the way that the fortunes of New Zealand wine on the showcase UK market were significantly boosted by events incidental to its development in the crucial period of the mid-1980s. The Chernobyl accident of April 1986 caused food safety concerns with many European wines—particularly those from Eastern Europe. Adulteration scandals in Austria and Italy in the mid-1980s had a similar effect ... Anti-apartheid sentiment reduced competition from South Africa, while the trade policies of Argentina and Chile hampered their exports ... New Zealand's "clean, green, nuclear-free" image, emphasized by the flavor characteristics of its flagship Sauvignon Blanc wines, gave its wines advantages in an expanding market that has proven central to the development of its wine industry (Barker et al. 2001).

These international factors matched the trade liberalization during the same period. The wine industry moved from protected and heavily regulated to become deregulated and globalized. During this period, capital that was invested in non-competitive industries started to be put to work in new industries where New Zealand excelled, such as primary goods, based on new international tastes. To compete on the world stage, wine moved out of the cardboard box ("chateau cardboard") and into the bottle. The subsequent share market crash of 1987 did not cease or ease New Zealanders' development of a foodie culture. Rowland sets out that it "muted New Zealanders' tastes toward a more modest concept of elegance—simpler, less formal, and associated with a sense of value" (Barker et al. 2001, p. 236). These qualities and "good honest produce" have also marked New Zealand's marketing of wine.

This history gives these businesses some of their characters. They are small, rely on the competitive advantage provided by fresh produce, and good growing

conditions, and they are new, relative to much of their competition. Without a tradition to enact through their products they are in need of other ways to inscribe their goods with value. The average size of New Zealand firms has been measured at 11.6 people, compared with 15.6 in the USA and 15.2 in Canada.<sup>4</sup> Most wine producers are also small. In 2009, 577 of the 643 wine growers in New Zealand had sales of less than 200,000 l (New Zealand Wine Statistical Annual 2009). There is a relatively high expenditure on research and development in small New Zealand firms. Just under 50 % of the total business R&D in New Zealand is accounted for by firms of fewer than fifty employees and almost 80 % is accounted for by firms of less than 250 employees. In both cases these are the highest relative R&D contributions by small firms of any OECD country. The equivalent numbers for the USA are less than 10 % and less than 20 %, respectively (Hong et al. 2009).

For some firms at least, this is a useful dynamic: small organizations, with short lines of internal communication and the capacity to bring a strategy to market quickly. Such a profile encourages networking and the rapid take up of new technologies. Accordingly, in a small country where implementation can be quick, New Zealand has implemented many things more quickly than other countries: digital telephone networks, a nationwide EFTPOS network (Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale) and even screw caps on wine bottles. The Financial Express noted that New Zealand wine makers were, “pioneers of the screw cap movement and also championed the cause of environment preservation alongside viticulture” (Re-New Zealand 2010). Such a statement combines the “clean and green” maxim alongside technological innovation. Yet, this commitment to the screw cap is not only about technological innovation. It is particularly suited to New Zealand conditions and the wine produced from it. Beverley Blanning linked the technological innovation and the distinctiveness of tasting New Zealand wine

Have you noticed just how much of the wine from New Zealand is sealed with a screw cap? Take a look. The switch away from cork has been remarkable here and is a trend that is also taking hold in many other parts of the world ... “Wines sealed in this way retain all of their vibrant fruit and aromatics, which probably explains New Zealanders’ keenness to embrace a product that highlights the natural qualities of their wines” (Blanning 2014).

The screw cap is linked to taste. The technological change has facilitated the concentration of the fruit flavor.

There is a wider context for this innovation. New Zealand has a history of companies using its early adopter characteristics for their own purposes. For example, since late 2011, both Facebook and LinkedIn have used New Zealand to trial new features ahead of the rest of the world.<sup>5</sup> The small is agile. Such a principle should also apply to specific wine regions in larger countries as well.

There is internal competition in the New Zealand market, but for many industries the most important competition is in the international market where just

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<sup>4</sup> Firm dynamics in New Zealand: a comparison with OECD countries, Duncan Mills and Jason Timmins, New Zealand Treasury Working Paper 04/11.

one of the forces is a strong national (France) (Gade 2004) and regional (Napa Valley) brands. This has led to a clear tradition of cooperative effort and an acceptance of the reality that, to be externally competitive, they need a concerted effort including a common approach in creating perceived value and having a commonly high quality of product. Producer Boards, and arrangements like them, are a feature of many New Zealand industries. They have been constituted to cover interests including meat and wool, dairy products, apples and pears, and wine. They can agree on standards and coordinate the transformation of an industry together for the common good. The international initiative to introduce screw caps for wine (and eliminate “corked” wines) started as a joint effort by New Zealand winemakers (though inspired by an Australian Fuseworks Media (2011)) to create competitive advantage. It took a joint effort to research screw caps, create demand for a supplier to meet at reasonable cost, and convince a global industry that the screw caps would not diminish the quality of the wine but would instead make quality wine easier to purchase (Fuseworks Media 2011).

These producer boards advanced the “100 % pure” campaign and image, adapting it to the consumer preferences in each industry. This has been a successful strategy. The New Zealand Wine Growers Association (to which all winegrowers belong) represents 205 million litres of wine (New Zealand Wine Statistical Annual 2009), a more than tripling of the amount of wine produced by member wineries in 2000. This organization constructs and mobilizes the iconography of New Zealand wines with a clean, green image that relies on and is a sophisticated cousin to, the Tourism New Zealand campaign. The paradox of such advertising is that the wine industry has a sizeable environmental impact. Viticulture requires large quantities of water. Many chemicals are required for both wine making and grape growing (Gabzdylova et al. 2009). Therefore, sustainability in the industry is important. The drivers are that it is a “dirty” industry, with 10 liters of waste water produced per liter of wine (Gabzdylova et al. 2009). Strategies are available that render the packaging kinder to the environment. O-I New Zealand, a glass packaging manufacturer, is creating lighter glass. This reduces the cost of export, but also the environmental consequences. Increasingly, there are movements toward sustainable winemaking (Goode and Harrop 2011). This model is based not only on understanding the grape and appropriate ripeness, but also rethinking the scale and scope of the volume of yields.

It is easy to question whether, without a strong national campaign to constitute the New Zealand brand, producer boards could have been as successful as they have been. It has been hard to promote even quality produce because of its shipping costs; but the right marketing can romanticize the fact of shipping the item from somewhere exotic as an attraction. Therefore, the role of digital interventions in preparing prospective consumers for products is incredibly valuable. The key is how this general national branding policy can be applied to both wine

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<sup>5</sup> For example see LinkedIn uses NZ to test New Endorsement Feature (2012), Facebook Trials Timeline in NZ (2011).

and specific regional development. Importantly, there is a necessity to build links and relationships between these regional businesses, to create an economic and social cluster that is both sustainable and authentic (Dana and Winstone 2008).

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## Chapter 11

# Creative Industries: A Pinot in One Hand, a Throttle in the Other

QR Codes are commonly used for New Zealand wines and in New Zealand wine stores, and the success of this use demonstrates its potential to serve as an excellent test bed for marketing wineries and wine regions throughout NZ and worldwide. One major retailer advertises that ‘you can receive tasting notes direct to your mobile’ for its major wines (Mobile tasting room 2013). With this policy and marketing context in mind, it is no surprise that QR Codes have taken off in New Zealand, where:

- (a) The second major selling point for New Zealand wine after its quality is a constructed sense of place that is specific to the country of production (100 % Pure New Zealand).
- (b) That place is geographically isolated from most target markets and customers (but hopefully they have seen *Lord of the Rings*).
- (c) Wine producers can quickly bring to market a cost-effective, easy to implement solution like QR Codes that can relocate the New Zealand place to the prospective purchaser, irrespective of where they are located.
- (d) There are strong, industry-wide arrangements to share practice and agreed standards.
- (e) The audience for New Zealand wine is relatively likely to own a smartphone that can run a QR Code reader.
- (f) New Zealand’s trading partners with the greatest potential for growth (in Asia) have high usage and penetration of QR Codes.

Therefore, all the strategies outlined in this book are in place, with a considered relationship between product, information and audience. The question now is how to move from a highly successful national policy, and the emerging profile of Auckland and Wellington as internationally branded cities, to enable regional development for the non-Malborough wines. Also, there is great potential for an integrated marketing plan between wine and food (Hall 2004). The management of wine bottle geography is pivotal to this strategy. If wine bottle labels are the equivalent of real estate then their value is not only in altering the purchasing



decision of a buyer in a shop, but also in providing brand and regional awareness once the bottle has been bought. The bottle can keep on selling, even after it is at home and empty.

Bottles matter to wine because it is an incredibly unusual product. As Blackman Bicknell and MacDonald realized,

Wine is a highly differentiated experience good with limited availability of information about its true quality until the time of consumption. As a consequence, buyers must use proxies of a wine's value to make the best possible purchase decisions (Bicknell and MacDonald 2012).

There is an array of proxies—including price—that attempt to reduce the risk in purchasing a bottle of wine. Price frequently—but far from always—connotes taste and quality. Yet the nature of quality is subjective when applied to all the senses and all cultural formations. But one of the proxies is strong regional branding. That reputation can impact on and frame the price of wine.

This is a crucial moment to balance the relationship between national and regional branding, beyond Marlborough. New Zealand lies between 34 and 47° south latitude. This positioning generates cool weather, but there is a diversity of climate and strong hours of sunshine and plentiful rainfall. This diversity, even on small islands, makes a difference. The North Island features a warmer climate, with Gisborne and Hawke's Bay releasing Chardonnay.<sup>1</sup> The Wairarapa region—on the south-east of the North Island—features a climate between Hawke's Bay and Marlborough, enabling the release of Pinot Noir. Within the Wairarapa is Martinborough, an emerging region that is beginning to develop independent brand recognition.

The South Island features the best known and most heavily marketed wine region of New Zealand: Marlborough. Two-thirds of the nation's wine emanate from here. The climate is unusual and interesting. It is sunny and dry, but features wide temperature ranges each day. This variance lifts the acidity in the grapes. These conditions create the opportunity for the emergence of high quality Sauvignon Blanc. The Waipara region features similar conditions to Marlborough, with specific releases of Pinot Noir, Reisling and Chardonnay. Central Otago reveals the largest extremes of temperature in New Zealand, producing a unique Pinot Noir.

This regional production creates some interesting trans-local consumption. Kathryn Blackman Bicknell and Ian MacDonald reported that,

The vast majority of the sauvignon blanc and an increasing percentage of the pinot noir produced and bottled in New Zealand are destined for the export market. By contrast, the majority of the New Zealand chardonnay is marketed domestically, and faces significant competition from Australian imports (Bicknell and MacDonald 2012, p. 175).

Therefore, the wine bottles for these products do hold a distinct function. By New Zealand law, particular information is required on the label: grape variety, alcohol

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<sup>1</sup> MacQuitty (2011) stated that, "For me, the best Hawkes Bay chardonnays taste like Chablis from a ripe vintage, but with a New World twist of tropical fruit."

content, preservatives, additives, region and brand. But if the markets are distinct, a differentiation on the basis of consumers (and desired consumers) is required (Bicknell and MacDonald 2012, p. 183). Studies show that regionality in New Zealand wine is most significant with the Chardonnays and least relevant with the Sauvignon Blancs (Easingwood et al. 2011; London and Smith 1998). The reason for this may be that the national branding has tethered itself to the Sauvignon Blanc. Many nations make high-quality Chardonnay, including a high volume yield from Australia. Therefore, with the number of winegrowers tripling in the past 15 years in New Zealand (New Zealand Winegrowers 2009), and with an array of wines being produced beyond the Sauvignon Blanc, regional marketing will be an increasing necessity to both differentiate and brand the products locally and internationally.

One of those modes of differentiation is via the age of the consumer. As shown in the earlier stages of this book, age and gender are key determiners of the likelihood to scan a barcode on any product. Men in their late twenties and thirties (the early adopter profile for technology) are the most frequent users. This group incorporates older Generation Y and younger Generation X. In thinking through the local market for New Zealand wine (regional Chardonnay) and the export market (Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc), Joanna Fountain and Charles Lamb probed how age is transforming the New Zealand industry. Their discovery is fascinating and must be considered—and tested—in other national and regional markets.

New Zealand Gen Y are drinking wine more frequently, and in more everyday contexts than their older counterparts were at a similar age, although they are less likely to consume wine on special occasions (Fountain and Lamb 2011).

Importantly, both Generations X and Y maintain a preference for drinking New Zealand wine over imported wine (Fountain and Lamb 2011, p. 119). Therefore, this group is a useful test case to align information about regional wine via QR Codes and building new markets for emerging wine varieties. It is also important to consider the horizontal integration of the wine industry, with other industries such as food and tourism. This is where the presence of a QR Code on a bottle or on attendant packaging is important. Simpson, Bretherton and de Vere realized that ‘wine tourism is an important niche activity for which participant needs and motivations have been somewhat under researched’ (Simpson et al. 2005). It is based on the formulation of relationships between producers and consumers, built through a bottle of wine and its contents. In thinking about the relationships encircling wine, the focus must be on the precise nature of ‘the product’ and ‘the service’. In reality, the buying and selling of wine is not about alcohol, but it is about shared experience. Simpson, Bretherton and de Vere showed that the visitors to cellar doors buy a small amount of wine, but frequently (Simpson et al. 2005, p. 180). Therefore, these consumers are not cellaring. They recommended distinct strategies to assist these consumers.

Winery visitors buy a lot of wine—from the cellar door, from supermarkets, from liquor merchants and from wine stores—and it appears that ‘frequently, in small quantities’ is the

typical pattern. In a circumstance where nearly 80 % of respondents buy wine at least once monthly, but 50 % have less than one dozen bottles currently in their home cellar, the winery's premium product (that which is recommended for medium-to-long term cellaring) may not necessarily be appreciated by cellar door visitors. In order to reach the 92 % of visitors who do not regard themselves as experts, there may be greater value in promoting the ready drinkability of basic labels, wine for drinking rather than cellaring, and this is a conceptualization of wine (as a fun beverage) that is strongly supported in later stages of this discussion (Simpson et al. 2005, p. 180).

Therefore, the experience of wine is about the product in context. It is bought, opened and shared. The point of sale—and point of opening—moment is relevant. These two windows are opportunities for information to be provided about the environment and distinctiveness of the wine. After the global economic crisis, this specific group of little (and often) consumers (which is the bulk of the audience for wine) need to be engaged in new ways. Banrock Station, for example, is linking their brand with environmental projects and sustainability, such as the Wetland Centre in South Australia and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in the United Kingdom. Considered and careful marketing is required to understand local and international markets. Mike Reid, Trent Johnson, Mike Ratcliffe, Karl Skrip and James Wilson have argued that 'business as usual' is not an option.

In the context of the ANZ wine industry it is likely that a new breed of marketing communication professionals will be required to effect this integrated perspective of marketing communications ... The large retail outlets found in key markets such as the UK will continue to demand higher service levels from wine marketers—coordinated brand portfolio and category management practices, significant volumes of competitive trade terms, improved promotional programmes and support, and higher levels of professionalism (Reid et al. 2001).

Such strategies must be carefully targeted, managing a series of sociological studies on wine, age and technology. At the moment there is confusion, masked by the dominance of Marlborough. Consider the Clocktower Pinot Noir (Fig. 11.1). Multiple geographies are activated through this wine bottle geography. But the connection between Marlborough and New Zealand (in other words, Marlborough is New Zealand) is confirmed.

The New Zealand branding is clear, with the clean, green and pure iconography that follows. 'Marlborough' as a region, international hub of high quality wine is also presented in a way that is actually more predominant than 'New Zealand'. But Marks and Spencer, the British High Street mainstay, has literally anchored the bottle. So a British retailer is literally validating this New Zealand wine. To sort out these conflictual spaces and places, a QR Code on the back could provide more focused and clear information, assisting the winemaker, Marlborough and New Zealand.

To provide an international context for what is currently occurring: Marlborough is New Zealand's equivalent of the Napa Valley in the United States. Jerry Anne Di Vecchio solidified this connection beyond wine domination.

Marlborough district on New Zealand's South Island is reminiscent of California's Napa Valley. Both regions attract visitors with a taste for pastoral scenery and fine wines. But



**Fig. 11.1** Clocktower geography (Photography by Tara Brabazon)

there is one big difference—the seasons are upside down: when it’s winter in Napa, it’s summer in Marlborough ... If you’re planning a New Zealand vacation, consider adding Marlborough to your itinerary. Besides wine touring, it offers grand biking, hiking, and trout fishing (Di Vecchio 1994).

This case is well made. But there are many more wine regions in the U.S. than Napa alone. Clear strategies for market differentiation are required to enable these other brands. American wine is not simply Napa wine. Such a model should be followed for New Zealand, and can be enabled at a faster speed through applications like QR Codes.

The goal is to market an analogue place, on an analogue object, yet deploying digital means. John Overton described this as, ‘the production and consumption of particular spaces in the New Zealand wine industry’ (Overton 2010). Wine is ideally suited when considering new strategies to align the analogue and digital. As stated in our introduction, our goal is to expand this project to food production and agriculture more generally, so that consumers can receive accurate information about food, and producers can present the context of their products. But wine is an ideal test case for this project as the location in which the grapes are grown are so integral to both how the wine is produced and how it is branded and marketed. This is captured within the French concept of *Terroir*, which activates a discussion of landscape and climate, but also the human history of work,

technology and expertise. Importantly, a place is being sold. The question is how this place is framed and marketed. Such a strategy is not detailing the reality of a place. Terroir, like the marketing strategy based on it, is founded on an assumption (Barham 2003). Overton realizes that,

the concept of terroir is predicated on the idea that quality and distinctiveness of product is a function of place: the essence of a place can be found—and consumed—in a glass of wine (or a piece of cheese, or a type of coffee). Consumption of products branded in these ways is, literally, the consumption of place. It is not just the physical act of consumption of a glass of wine that represents a place; it is also the consumption of the particular construction of that place as represented by industry capital, winemakers, advertising agencies and wine writers and retailers. Constructions of places thus move through the value chain from production to consumption (Barham 2003, p. 761).

This is more than consumption. It is virtual teleportation to a place. This is place marketing. It is a place at a glance (Banks et al. 2007). There is a politics to the placing of wine, with critics, journalists, winemakers and educators all battling to frame and control the thinking spaces of the product (Colman 2008). These wine places are being constructed. They are not ‘natural’. Nature is being bent, shaped and digitized to create a sharp and crisp alignment of production and consumption (Overton and Heitger 2008). The goal of shaping wine in this way is to develop a series of experiences, a drinking culture (Wilson 2005).

New Zealand has been slow in protecting how wine industry locations in the nation are protected. Considering the dominance of Sauvignon Blanc and Marlborough, and the necessity to upkeep the ‘clean and green’ maxim, New Zealand has moved very slowly to configure and enforce Geographical Indicators for its food and wine (Overton 2010, p. 754). Part of this process is to invest in and understand rural places. Rurality is an ideology. It must be built and created (Overton and Heitger 2008). While New World wines—the United States of America, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and the South American nations—have increased their market share on the ‘Old World’, they have often done so by cutting away (and often dismissing) Old world regulatory mechanisms. But in the case of New Zealand, there may be an option and opportunity to invest in Terroir, but with a digital twist. New Zealand production techniques are expensive: small-scale operators produce a variable quantity and quality of wine because of the variations and unpredictability of the climate. Therefore, it targets the ‘ultrapremium’ market. Cask wine is avoided. Saunders describes New Zealand as ‘the evolving boutique wine country of the world’ (Saunders 2004). So therefore, investing heavily in the distinctiveness of place is a way to justify the high prices for the low yield. In 1994, the Geographical Indications Act was passed, but not applied with effectiveness because of the World Trade Organizations intellectual property and trade protection measures (Saunders 2004, p. 422). Yet, if provenance can be established for food and wine, then effective branding can be enabled (Murray and Overton 2011).

There are benefits from integrating a physical industry (agriculture) with a cultural one (the creative industries, including intellectual property rights, marketing, branding, skill development and design). This strategy has been successful

for New Zealand winemakers. New Zealand wine achieved a compound 10 % increase in export receipts across each of the past 4 years, from \$815 million in August 2008 to \$1,189 million in August 2012 (New Zealand Wine Insights 2012). This growth is not based on cost, or cost alone, because New Zealand growing conditions do not favour volume (New Zealand Wine Insights 2012, p. 14). New Zealand competes on quality and provenance. The California Wine Export Programme reports that in 2007 New Zealand wines had the highest export value per litre out of any country, surpassing even France.

But there are challenges. The relationship between place and taste is complex, ambiguous, difficult to measure and even more difficult to manage. We are trying to use QR Codes to capture and build that relationship, by presenting narratives of grape growing and wine making. This can be accomplished through links to digitized text, photographs and video. Clearly though, disconnections of place and taste in export marketing on New Zealand is taking place. A 2011 review in the New York Times from Eric Asimov responded to his tasting of New Zealand Pinot Noir.

A sense of place—the idea that the wine you are drinking expresses the specific qualities of a particular place and a particular culture or people—develops over time, as farmers and consumers come to understand the qualities of a piece of land ... Many of the wines were lacking a sense of place ... But the thing that kept coming back to me was a lack of definition in the wines, a sort of muddiness that prevented many of them from expressing themselves with clarity and precision (Asimov 2011).

Some of this critique is nonsense. It is too simple to want the structures of red wine to undulate over the contours of the landscape. Also, of all wines, Pinot Noir is intensely of the landscape and geography. The specificity of the cool climate required for it makes the Marlborough and Central Otago wines incredibly rare in the suite of New World wine producing countries (Robinson 2001).

New Zealand winemakers continue to promote the trans-local, both building and benefiting from a strong New Zealand brand. At the 2013 America's Cup, visitors to the New Zealand base's wine bar in San Francisco could download an App, scan codes on New Zealand wines, and use the app to learn about the vineyard, watch a video about how the wine was been made and find out where to buy it.<sup>2</sup>

For prospective consumers with a smartphone, a QR Code can enact the connection between New Zealand greenery, technology and even sportsmanship. Sun, sea, spray, grapes and kiwi ingenuity, all bottled together into a single signficatory space that compels not just a single purchase, but a national brand. *Who cares* if you've never been to New Zealand? That Pinot saves you the 20 hour plane ride.

The key question remains about the specificity of branding in and through New Zealand wine. Is the national branding sufficient and appropriate? Can a QR Code simply link to 'clean and green' iconography and narratives about New Zealand wine? Or is there now a maturity in the export markets where digital wine can

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<sup>2</sup> New Zealand business meets America's Cup, Press Release. [http://www.newzealand.com/travel/media/features/kiwi\\_innovation/sailing\\_nz-business-meets-americas-cup.cfm](http://www.newzealand.com/travel/media/features/kiwi_innovation/sailing_nz-business-meets-americas-cup.cfm).

configure regional clusters to render the marketing more complex and specific. Leo Dana and Kate Winstone took these research questions as their focus, assessing the capacity and integrity of a 'Waipara wine cluster'. Less than an hour from Christchurch, which is fully serviced by an airport, the branding is emerging that describes the region as, 'the world's greenest wine region'.<sup>3</sup> In this site, terroir is summoned, alongside recognition of the very specific climate. As with the Australian winemakers and industry websites, this is a conventional web 1.0 (read web) site. The level of interaction, embedded sonic and visual files is low. This is digital wine, but is basically configured. Certainly, a QR Code could link to this site, to increase awareness of the landscape, grape growing and wine making. But it would be more powerful to link to richer materials.

The importance of a cluster in wine marketing is that it is a reshaped brand and product for an international and domestic audience (Mytelka and Goertzen 2003; Harfield 1999; Porter and Bond 2004). Clusters are defined by Swann and Prevezer as, 'groups of firms within one industry based in one geographical area' (Swann and Prevezer 1996). So regions then compete against others to enable growth. The New Zealand wine industry does exhibit authentic regional relationships. Importantly, the cluster is an important term, variable and trope to understand an array of agricultural industries. While other industries—such as IT and manufacturing—may move across and between cities—grapevines are literally planted into the soil. So these wine regions are geographically proximate and capture particular characteristics of climate and terrain. The key strength in investing in clusters and regions, rather than a clean and green national iconography, is that attendant industries, such as transportation networks and tourism, can link into the cluster. This is—once more—horizontal alignment of the creative industries. Tourism is invested into a very specific configuration of place, focusing on what is different rather than the same. Arriving at Auckland airport to experience New Zealand wine is not helpful. But targeting a strategy to arrive at Christchurch airport—noting that an array of direct international flights already exist and very regular flights from both Wellington and Auckland—builds (on) that clustering. Therefore the focus on internationalization is not simply promoting the wine in an export market. It is enabling and promoting other industries.

As set out in this volume, and as shown by New Zealanders and their wines, the use of QR Codes is about more than just a barcode. It inscribes wine as a destination rather than just a product. If the question is how 'capacity building' in a range of small and media food and wine enterprises is created (Braun and Hollick 2007), then QR Codes have the ability to cut through a crowded market and co-opt brand values that have been built to propel local products forward. All wineries have a life cycle (Beverland and Lockshin 2000). That is the physical industry. So too does the cultural industry have a life cycle. This century has been the rise of 'Brand States' as described by Peter van Ham, writing in 2001. These are nation

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<sup>3</sup> "The world's greenest wine region," Waipara Wine, <http://www.waiparawine.co.nz>.



states inscribed with brand values that have ‘emotional resonance’ in the same way as private sector consumer brands. As Van Ham suggested,

We all know that “America” and “Made in the U.S.A.” stand for individuality and prosperity; Hermès scarves and Beaujolais Nouveau evoke the French *art de vivre*; BMWs and Mercedes-Benzes drive with German efficiency and reliability. In fact, brands and states often merge in the minds of the global consumer. For example, in many ways, Microsoft and McDonald’s are among the most visible U.S. diplomats, just as Nokia is Finland’s envoy to the world (van Ham 2001).

Van Ham concludes that ‘to do their jobs well in the future, politicians will have to train themselves in brand asset management’ (van Ham 2001). He could have been writing about the 100 % Pure New Zealand campaign. The New Zealand wine initiative is an example of how industries can benefit from being part of a *Brand State*. The 100 % Pure brand is a national treasure. If QR Codes are to be a bridge between a product and its context and brand, the physical producer of the product will need to know that these will endure. In the New Zealand context that means wine, dairy, wool, meat and other primary produce are all connected. To the extent that they can all impact the national brand, they can help—or hinder—each other.

It is risky to overstress a singular national brand. In August 2013 Fonterra, New Zealand’s main dairy exporter, recalled tonnes of milk products after concerns that they had been contaminated by botulism. Tragically, potentially contaminated Fonterra whey had been used to manufacture baby formula. Concerns about the extent of contamination extended to families in a variety of markets, including China where parents were concerned by the potential for harm to their only child—as is common under China’s one child policy. These incidents in the ‘extended 100 % pure family’ are important. The Fonterra recall was reported in media worldwide. The response in Chinese media was not just to attack Fonterra but to specifically target New Zealand’s ‘100 % Pure’ campaign as a ‘festering sore’ (100 % Festering Sore—Chinese News Sites 2013). Chinese media questioned the level of quality control in New Zealand as a country—not just in dairy produce, but referencing quality control problems with the construction of New Zealand homes and suggesting that quality control and food safety issues are systemic problems (100 % Festering Sore—Chinese News Sites 2013). ‘100 % Pure New Zealand’ was compared to a McDonald’s slogan.

Therefore, there have been some aspersions cast on the validity and accuracy of the popular promotion, ‘100 % Pure New Zealand’. Will this shadow have an impact on the market for New Zealand wine? It may not, but the answer will be decided one bottle at a time, in each market, by each consumer—in just the same way as the QR Codes on the bottles. The incident highlights a final important lesson for users of QR Codes. The successful hitching of agricultural and cultural industries relies on the health of both, if success is to be achieved and maintained. ‘100 % Pure’ has a lot to offer, but only for as long as both the agricultural and cultural industries maintain their integrity.

Valid questions are raised for users of QR Codes. How much to invest in a national brand (100 % Pure New Zealand), a local brand (Wellywood) or an



industry brand (Hawkes Bay wine)? New Zealand can be expected to invest heavily in a national brand that connects all of these together, and to do what it takes to maintain it. The choice may not be hard. But in other contexts it may not be as simple. What is the value of a national brand to your product, what are the alternatives and how confident can you be of the strength and durability of those you consider appropriate? That choice is important—though experience suggests that picking the right affiliation, and using QR Codes purposefully and well, would be a worthy promotion.

It is necessary to return to the key setup of the sociology of QR codes offered in the first few chapters of this book. ‘Everyone’ does not use QR codes. They have different uses in different nations, but affluent men in the early adopter profile are the key users. They are also the targeted market for wine. Importantly, interview-based studies are now emerging about the distinctions between male and female wine consumers. So at this point, it is possible to align regionalism, clustering, wine consumption and technology.

In the United States, the most studied wine industry, women (surprisingly) purchase the majority of wine (Atkin et al. 2007). Studies have shown that women spend more time researching and understanding wine than men, who are more instinctual in their judgments (Barber 2009). Women will talk to winery employees and those working in wine shops, while also reading labels. Women also visit more wineries than men, but do not purchase the equivalent amount of wine (Thach 2012). Therefore, wine tourism is important in and to this gendered discussion of wine. Yet women are 55.5 % of the consumers of that wine (Nielsen 2009). Therefore, considering the current sociological profile of QR Codes users—affluent men in the late twenties, thirties and early forties—this purchasing pattern for wine may suggest the codes will not work. However, Liz Thach’s study confirmed that, ‘Differences in motivation indicate that men are more interested in discussing the technical aspects of wine and exhibiting knowledge, whereas women want to relax and socialize with friends over wine’ (Thach 2012, p. 134). However, women use the information that is available at the point of purchase, perhaps because—as Thach suggests—they are more under-confident and worried about making mistakes about wine (Thach 2012). Therefore, recognizing that men and women use information about wine differently, QR codes can be targeted for these social uses. Women deploy information at the point of sale to make their decision. They would scan the QR Code if they knew of its function to display valuable information to enable their purchase. However, men—who have not purchased the wine they are drinking and discussing—will use the information to discuss the ‘technical aspects’ of the wine after it has been bought. Therefore, that creates brand loyalty and future purchases. New media enable new wine choices.

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## Chapter 12

### Conclusion

An array of new wine regions and districts are emerging outside of the old wine economies. These new businesses are often unprotected by EU laws and languages and—since 2008—must be entrepreneurial rather than subsidized. Infrastructure funding is declining and national, state, or provincial support is reduced. Therefore, strategies must be implemented that add great value to the product economically, socially, and in terms of sustainability, at minimal cost.<sup>1</sup> Many of these strategies can emerge by thinking about wine marketing and communication in a new way. For example, the Goriška Brda wine district, located on the Slovenian border with Italy, is growing, particularly in the area of wine tourism. But the question is how this region is branded beyond these nations. Igor Jurinčič and Štefan Bojnec offer some suggestions, but the mechanisms and strategies to accomplish them are unclear at this stage.

Among the proposals for future development are also networking in wine tourism supply with tourist agencies and tourist information centers in Slovenia and abroad; joint promotion in different fair activities by the regional wine, olive oil, and fruit producers as well as presentation of typical local foods; and development of different sport and other activities for tourists (Jurinčič and Bojnec 2009).

All these initiatives are correct and useful. The question is how these projects, protocols, and policies can be enabled. The versatility of the QR Code can solve—or at least manage—many of these challenges and opportunities. QR codes on print-based documentation can provide an array of links to wineries, local food producers, events, and special initiatives.

Throughout this book, the visibility and penetration of QR Codes in the United States and Canada have expanded. The number of QR Codes generated and displaced has moved from a gimmick to a tool. Similarly, Australian and New Zealand wine industries have transformed the QR Code into a digital screw cap: a sign of innovation, intervention, and imagination. The current digital links from the codes are not as innovative as they could be, accessing generic Web sites rather

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<sup>1</sup> While published before the proliferation of the web into business, education, and popular culture, we wish to note the value of (de Haan et al. 1997).

than specifically generated and targeted data, but the digital strategy is improving. It is important to remember what the “QR” means: Quick Response. QR Codes have the capacity to display intensely relevant information to a user at speed. Yet in an age when supposedly “everything” is online, the QR Code remains a bridge between the on and offline worlds. The value of this bridge—and its best uses—are only now being realized, proposed, activated, and evaluated. The next stage of development will not be the QR Code, but enhancing the data—and appropriateness—for specific audiences. Tailoring of materials for the small and mobile screen is easy to recognize, but more complex to enact. Ensuring large buttons to press, a clean and precise interface, few images, and text at the correct size for the platform are simply and key strategies. The success of the QR Code is also easy to evaluate. Just as with Google Analytics, QR Codes offer a rapid and trackable route to information. While men have been the primary and early market, this will change, as consumerism changes.

Some fascinating and complex decisions will need to be made in the next stage of development for QR Codes and the international wine industry. Will the function of the codes be marketing or customer service? Will the Codes aim to provide further information—and perhaps upscale future purchases—or should it be linked to wine reviews? The decision should be determined by the product and the audience. If the imperative is to convince the consumer in the shop to buy the wine, then reviews are most appropriate. However, for the lower level wines from major wine makers, a goal may be to acknowledge the purchase but show other more expensive wines that are available for view next time. If the aim is to create a culture around the wine, then providing links to recipes and food pairing may be useful. The focus must be to use the QR Code in a way that conveys information that is not possible by other means. A wine bottle cannot play a video on YouTube. Through QR Codes, a wine bottle becomes a portal for video.

Drinking wine is a sensory experience. It activates the eyes, nose (Allen et al. 1991) and tongue. The key is to find a way to organize, align, and energize the relationships between these senses to increase the quality of information gained, understood, and applied. A key—and currently underplayed—strategy is to use the wine bottle’s label to align taste with information about regionality. So, for example, building the connections and content around Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc (Parr et al. 2007) or Chardonnay (Ballester et al. 2005). Experienced wine tasters are able to locate and diagnose particular flavors (O’Mahony 1991) emerging from a particular geographical location (Barker 2006). ‘Terroir,’ (Jackson and Lombard 1993) builds the link between product and place. This alignment is then captured in language (Brochet and Dubourdieu 2001). This book has argued that more is needed than *terroir*, to enable an engagement with geography, history, and regional development. The key is to create an intervention of information between the senses and regional location, information, and sales.

Sauvignon Blanc grapes are grown in the Marlborough region in New Zealand. They have specific characteristics (Parr et al. 2005). But wine writing—and wine media more generally—amplifies this distinctiveness. These regional distinctions

focus on the varietal specificity of the wine (Parr et al. 2006), rather than the post-picking production process.<sup>2</sup> Through QR Codes, an industry—of grape growing, wine making, design, advertising, and regional clustering—can be marked and marketed. This is modern wine: taking tradition, but revealing it through the scan of a mobile phone.

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<sup>2</sup> Parr et al. op cit, p. 850.

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