



## Best Practice in Promoting Territorial Wine Tourism – The Example of Central Otago

*Dr. Steve Charters MW*

*‘Essence distilled, Excellence instilled’*

# The territorial brand

- **This presentation focuses on what is termed the territorial brand. This is a brand which**
  - belongs to all the producers in a definable territory, and which necessarily exists because the product they make can only be created there and cannot be replicated anywhere else.
  - includes some drinks, foodstuffs and tourism.
  - consequently exists together and in cooperation with a number of individual proprietary brands of the same product.
- **Crucially, the perceived quality and reputation of the brand is based on collective activity.**



# The Central Otago wine industry

042\_n\_zealand

Page 1 of 1

- A new industry – commercial wine only made from 1987.
  - Now New Zealand's fourth largest wine producing region.
- The southernmost wine region in the world.
- Internationally regarded for the quality of its pinot noir wines.
- Two co-ordinating groups which work together.
  - COWA – the wine industry association.
  - COPNL – to promote the region's pinot noir.



# The cohesion of the actors

- The idea that everyone worked together for the good of the region is a dominant theme in the discourse
- Interviewees asked to name three key players
  - The two most often cited were amongst the first four to plant vineyards - praised for their willingness to work together.
  - A second phase seen to add a level of professionalism qualified winemakers and viticulturists and a 'tireless' marketing/public relations "genius"
    - thus offering three key skills for consolidating the region.
- They gave 'financial and intellectual investment when the first generation was still keeping their head above water'. The different phases of the industry, however, work well together.
  - 'We all share ideas'.
- Motivation is perceived to be a key element in cohesion.
  - It was suggested that nearly everyone who came into the industry 'came here because it is a great place to live'.

# Willingness to accept the overriding imperative of a territorial brand.

- **Stemming from cohesion was a strong sense that the territorial brand was more significant than any individual producer.**
  - Of one early pioneer it was said that ‘he had a dream for the region’
  - Another (15) said of one pioneer that he had shown the need to protect the region ‘so that the region becomes a brand in its own right’.
  - ‘Don’t bug each other ... don’t promote your wines over someone else’s wine – promote Central Otago’.
- **This acceptance of the paramount nature of the territorial brand is unusual but offers strength.**
  - It may stem from the fact that there are six sub-regions, allowing internal place differentiation, rather than quality differentiation - thus ‘your wine is not worse than mine, just different’.
- **The importance of welcoming visitors to cement loyalty**
  - ‘If you can get them here they’ll fall in love with it and they’ll go back and sell it. That’s the cheapest investment’.

# The story - external

- **The mythology underpins cohesion and acceptance of the territorial brand.**
  - This starts with the product
    - ‘Pinot noir is sexy; you look all intellectual drinking [it] yet it tastes easy’.
  - A wider geographic and historic context.
    - The gold rush (an indexical relationship between a valuable past product and the modern wine).
    - Pioneering activity of the first settlers.
    - The area’s topographic and visual character ‘every vineyard in Central Otago has an exclamation mark behind it – a mountain, a lake, a river’.
- **These stories are mainly for external consumption. Others are internal.**



## The story - internal

- Initially the rest of the New Zealand wine industry would not accept them.
  - External enemies strengthen internal cohesion.
- The external critics now love the wine, so new enemies are found.
  - One person commented that the local community does not realise how important the wine industry is, another that the local tourism plan has almost no proposed investment in wine tourism.
- Not many winemakers leave the region after they have come, suggesting that Central Otago is some kind of oenological Valhalla.

## An icon wine style

- It was clear early on that good pinot noir could be made.
- There were a variety of styles.
- Everyone accepted that this was the dominant variety, and that varying styles were acceptable.
- Consumers latch onto this defining variety.



# An effective brand manager.

## ■ COWA

- The brand manager accepts that supporting pinot noir is a key function. Thus...

## ■ ...COPNL

- The comment was made about COPNL that 'the founder ... needs a gold medal', because it was perceived to promote a single, coherent image.

## ■ Joint marketing ventures.

- Regular pinot noir conferences.
- Road shows and joint promotions around the world.
- A memorandum of understanding with Burgundy.

**Thanks for your attention...**

**...and are  
there any  
questions?**

