Economists on bloggers

9 Dec 2011 by Jancis Robinson

Exactly a week after my own thoughts on wine blogging and bloggers (see Meeting the wine bloggers), the American Association of Wine Economists publish a much more serious paper on Motivations and Characteristics of International Wine Bloggers by J Freitas Santos.

Click on the link above to read it in its entirety if, like me, you are fascinated by the future of wine writing, although it is odd to see such an intuitive business as writing about wine online analysed so formally with recourse always to substantiating previous research work, much of it surely out of date. (To refer to a paper published in 1999 seems postively quaint in this particular context, for example.)

The Portuguese economist who wrote the paper earnestly tells us, 'Content is considered to be most important element of the blog (Kargar *et al*., 2008) and is seen to be directly related to blog success (Safran and Kappe, 2008).'

Some interesting factual nuggets can be extracted, however. For example, visitor numbers are higher in Asia than in Europe or the US (a finding underlined by Debra Meiburg MW in her recent presentation on a similar topic in Hong Kong), and the principal motivation for wine bloggers seems to be to help promote themselves in other wine-related work, as the paper puts it.

It seems to have been written primarily to guide brand owners and provide them with information on how best to utilise this particular new medium and concludes with some puzzlement, 'this study indicates the minor role of advertisement and the practice of rating wines as a strategy to increase the profitability of the blog'.