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Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

MYSTERY VISITORS AS A VEHICLE TO EXPLORE SERVICE QUALITY AT CELLAR DOORS OF THE STELLENBOSCH WINE ROUTE

by

WEI-YING KATHLEEN CHEN

Mini-thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF TECHNOLOGY: MARKETING MANAGEMENT

in the Faculty of Business

at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Supervisor: Mr Norbert Haydam

Cape Town

July 2010

DECLARATION

I, Wei-Ying Kathleen Chen, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.



Signed

30/08/2010

Date

ABSTRACT

This study examines the validity of the mystery shopper research method, which was applied in the context of wine tourism. In the process of achieving this objective, the service quality of selected wine estates along the Stellenbosch Wine Route (SWR) was also established. Furthermore, the findings reveal whether this research method is beneficial to facilitate customer relationships.

Wine tourism is considered a special interest tourism that has received heightened global attention in the past decade, both practically and academically. This growth is also mirrored domestically, as wine tourism is one of the major attractions in the Western Cape. Since 2006, the number of wine estates in the Stellenbosch region rose by 12.3%, resulting in more than 140 wine estates that are currently available. This ultimately means that there are more wine estates, which all compete for the same customer base, and this increases competitiveness. Moreover, being a relatively homogenous product offering, with the key differential point being the actual winescape, it is important that wine estates focus on delivering superior service quality in order to achieve competitive advantage. This also calls for a need to systematically test service quality and procedures to ensure that desired levels are maintained.

The research methodology that was used is exploratory in nature, comprising of two in-depth interviews and sixteen mystery visits via judgmental sampling. The mystery visits were conducted at the Stellenbosch Hills and Bottelary Hills sub-routes. One popular and one less recognised wine estate per sub-route were observed. Findings showed that service quality at these estates are generally high, yet experiences at all estates were vastly different. The most important discovery is that the concept of mystery visitors is, in fact, an appropriate vehicle to assess service quality and to facilitate customer relationships. This method was successful in identifying the source of problems that led to sub-optimal performance, which allowed for corrective action to be taken. As a result, the service quality of the estates can be further increased to ensure a perfect experience on each occasion, which, over time, builds the reputation of the wine estate. Ultimately, this research has demonstrated that mystery visitors can be applied in the context of tourism on both an individual and collective scale.

Key words: *wine tourism, special interest tourism, wine tourists, Western Cape, Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch Wine Route, service quality, research method, mystery shopper and mystery visitor.*

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DEDICATION

For Ming-Hsueh Huang and Tai-Lin Chen.

Your love, patience, advice, encouragement and support carried me through.

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GLOSSARY

Term / Abbreviation	Explanation
Attractions	Facilities developed especially to provide residents and visitors with entertainment, activity, learning, socialising, and other forms of stimulation that make a region or destination a desirable and enjoyable place (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006:579).
Brand	A name, term, logo, symbol or design, or combination of them, intended to identify goods or services of an organisation and to differentiate them from competitors (George, 2008:479).
Café Society	Akin to Café Culture. Used informally to describe people who habitually visit coffee houses and give parties in restaurants rather than at home (Anon, 2009).
Critical incidents or episodes	Encounters between customers and service producers that can be especially satisfying or dissatisfying (Palmer, 2005:103; George, 2008:479).
Customer club	Also referred to as loyalty schemes or loyalty programs. Defined by Butscher (2002:18) as *"an at least communicative union of people of organisations, which is initiated and operated by an organisation in order to contact these members directly on a regular basis and offer them a benefit package with a high perceived value, with the goal of activating them and increasing their loyalty by creating an emotional relationship."*
Desired expectations	Referred to as the level at which customers want the product or service to perform (Swan and Trawick, 1980 cited in Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1993:2).
Domestic tourism	Visits by residents of a country to their own country (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006:7).
Gastronomy	The art and science of good eating. The study of food (Gillespie and Cousins, 2001:2).
General tourist	A wine tourist who visits a vineyard, winery, wine festival or wine show for the purpose of recreation (Galloway, Mitchell, Getz, Crouch, and Ong, 2008:951).
IBM	International Business Machines
Ideal expectations	Refers to the *"wished for"* level of performance by consumers (Miller, 1997[1] cited in Zeithaml *et al.*, 1993:2)
Infrastructure	Facilities, equipment, and installations needed for the basic functioning and daily lives of the residents of a region. These include communication systems, water and sewage facilities, public protection, health, transportation, and education systems

[1] Miller, J.A. 1977. Studying Satisfaction, Modifying Models, Eliciting Expectations, Posing Problems, and Making Meaningful Measurements. In Hunt, H.K. (ed). *Conceptualization and Measurement of Customer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction.* Bloomington: School of Business, Indiana University: 72-91.

(Goeldner and Ritchie, 2004:581).

Intangible dominant — A product that is mostly comprised of properties that cannot be seen, felt, and tasted prior to the consumer's purchase decision (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:5).

Loyalty — Non-random repeat purchasing from a seller, with behavioural and attitudinal dimensions (Palmer, 2005:176).

Marketing myopia — A term coined by Theodore Levitt, which used to classify businesses that define themselves too narrowly, and hence improperly describe their purpose (Levitt, 1960:45).

Minimum tolerable — This refers to minimum tolerable expectations. Miller (1977)[2] (cited in Zeithaml *et al.*, 1993:2) defines it as the lower level of performance, which is acceptable to a consumer.

Moment of truth — The instance of contact or interaction between a customer and a company that gives customers an opportunity to form or change an impression of the company (Anon, n.d.a).

Motivation — Described as the driving force within individuals that impel them to behave in a certain way (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:83).

MSPA — Mystery Shopping Providers Association.

Mystery customer — Also known as mystery guest or mystery shopper. A researcher who investigates tourism companies through using their services, while pretending to be a customer. Such researchers usually monitor areas such as level of customer service and product knowledge (George, 2008:483).

Mystery shopping — An observational form of research that uses trained researchers to pose as customers or potential customers for the purpose of assessing the process of a service delivery (Wilson, 1998:148).

New World — Wine making countries are divided into *New World* and *Old World*. New World is a term, which is used to describe newer wine making countries outside of Europe with the likes of the USA, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Chile, and Argentina (Anderson, 2003:47).

Old World — Wine making countries are divided into *New World* and *Old World*. Old World refers to wines that come from traditional European producers such as Spain, France, and Italy (Anderson, 2003:47).

Perceptions — A process by which individuals interpret information that is available to them, which results in them having particular opinions of, and attitudes towards, tourism offerings and destinations (George, 2008:484).

Relationship marketing — A means by which an organisation seeks to maintain an ongoing relationship between itself and its customers, based on continuous patterns of service delivery, rather than isolated and discrete transactions (Palmer, 2005:176). A process of

[2] *Ibid.*

	attracting, maintaining, and enhancing long-term relationships with key customers and other parties, through mutual exchange and keeping promises (George, 2008:485). Grönroos (1994)[3] (cited in Storbacka, Strandvik, and Grönroos, 1994:22) also mentions that the above should be fulfilled at a profit.
Reliability	This refers to the ability of replicating results when the variables under investigation remain the same (Riley, Wood, Clark, Wilkie, and Szivas, 2000:126). Biggam (2008:100) adds that a key aspect of reliability is *trust* – the research can only be trusted if it has been documented or recorded.
Segmentation	A process of identifying and grouping a market into subsets of consumers with common needs or characteristics and choosing segment(s) to target with a distinct marketing mix (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:44).
Service failure	Failure to meet customers' expectations regarding the standard of service delivery (Palmer, 2005:103).
Service loyalty	Refers to the degree to which a customer exhibits repeat purchasing behaviour from a service provider, possesses a positive attitudinal disposition towards the provider, and considers using only this provider when a need for this service exists (Gremler and Brown, 1996[4] cited in Caruana, 2000:813).
Service quality	The delivery of excellent or superior service, which is relative to consumer expectations (George, 2008:486). The perceived judgment, resulting from an evaluation process where customers compare their expectations with the service that they perceive to have received (Grönroos, 1984[5] cited in Wong, 2004:367).
Servicescape	A term, which was developed by Booms and Bitner (1981)[6] (cited in Palmer, 2005:80), which describes the environment in which a service is assembled and in which seller and customer interact, combined with tangible commodities that facilitate performance or communication of a service.
Share of heart	Also known as Emotion Marketing. Defined by Nowak and Newton (2006:158) as *"the company effort by employees, events, and communications to give the customer a tremendous sense of belonging and camaraderie".*
SIRC	Social Issues Research Centre
SIT	Special interest tourism. Provision of customised leisure and recreational experiences, which are driven by specific expressed interests of individuals and groups (Douglas, Douglas, and Derrett, 2001:3; George, 2008:486).

[3] Grönroos, C. 1994. From Marketing Mix to Relationship Marketing. Towards a Paradigm Shift in Marketing. *Management Decision*, 32(2):4-32.
[4] Gremler, D.D. & Brown, S.W. 1996. Service loyalty: its nature, importance and implications. In Edvardsson, B., Brown, S.W., Johnston, R. & Scheuing, E.E. (eds). *Proceedings American Marketing Association*, 171-180.
[5] Grönroos, C. 1984. A service quality model and its marketing implications. *European Journal of Marketing*, 18(4):36-44.
[6] Booms, B.H. & Bitner, M.J. 1981. Marketing strategies and organisation structures for service firms. In Donnelly, J. & George, W.R. (eds). *Marketing of Services*. Chicago: American Marketing Association: 51-67.

Specialist tourist	A wine tourist who visits a vineyard, winery, wine festival or wine show for the purpose of recreation and the primary motivation is a specific interest in grape wine or grape wine-related phenomena (Galloway *et al.*, 2008:951).
Switching costs	Also known as Switching Barriers. These refer to any costs (such as learning, search, and emotional costs) and cognitive effort and risk factors (including financial, psychological, and social) that prevent customers from switching brands or suppliers (Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:23; Büschken, 2004:8). Storbacka *et al.* further state that the idea is to increase switching costs to minimise customer defection, which, in turn, increases profitability.
SWR	Stellenbosch Wine Route. Established in 1971, it is the second oldest wine route outside of Europe. The SWR is comprised of five sub-routes, which are home to more than 140 wine farms (Anon, n.d.b).
Tangible cues	Physical elements of the service offering such as brochures and adverts, which provide tangible stimuli in the buying decision-making process (Palmer, 2005:103).
Tangible dominant	Products that have physical properties that can be seen, felt, and tasted before a customer's purchase decision (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:5).
Validity	This refers to research that is acceptable to the research community, which is based on three criteria: i) research must be based on tried and tested research strategies and data collection methods; ii) use data analysis techniques that are deemed appropriate for the relevant study; iii) all of which must be implemented properly (Biggam, 2008:99). Valid research results when the research instrument measures what it intended to measure (Riley *et al.*, 2000:126).
VFM	Value for money. Mental estimates that consumers make of a tourism organisation's ability to satisfy their needs and wants (George, 2008:488).
Wine Route	Described by Bruwer (2003:424) as the *"roadways to core attractions in wine tourism"*. Wine routes are essentially tourist routes that are connected by wine estates in a given area. It is characterised by natural and physical attractions that lead the tourist to individual wine estates along the route.
Wine Tourism	Hall and Macionis (1998)[7], as cited by Bruwer (2003:423), define wine tourism as *"visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals, and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivation factors for visitors"*.

[7] Hall, C. M. & Macionis, N. 1998. Wine tourism in Australia and New Zealand. In Butler, R.W., Hall, C.M. & Jenkins, J.M. (eds.), *Tourism and Recreation in Rural Areas*. England: John Wiley& Sons: 197–221.

Winescape	Refers to the attributes of the grape growing region that is characterised by the presence of vineyards, winemaking activities, and the storage of wines (Sparks, 2007:1181). Also known as the *wine terroir*.
WOM	Word of mouth. Refers to word of mouth advertising or communication where a family or friend recommends a company's offerings to another (George, 2008:488).
WOSA	Wines of South Africa is a non-profit organisation that promotes South African wine to international markets (Wines of South Africa, n.d.a).
Zone of tolerance	The difference between an adequate and desired level of service from a customer's perspective (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1993[8] cited in Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:26).

[8] Zeithaml, V., Berry, L. & Parasuraman, A. 1993. The Nature and Determinants of Customer Expectations of Service. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 21(1):1-11, Winter.

CHAPTER ONE
OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

Wine tourism is the fastest growing tourism segment in South Africa, which is an industry worth R6.5 billion (Morgenthal[9] cited in von Ulmenstein, 2009). In 2004 the wine industry contributed R16.3 billion to the GDP and more than 25% of this figure was derived from wine tourism related activities in the winelands (Wines of South Africa, n.d). Furthermore, approximately 257,000 people are employed both directly and indirectly in the wine industry. Of this number, 23% (59,000) are directly employed in the wine tourism industry.

Wine tourism plays a considerable role in the attractions sector, particularly in the Western Cape. In 2008 7.7% of visitors to the Western Cape visited wineries; this is the same percentage mirrored in visits to Cape Point (Western Cape Tourism Barometer, 2008:60). Furthermore, projections for 2009 estimated that 91.9% of visitors were expected to visit wine routes – the same number that were expected to visit both Table Mountain and Victoria & Alfred (V&A) Waterfront. It is uncertain whether these figures were achieved, but statistics documented that the Cape Winelands is a popular region for wine tourism. In fact, experiencing food and wine is one of the key purposes of visit for domestic visitors, and for overseas visitors it is the key purpose of their visit – apart from having a general holiday (Western Cape Barometer, 2008:41; Western Cape Barometer, 2009:47).

The above figures represent an active industry, which has huge potential, as corroborated by Bruwer (2003:433) who revealed that South Africa has a well-developed wine tourism infrastructure and a healthy wine tourism market. As a result, the wine tourism industry is well worth exploring.

Although sparse, academic literature concerning wine tourism was documented from the early 1990s. However, it was not until the First Australian Wine Tourism Conference, which was held in Australia in 1998 that positioned this field in a more structured manner. By providing a situational analysis on the wine tourism industry, academics and practitioners were able to formally document the status of wine tourism in various countries, along with factors that prompted its growth. This conference created a wealth of information that directed stakeholders in the development of the wine tourism industry within their own countries.

[9] Andre Morgenthal is the communications manager of WOSA (Wines of South Africa).

More than a decade later, the wine tourism industry produced several new players referred to as New World wine regions such as Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, New Zealand, South Africa, the UK, and USA. The strong growth in the number of wineries in these regions over recent years ranged from 40% to 54% between 2003 and 2007 (Wine Institute, 2008; Winebiz, 2008; New Zealand Wine Annual Report, 2008:3), which signalled a well-accepted, yet highly competitive market. These new entrants have, thus, increased the number of players worldwide, giving visitors more variety of choices, which, in turn, stimulates competition on an international scale.

The growth of wine tourism arises as a response to numerous factors, in particular, shifts in demographics and changes in consumer values and lifestyles (Thach, 2007). Thach maintains that increases in disposable income and wine consumption, desire to escape from daily routine and work stress, as well as an inclination towards a Café Society through gastronomy, have all merged to form a mounting demand for wine tourism products.

Much like other industries, competitive pressures instigated a growing emphasis on delivering quality service. Customer service, customer satisfaction, and service quality are all popular phrases that are used in the modern business world. The wine tourism industry is no exception; in fact, service quality, satisfaction, and visitor experience appear to be common denominators in numerous wine tourism studies, for example, O'Neill and Charters (2000); O'Neill, Palmer and Charters (2002); Carmichael (2005), Nowak and Newton (2006); Scott (2008); Cohen and Ben-Nun (2009); and Wang, Zhang, Gu, and Zhen (2009).

The focus on service quality has been primarily three-fold. Firstly, owing to the homogeneous nature of the industry, competition on both a national and international level is rife. Apart from the physical winescape, little differentiation between wineries exists as they all offer similar products. Generally, this tends to lead to competition, which is based on price. However, in a service-dominant industry of this nature, merely offering low prices is not sustainable, hence the move towards customer service as a form of competitive differentiation.

Secondly, service quality directly correlates with customer satisfaction (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:344). In essence, the higher the quality of service received, the greater the satisfaction will be, which positively influences the visitor's overall experience, as well as future intentions (Sparks, 2007:1190). This explains why O'Neill and Charters (2000:114) identify quality of service as one of the critical success factors of wine tourism. Consequently, both visitor satisfaction and experience are functions of

service quality. This points to the importance of maintaining consistent quality service.

Lastly, by differentiating through exceptional service, wine farms significantly increase their chances of securing loyal customers. It is critical that consistency in quality is achieved, since modern customers are more sophisticated and well informed (Gitomer, 1998:36). Gitomer describes these individuals as being harder to satisfy and are less loyal due to the abundance of choices available to them. However, once satisfied customers have been converted to loyal customers, they essentially become the brand's marketing team (Reichheld, 2003:51). Similarly, IBM[10] (cited in Verhoef, Lemon, Parasuraman, Roggeveen, Tsiros, and Schlesinger, 2009:31) states that a customer's experience plays a crucial role in nurturing loyalty to the brand and services. Therefore, service quality remains a vital element, which influences customer satisfaction, which, in turn, is a prerequisite in achieving customer loyalty.

Against this background, the study explores service quality in the context of wine farms with the use of mystery visitors as a research tool. Extant literature concerning wine tourism is largely fragmented between the industry structure, tourist motivations and psychographics, and the wine tourism experience. Despite the emphasis placed on service quality and experience, practical measurements of these elements have not been sufficiently investigated.

1.2 Problem statement

The proliferation of wine farms worldwide has significantly increased the level of competition on a local, as well as international level, whereby suppliers vie for the same customer base. Due to the wealth of available wine farms, consumers have an abundance of choice. This means that should they be disappointed or displeased with a particular wine farm, they can easily select another. Implications for suppliers include loss of patrons, decrease in positive referrals or increase in negative WOM (word of mouth) and, ultimately, a reduction in profits. This leads to the importance of delivering superior customer service in order to ensure customer satisfaction.

Moreover, owing to the homogenous nature of the wine tourism industry, there is little criteria, which distinguish the wine farms, apart from their physical winescape. Hence, this further punctuates a need to deliver quality service as, in this instance, it may be the only form of competitive differentiation that wine farms can resort to.

Literature, which is outlined in this chapter, support the need to maintain customer

[10] Badgett, M., Boyce, M.S. & Kleinberger, H. 2007. Turning Shoppers into Advocates. *IBM Institute for Business Value.*

satisfaction in the context of wine tourism. Efforts to promote quality service stems from a need to provide visitors with a pleasant experience that results in their satisfaction, which, in turn, increases the likelihood of their return (Sparks, 2007:1190). Despite evident consequences of visitor satisfaction, it proves to be inadequate in a wine farm's long-term strategy. The key reason behind this is that satisfied customers are not necessarily loyal customers, as suggested by Büschken (2004:2) and Reichheld (2003:48). In essence, there is no certainty that customers will return or refer the wine farm to others. Nevertheless, quality customer service is the foundation for customer retention and loyalty.

Research that supports the importance of service quality shows that 69% of customers detract due to poor service, compared to 13% who leave on account of poor product quality (Michelson, n.d). As a result, maintaining visitor satisfaction and keeping abreast with gradual shifts in their views is a tedious but necessary process as a means to deliver and achieve competitive advantage. As seen in the preliminary literature review, customer experience and satisfaction are exceptionally crucial in order to retain and acquire wine visitors.

In addition to gauging satisfaction levels, several academics and practitioners advocate development of customer relationships. Van der Wiele, Hesselink, and van Iwaarden (2005:529) reveal that forming strong customer relationships is ultimately the only way to compete in the modern business world. Through this long-term bond, wine farms can engage in a continuous learning process with customers, and inherently identify the sources of their satisfaction, as well as dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, it is still important to assess customer satisfaction levels because it is the basic constituent of customer loyalty. Only when this is achieved, will customers be more receptive to relationship building initiatives. Hence, customer satisfaction assessment is a fundamental imperative for all businesses.

Since the nature of services is variable, it is vital that protocols are established to ensure a standard level of service delivery. Realistically, even with these procedures, it is difficult to guarantee flawless delivery on a constant basis as customer perceptions and expectations are highly subjective. Staff performance is also affected by their moods, which result in fluctuations in customer service (Lou and Homberg, 2007:136). To minimise these variations, service levels should be systematically tested, which include assessment of service quality and customer satisfaction.

The most prevalent method of determining client satisfaction is through the use of customer surveys. Albeit its widespread use across all types of businesses and

industries, satisfaction surveys do possess some shortcomings. A key problem is that it can only identify customer perceptions and not the service delivery process. Moreover, these perceptions are highly subjective and, therefore, are not entirely precise. This situation causes an obstruction in the aim of delivering superior service since they cannot be identified and thus rectified.

Reichheld (2006:3) believes that customer surveys are actually a source of misinformation. In an attempt to cover as much information as possible, surveys contain too many questions that discourage customers, and increase the survey cost. Reichheld further states that sometimes the wrong customers respond, and for the ones that do, their problems are not heard by the right employees; even so, their preference for anonymity through omitting names and contact details prevent an opportunity for follow-up questions to uncover sources of dissatisfaction. Survey results are also not correlated to a company's performance; in fact, 60%-80% of customer defections arise from previously *satisfied* and *very satisfied* customers. This confirms Büschken's (2004:2) and Reichheld's (2003:48) views that satisfied customers are not necessarily loyal.

Since measuring satisfaction via surveys appear to be futile, an alternative approach is required. Other options include focus groups and in-depth interviews, however, for the purpose of this study, they are inadequate since similar to satisfaction surveys, they comprise mostly of visitor perceptions rather than facts that are used to benchmark performance against prescribed standards. As a result, the most suitable method is that of mystery shoppers, as this method not only accounts for customer perceptions, but also for the exact procedure of the service delivery, which makes it an ideal vehicle to uncover perceptions, as well as the service delivery process necessary for this study.

The mystery shopper concept has been successfully applied in several industries such as financial, retail, fast food, and hospitality (hotels and tour operators) (Wilson, 1998; Erstad, 1998; van der Wiele *et al.*, 2005; Miller, Hudson, and Turner, 2005). However, its effectiveness has not yet been seen in wine tourism.

Summarily, the key problems pertaining to this study is two-fold. Firstly, an increase in competitive rivalry has led to the necessity of delivering quality customer service in order to retain customers and build loyalty, particularly with existing customers since they are less expensive to maintain. Secondly, owing to variation in service quality and the influence that customer service has on visitors, it is important that it is measured on a regular basis in order to maintain a certain level of quality. As a result,

it is proposed that mystery visitors should be used as a vehicle to measure customer satisfaction through service quality. The assessment of service quality can also be used to facilitate customer relationships by identifying areas for improvement. The results of the study will render the following two possible outcomes:

1. Yes, mystery visitor is an effective method to measure customer satisfaction in the context of wine tourism. This outcome will provide two conclusions. Firstly, mystery visitors can become the conventional standard, which is used to measure customer satisfaction through the assessment of both visitor perceptions in addition to the service delivery process. Secondly, the service quality identified will be useful to cultivate customer relationships.

2. No, mystery visitor does not live up to its standards and cannot be used to gauge customer satisfaction in the context of wine tourism. Reasons behind its failure will be identified. In this case, other methods or a combination of methods should be reviewed.

The outcomes will act as guidelines for future research by identifying successes and failures, which will allow adjustments to be made to improve the methodology.

1.3 Preliminary literature review

The following is a basic review of extant literature, pertinent to the topic at hand.

1.3.1 Overview of wine tourism

The wine tourism industry can be regarded as an emerging special interest tourism segment that integrates the synergies of two successful sectors, namely wine and tourism (Carlsen, 2004:6). It is also closely linked with other sectors such as food, as both invoke the senses of smell and taste, which Johnson (1997)[11] (cited in Getz, 1998:14) states is strongly associated with gastronomy.

The integration of the wine tourism industry has come a long way since the late 1990s; although both industries acknowledge the benefits of working together, a lack of understanding of tourism in the wine industry (and vice versa) caused wine tourism to grow slowly in the beginning. Getz (1998:26) identifies this problem as a major barrier to success. Back then, there was little cohesion and cooperation between the wine and tourism industries (Hall and Johnson, 1998:64). Tourism was unfamiliar with viticulture and the fundamentals surrounding wine, while the wine industry lacked

[11] Johnson, G. 1997. Surveying Wine Tourism in New Zealand. *Quality Tourism: Beyond the Masses.* Proceedings of the First National Tourism Students' Conference, Tourism Club, University of Otago, 61-66.

understanding in the service and hospitality industry. Nevertheless, attempts to incorporate tourism into the wine industry have been documented worldwide since the late 1990s, particularly in Europe, the USA, Canada, South Africa, and Australia (Getz, 1998:23).

With further interest and development in this industry, wine tourism has been able to grow into a sector in its own right. Increased competition amongst wine regions has led to the innovation of harmonious strategies to assimilate the tourism and wine industries. Although Old Wine regions have an advantage of the prominence of their brand name based on the quality of their wines, both Old and New World regions were novices at the inception of the wine tourism industry. Based on the rapid development of New World wine regions, they have proven to be worthy of competition alongside Old World wine destinations. More than half of the top winescapes originate from New World regions, as seen in Table 1.1. An underlying reason for this could be different levels of attention that are given by the relevant regions. New World wine regions are most probably more proactive in developing their strategy compared to Old World regions, which mostly rely on their distinguished brand to sell the region. Nevertheless, wine tourism is growing in all regions.

Table 1.1: Top 10 Wine Destinations 2008 based on TripAdvisor's[12] visitor preferences

Rank	Destination	New World/Old World
1	Bordeaux, France	Old World
2	Napa Valley, California	New World
3	Tuscany, Italy	Old World
4	Champagne-Ardenne, France	Old World
5	Barossa Valley, Australia	New World
6	La Rioja, Spain	Old World
7	Sonoma Valley, California	New World
8	Valle Central, Chile	New World
9	Stellenbosch, South Africa	New World
10	Marlborough, New Zealand	New World

(Adapted from Wine Industry Report, 2008)

Robinson (1994)[13], as cited in Getz (1998:14), states that an increase in foreign travel is said to have prompted demand for wine tourism (Getz, 1998:14), but this only explains the demand by international tourists and not on a local level by domestic visitors. Generally, the growing interest in wine tourism can be attributed to a combination of economic interests, renewed business strategies, and changing consumer lifestyles.

[12] TripAdvisor (http://www.tripadvisor.com) is a prominent online travel community that publishes tourism-related information based on their editors and traveller popularity.
[13] Robinson, J. (ed). 1994. *The Oxford Companion to Wine*. Oxford University Press.

Despite diametrically opposite economic activities that the wine and tourism industries may pose, wineries have come to realise the synergy that can be achieved by merging with the tourism industry. Their interest was partly prompted by the onset of cellar door sales. For several wineries around the world, onsite sales are crucial to their survival (Williams and Dossa, 2003:2). For example, in Australia, onsite sales range between 20% to 34% of total revenue and in France between 19% and 23%. This has led wineries to restructure their business models and strategies to encompass the tourism factor.

Hall and Mitchell (2003:57) and Getz (1998:18) identify eight benefits that tourism provides wineries, which validates the reasons for wineries to be interested in tourism. These benefits include: increased consumer exposure to products, brand awareness and loyalty, relationships with customers, increased margins through direct sales, an additional sales outlet, marketing intelligence on products through customer feedback, marketing intelligence on customers themselves, and educational opportunities to create knowledge and awareness, which ultimately leads to increased consumption.

The changing lifestyles of consumers also affect demand of wine tourism. Getz (1998:16) attributes this to higher levels of education, which results in demand for special interest tourism, the need for peace and tranquillity, more outdoor recreation derived from being health conscious, and a need for a rewarding and learning experience. Thach (2007) adds that consumers are becoming more 'café society' oriented, as mentioned in section 1.1 (introduction), which translates into more restaurant meals with friends and this naturally incorporates an element of wine.

Overall, wine tourism is a complex industry, as it requires basic understanding of both the wine and tourism industries in addition to consumer behaviour.

1.3.2 Wine tourism in South Africa

South Africa's wine regions are divided into eight zones, namely, Stellenbosch, Paarl, Worcester, Malmesbury, Robertson, Orange River, Olifants River, and the Little Karoo (SAWIS, 2008:8). These regions offer a total of 15 wine routes[14], most of which are situated in the Cape regions. Bruwer (2003:426) substantiates that 74% of all South African wine estates are located within one-hour drive time from the city centre

[14] SA Wine routes include: Breedekloof Wine Route, Constantia Wine Route, Darling Wine & Art Experience, Durbanville Wine Valley, Franschhoek Vignerons, Klein Karoo Wine Route, Olifants River Wine Route, Orange River Wine Route, Paarl Vintners, Robertson Wine Valley, Stellenbosch Wine Routes, Swartland Wine Route, Tulbagh Wine Route, Wellington Wine Route, Worcester Winelands (Wines of South Africa, n.d.b).

of Cape Town. This indicates that the market is close by – a proximity benefit that South African wineries have over their international counterparts.

Of these wine routes, the Stellenbosch Wine Route (SWR) is the best-recognised wine route brand in South Africa, as well as the most visited, which draws international and domestic visitors. In addition, it is also the largest in terms of winery membership and the oldest, which was established in 1971 (Stellenbosch Wine Routes, 2008). The SWR is formed by five sub-routes, which, in total, consist of 146 winery members as of March 2010, a 12.3% increase from 2006. The sub-routes and their membership figures are depicted below in Figure 1.1. Members per region can be found in Appendix A1.

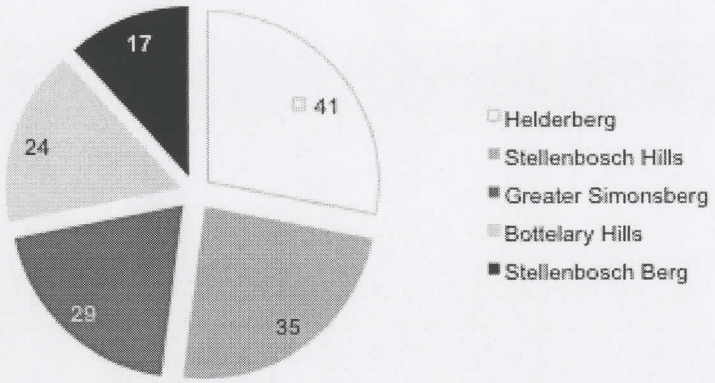


Figure 1.1: SWR sub-routes and membership numbers as at March 2010

Opposing the views of Bruwer (2003), authors Tassiopoulos, Nuntsu, and Haydam (2004:52) suggest that the South African wine tourism infrastructure is, in fact, inapt. Major problems lie in a lack of integration between relevant role players of the tourism industry, the precedence of other areas over wine tourism, a lack of meticulously implemented research that still has an ability to obtain investment funds to attract visitors. This means that human and financial resources that are invested in the wine tourism industry are not being used efficiently, and are thus being wasted. Moreover, South African wineries are less concerned about the experience of visitors, as their main goal is to maximise cellar door sales, since this is where their profit margins are highest.

Although South African wine routes are well known internationally, these concerns are serious issues that have long-term consequences for the industry as a whole. Bruwer (2003:429) found that 4% of South African winery organisations along wine routes consider tourism as a direct stakeholder. This poses as a crucial problem since in order for wine tourism to be successful, three domains that comprise the wine tourism system should be integrated, that is, consumers, suppliers, and the

destination (Getz, 1998:26). South African wineries lack experience and skill regarding tourism (Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:52); hence, they cannot offer the ultimate experience for wine visitors. There is an imperative need to understand each domain in order to better assimilate relevant players of the wine tourism industry. Therefore, there is much to learn for South African wineries and through observing the successful implementation of the USA and Australian wine tourism industries, it would be sensible for South Africa to learn from such key competitors.

1.3.3 Wine tourist profiles and their motivations

Compared to other wine regions, it appears that South Africa also has a significantly higher proportion of *wine lovers* as opposed to *wine interested* (Bruwer, 2003:431; Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:55). Usually the former segment only comprises a small portion of the overall wine tourism segment (while the latter dominates), as seen in Australia (Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002:316). This is indicative of a strong wine tourism market in South Africa. Wine tourist segments are discussed in depth in section 2.3.2.

Motives of these wine tourists can be explained by *push* and *pull* factors, as proposed by Dann (1977:186) and Crompton (1979:410). Irrespective of segment, wine tourist motives can be broadly divided into wine-related and tourism-related activities. It appears that the primary motive is wine-related, except for regions in Canada where it is mostly tourism-related (Carmichael, 2005:195; Getz and Brown, 2006:151). The following activities are key reasons to visit wine farms: to taste and buy wine, to learn about wine, to experience a wine setting, to relax, and to socialise with friends and family (Bruwer, 2003:430; Alant and Bruwer, 2004:32; Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:57; Getz and Brown, 2006:151; Thach, 2007).

Their choice to partake in those activities further implicates the motives behind their overall reason for visiting wine farms. These can be explained through the classical framework of needs, which was posited by Abraham Maslow. Three of the five levels of needs emerge based on their reasons to engage in wine tourism; these are social, self-esteem, and self-actualisation needs. The theory and application of wine tourist motivation is discussed in detail in section 2.3.3.

Opposing Carlsen's (2004:7) uncertainty, the primary motivations clearly indicate a distinct market for wine tourism. Although an understanding of tourist behaviour is essential for the success of wine tourism, one cannot overlook an equally important aspect of service quality.

1.3.4 Link between quality service delivery and wine tourist satisfaction

The topic of customer satisfaction has achieved worldwide attention of practitioners, as well as academics, resulting in an abundance of research in this area. Overall, it has been agreed that customer satisfaction has desired impact on business results, with the key area being profitability (Lou and Homberg, 2007:133). There also exists a positive link between customer satisfaction and loyalty through repeat purchases (Lou and Homberg, 2007:133, Söderlund, 1998:169). However, Reichheld (2003:48) disputes this, as he believes that consumers may remain with suppliers if they feel indifferent or have no other choices but to continue their purchase from the same supplier. Büschken (2004:5) refers to this barrier as switching costs. These arguments suggest that loyalty evokes a high level of customer satisfaction, but satisfied customers do not necessarily become loyal. Söderlund extends this research by distinguishing between low and high levels of customer satisfaction and their relation to loyalty.

In the wine tourism industry, striving for customer satisfaction cannot be overstated as visitors to wine farms evaluate their satisfaction on the holistic experience that they achieve. Collectively, factors that influence wine visitor experience (and hence their satisfaction), includes factors such as their prior perceptions and expectations, as well as the ability of winery staff to deliver on the needs and expectations of visitors.

Visitor experience is not only influenced by the winery, but the entire wine tourism system; Getz (1998:26) states that in order for wine tourism to be effective, successful cooperation and integration between suppliers, consumers, and the destination should be achieved. All these relevant stakeholders (wine estates, restaurants, accommodations, and other leisure-related activities) are responsible for developing a positive experience for the wine tourist so they will make future visits and refer the region to friends and family. However, the same experience from repeat visits can never be replicated due the impact that past experiences have on future experiences (Ryan, 1995:42). Four phases that also influence overall experience, as posited by Verhoef *et al.* (2009:32), include the search, purchase, consumption, and after-sales phases. Although all four are important, it may be reasonable to say that in the wine tourism industry the consumption phase may hold more weight due to the experiential encounter at the winescape, where moment of truth occurs. It is this experience that ultimately determines the future intention of wine tourists (Sparks, 2007:1190).

In order for customers to realise satisfaction, their experience is shaped by the service delivery, which should match their prior expectations of it (Mudie and Pirrie,

2006:240). It is at this point that the process becomes complex in the sense that each person is different and has different perceptions and attitudes, which often collide with perceptions that are offered by others. For example, one visitor has an exceptional experience at a wine farm and thus recommends it to a friend, who then develops his or her own perceptions and expectations of the winery based on opinions of the friend. The consumption of service delivery experienced by the friend may or may not meet prior expectations that were developed, which subsequently results in dissatisfaction or indifference. These experiences are also affected by external factors such as the weather, variety of wines available, and even the level of service on that specific day coupled with customer-to-customer interaction, which Verhoef *et al.* (2009:34) classify as the social environment, may affect a customer's total experience.

A study by O'Neill and Charters (2000) reveals that service quality is the most important aspect, which influences future intentions of the wine visitor. Therefore, in order to retain customers and build loyalty, wine farms should deliver exceptional experience through consistent service excellence. Slater (1994:24) argues that delivering superior customer experience is the only way to gain competitive advantage. With the natural variability of service delivery, it is crucial for wine farms to make quality service an ongoing objective. Moreover, a wine farm's brand can be built on quality service delivery, which results in a positive and strong reputation. If applied at a regional level, it can also render the same results for the wine region. This signals the importance of having a unified service across all wine estates in order to build a strong wine destination brand.

However, Slater (1994:25) states that quality should be defined by the customer, therefore, quality service delivery cannot be guaranteed for all customers due to the different perceptions and expectations that govern their definition of quality. As a result, it becomes essential for wineries to learn about each different customer in order to fulfil their individual needs, which not only satisfies them, but also increases the probability of them becoming a loyal customer. This is especially important as wine tourists are becoming sophisticated and are more demanding, resulting in a need for competent and pleasant winery staff.

Moreover, Lou and Homberg (2007:136) assert that internal marketing, particularly employee commitment and attitude, have a direct and positive impact on customer satisfaction. This suggests that in order to maintain consistent quality service to visitors, the morale of winery staff should be lifted. Satisfied staff may also avoid unnecessary employee turnover costs for the wine farm. It is important that the

objectives permeate through and is understood by all levels of the wine estate so that their efforts become more efficient and effective.

Slater (1994:22) advocates that sustainable competitive advantage is no longer based on structural characteristics, but on capabilities that allow businesses to deliver superior value to customers through being market-oriented. Slater identifies customer-orientation as a crucial component of this, highlighting the importance of customer satisfaction as a continuous objective, even after the sale. This results in a need for continuous learning about the customer, their expectations and how their tastes change over time, and even about their competitors and marketplace in order to better serve the customer. He cites that the rate at which organisations learn may become the only sustainable source of competitive advantage.

This points to a need for customer relationship programs, which are believed to be beneficial in the wine tourism industry, considering the high incidence of repeat visitors (Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:62). Peppers, Rogers, and Dorf (1999) advocate relationship marketing; by learning and differentiating between customers, a company can tailor products and services to meet the exact needs of customers, resulting in satisfaction, higher switching costs, and ultimately loyalty. With different tourist profile segments, it would be a strategic move to engage in one-to-one marketing.

1.4 Delimitations of the study

The research project aims to determine the service quality process of cellar doors along the SWR, therefore, only wine routes in this vicinity are represented. The study is limited to domestic visitors (particularly local), since international visitors have a low frequency of visits and are, therefore, not practical for the purpose of this study.

Furthermore, the assessment of service procedures and satisfaction levels are limited to the cellar door. The reason for this is that a majority of customers visit wine farms for the key purpose of purchasing or sampling wines, and only a small fraction patron restaurants that are situated on wine farms, as seen in Bruwer's work (2003). This can also be inferred from research conducted by Charters and Ali-Knight (2002).

1.5 Aims of the study

The aims of the study are justified by the following objectives and research questions.

1.5.1 Objectives

The primary objective of the study is to evaluate the application of mystery visitors in the context of a wine route and to determine whether or not it is an appropriate vehicle to measure customer satisfaction. The secondary objectives are listed below:

- To measure the service quality of selected cellar doors along the SWR;
- To determine whether service quality discrepancies within the wine region exists, and to what extent these can be recognised within the region;
- To identify problem areas regarding service quality; and
- To determine whether the service quality identified can be used to cultivate customer relationships.

1.5.2 Research questions

In relation to the objectives, the findings will answer the following questions:

- Were mystery visitors successful in identifying problem areas?
- What are core service differences between cellar doors?
- Can mystery visitors facilitate customer relationships?
- Does service quality play a more important role in customer satisfaction than the physical environmental aspect?
- How well trained are the staff?
- What is the focus of wine farm staff (sales versus service)?
- What can be done to improve service levels?

1.6 Research design and methodology

An exploratory approach was adopted for the primary research, in which both the supply and demand sides were involved. Research tools that were used include in-depth interviews (qualitative) and mystery visitor observations (both qualitative and quantitative). The purpose of using both was to ensure that the mystery visitor questionnaire measured aspects, which are deemed important by tourism stakeholders. Figure 1.2 on the following page illustrates an overview of the research design.

Pertaining to sampling, a judgmental sample was used to determine participants for the in-depth interviews. The supply-side interview then also provided a judgmental sample of potential wine estates for the study. Chapter Four discusses the research design and methodology in further detail.

Secondary data	
Literature review	
Primary data	
Qualitative: Experience interviews *(n=2)* Observation *(n=16)*	**Quantitative:** Observation *(n=16)*

Figure 1.2: Overview of the research design

1.7 Significance of the study

The expected outcome of the research validates mystery visitors as a research vehicle to assess service quality of wine farms. On a practical level, it broadens research methods that are used by wineries to gauge customer satisfaction and service quality. Wineries can collectively use the study results to improve or adjust the process of their service delivery and to build customer relationships. This will trigger the improvement and advancement of their cellar door culture. Moreover, if implemented on a regional scale, it will certainly enhance the image of Stellenbosch as a wine destination, resulting in a strong brand.

Seeing that wine tourism is an important trend in New World markets, extensive research from all angles is required in order to understand and improve the infrastructure and processes of this industry. This outcome will be the first attempt from wineries in South Africa to employ mystery visitors over customer surveys to determine the quality of service delivered. Academically, this investigation contributes to the body of knowledge by proving the validity of mystery visitors as a vehicle to conduct research pertaining to service delivery in the wine tourism industry. Extant literature concerning wine tourism has mostly been derived from the supply-side of the business domain; therefore, this academic study illuminates demand-side opinions – a necessary step considering the paucity of research in this area.

1.8 Outline of the report structure

The structure of the dissertation is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter Two comprises the first half of the literature review. It provides an overview of wine tourism based on three sections. The first section covers a basic introduction and researched areas of wine tourism. It then proceeds to cover the framework of wine tourism, highlighting the wine tourism system and product. The second section examines consumer behavioural aspects, with particular reference to wine tourist profiles, motivation, and the wine tourism experience.

Chapter Three concludes the literature review by focusing on the implications of customer service. Similar to Chapter Two, it is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the importance of delivering quality customer service. It is followed by customer satisfaction, and lastly, loyalty and customer relationships.

Chapter Four discusses the research design and methodology. In particular, it identifies, as well as justifies, the research design, and explains how it is structured and executed. The theory and application of the chosen method is also analysed.

Chapter Five provides the findings obtained from the primary research. The qualitative and quantitative data, in addition to the secondary data from the literature review, are triangulated to form a discussion and interpretation of the research findings.

Chapter Six presents conclusions and recommendations that are based on the findings in Chapter Five. Specifically, it determines whether the expected outcomes have been achieved, and also provides suggestions for future research.

1.9 Summary

The global emergence of new world wine regions over the past decade has placed a focus on the relatively new industry of wine tourism. Since it incorporates characteristics and technicalities of both the wine and tourism industries, it requires a well-integrated system that meets its needs as an entire unit. Despite there being two sums that make a whole, wine tourism is largely tourism-dominant. Being intangible with a homogenous product offering, the wine tourism experience is contingent on the memories retained by the visitor, in addition to their pre-visit expectations, which often includes WOM communication. Hence, good service quality tends to be the norm for tourism products, given the fact that quality service is positively correlated with customer satisfaction and, ultimately, the financial performance of the organisation.

This highlights the significance of examining the service performance of organisations. Most of the time this is done through customer surveys. Despite its disadvantages, this method is still a prevalent one for several organisations and is also mirrored in academic studies. The literature review does suggest a more suitable method by using mystery visitors; however, application in the wine tourism industry has yet to be seen. Hence, the debut of this method aims to assess how mystery visitors fair as a research vehicle in the context of wine tourism. Consequently, the findings will impart substantial insight for industry stakeholders, as well as provide directions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO
OVERVIEW OF THE WINE TOURISM INDUSTRY

2.1 Introduction

The past decade has seen a significant growth in the number of wineries worldwide. Statistics reveal that a majority of these originate from New World regions. Australia particularly, has displayed remarkable development during this period (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:343; Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002:311). In fact, much of the available literature on wine tourism is derived from research that was conducted at wine regions in Australia. This is a result of strong participation by the government to promote Australia as a wine destination (Hall and Mitchell, 2001:319; Getz and Brown, 2006:147). Similarly, California has become recognised for its winescape with 45% of US wine farms being concentrated in this state (Wine Institute, 2008). Although growing slower than its worldwide counterparts, South Africa's flagship wine region, Stellenbosch, has formed a favourable destination image and developed more than 140 wine farms along this route (Wine route, n.d).

With a significant growth rate in the number of wineries (40% to 54% between 2003 and 2007) from New World regions (Wine Institute, 2008; Winebiz, 2008; New Zealand Wine Annual Report, 2008), wine tourism has become an increasingly valuable industry. Despite this, academic literature regarding wine tourism is still undersupplied, but compared to the early and mid 1990s, there has been a significant improvement. Academics have contributed to the wine tourism body of knowledge by examining the industry structure (Getz, 1998; Hall and Johnson, 1998; Bruwer, 2003); the impact of service quality at cellar doors (O'Neill and Charters, 2000; Charters and O'Neill, 2001; Jago and Issaverdis, 2001; O'Neill *et al.*, 2002); and mostly through research that is concentrated on consumer behavioural aspects, predominantly in the following domain:

- Wine tourist profile (Nixon, 1998; Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002; Bruwer, Li, and Reid, 2002; Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004; Bruwer and Li, 2007);
- Wine tourist attitudes and motivations (Hall and Mitchell, 2003; Mitchell and Hall, 2004; Alant and Bruwer, 2004; Sparks, 2007; Galloway, Mitchell, Getz, Crouch, and Ong, 2008); and
- Wine tourist experience (Morris and King, 1998; O'Neill *et al.*, 2002; Hall and Sharples, 2003; Griffin and Loersch, 2006; Carmichael, 2005; Nowak and Newton, 2006; Cohen and Ben-Nun, 2009).

Although these studies regarding behavioural aspects significantly benefit the industry, they can only provide a general framework since the needs and wants of wine tourists differ from region to region owing to differences in culture and social norms. In attempts to better understand wine tourists and what they seek from the wine tourism experience, other areas have largely been overlooked. For example, aspects outside of consumer behaviour-related issues, namely theoretical framework of wine tourism such as key stakeholders or components in wine tourism and how they function together to achieve synergy (Getz, 1998:26; Carlsen, 2004:6). However, it is understandable that more emphasis is placed on deciphering the wine tourist, as without them, there would be no market for wine tourism products.

Nevertheless, this imbalance of concentration denotes that there is still much to learn about this complex industry, and only when this is achieved, can all components fully appreciate the benefits of wine tourism.

2.2 Wine tourism framework

This section introduces the definition and concept of wine tourism, which subsequently lead to the focus on two important areas: the wine tourism system and product.

2.2.1 Conceptualising wine tourism

Wine tourism is an emerging sub-field of tourism, formed by the synthesis of two prominent but diametrically opposed industries – wine and tourism (Carlsen, 2004:8). Due to its broad nature, wine tourism can be viewed from different perspectives. Van Westering (1999)[15] (cited in Carmichael, 2005:187), for example, approaches it from the attractions point of view, specifically focusing on heritage, landscape, and the wine. The widely held view, derived by Hall and Macionis (1998)[16], as cited by Cohen and Ben-Nun (2009:21), approaches it from the perspective of motivation, where the main purpose of wine tourists is to engage in wine-related activities at the winescape.

Conversely, Getz (2000)[17] (cited in Getz and Brown, 2006:147) proposed that wine tourism should be observed not only from one angle, but also from all three perspectives that comprise the industry, namely travellers, destination, and suppliers. Charters and Ali-Knight (2002:312) affirm that definitions of wine tourism encompass characteristics such as lifestyle experience, supply and demand, education, art, wine

[15] Van Westering, J. 1999. What is wine tourism? Paper presented at the First European Wine Tourism Conference in Surrey, England, 1-4 September.
[16] Hall, C.M. & Macionis , N. 1998. Wine Tourism in Australia and New Zealand. In: Butler, R., Hall, C.M. & Jenkins, J. (eds.) *Tourism and Recreation in Rural Areas.* Chichester: Wiley.
[17] Getz, D. 2000. *Explore wine tourism: management, development, destinations.* New York: Cognizant.

and food, tourism-destination image, and marketing opportunities for the region. Seeing the different attempts at defining wine tourism thus illustrates the diversity of this industry.

In order to understand wine tourism, it is necessary to recognise how it fits into the larger scope of tourism, in general. Numerous academics have labelled wine tourism as Special Interest Tourism (SIT) (O'Neill and Charters, 2000:112; O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:343; Bruwer, 2003:423; Swarbrooke, 2002:364; Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006:310; Sparks, 2007:1180; Thach, 2007; George, 2008:486). This means that tourists or visitors are motivated to travel as means to satisfy their hobbies or interests; besides visits to wine farms, other examples include, but are not limited to art, fishing, gardening, golf, hunting, opera, photography, safaris, sports, and theatre (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006:310).

All these interests represent activities at specific attractions, which constitute one of the sectors of tourism. Van Harssel (1994:7) identified seven sectors, namely tourist destination, transportation, accommodation, cruise lines, attractions, travel brokers, and travel related services. Over the years these have been refined to incorporate sectors that are relevant to current interests, as seen in Goeldner and Ritchie (2006:14). The authors refined the sectors to accommodation, tourism services, transportation, entertainment, food services, adventure and outdoor recreation, attractions, events, and travel trade. Figure 2.1 illustrates sectors of tourism, which simultaneously highlights individual segments of the Attractions sector.

Referring to this figure, wine tourism can be classified further based on the motivations of the wine tourist. With strong links to food (Alant and Bruwer, 2004:28; Carlsen, 2004:5), wine can be grouped under 'Cuisine', and even 'Museums' where established wine farms, with a long history, can share their legend – relevant to this case is Solms-Delta in Franschhoek, Western Cape, South Africa. Considering the characteristics of wine tourism, it would primarily be labelled as a *natural attraction* with the key pull factor being its winescape. On another level, wine festivals provide a great opportunity to learn about and sample wines, and hence can be represented by *events*.

These classifications run parallel with the views of Charter and Ali-Knight (2002:312); they state that wine tourism experience can be provided through events and festivals, cultural heritage, dining, hospitality, education, tasting and cellar door sales, and winery tours. As a result, wine tourism can be defined and perceived from different angles. These become clearer in the following section, which deals with the wine

tourism product.

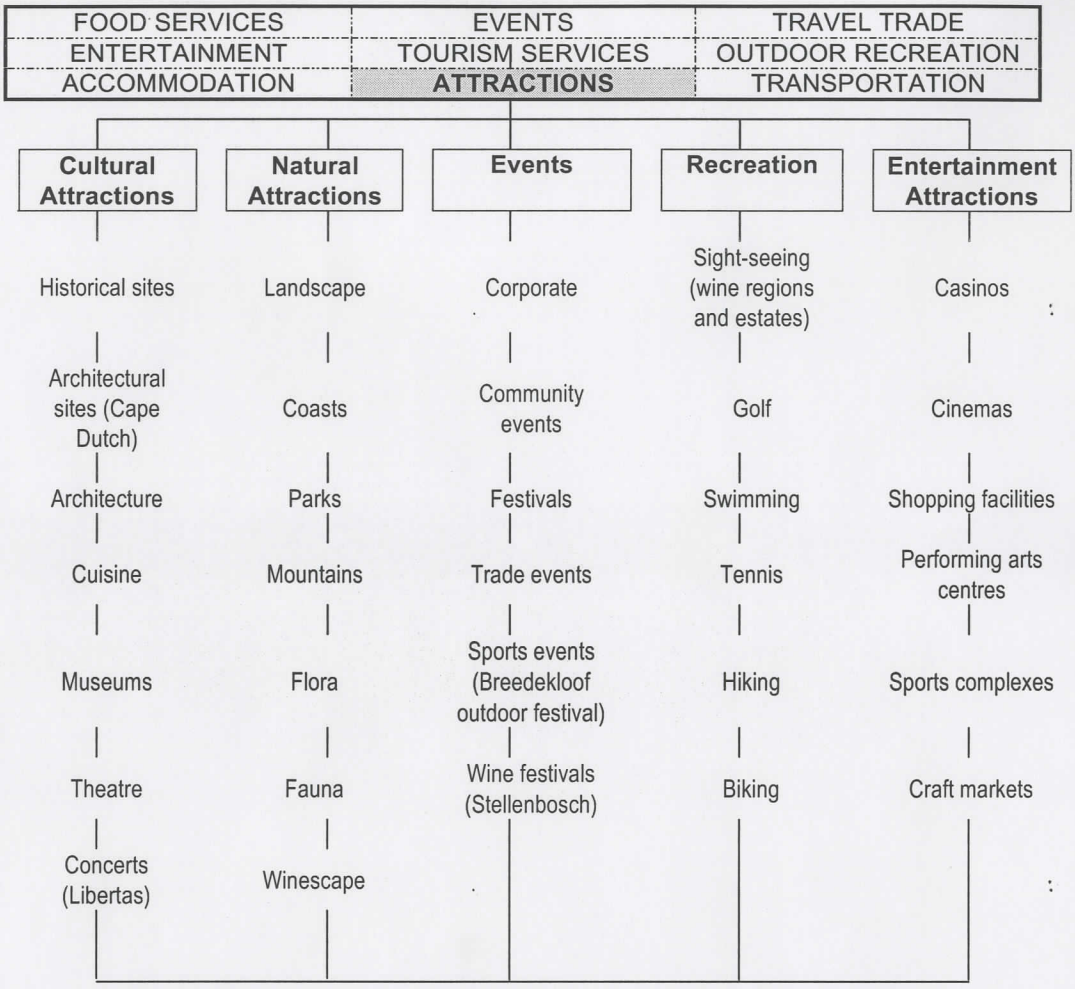


Figure 2.1: Tourism sectors and attractions' segments in the wine industry
(Adapted from Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006:211)

2.2.2 Wine tourism system

As pointed out by Carlsen (2004:6), wine and tourism are diametrically opposed industries and it is necessary to have basic knowledge of both in order to fully understand wine tourism. The wine industry is a primary industry, which is supply-led based on factors that affect its production; being a price taker with homogeneous products is indicative of a market that is founded on pure competition; due to low profit margins, the wine industry seeks to minimise costs rather than maximise revenue and their wealth is created through capital growth. In contrast, the tourism industry offers heterogeneous products and services, which are demand-driven. This allows them to maximise their profits by being price-makers rather than price-takers. These characteristics are summarised in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Comparison of characteristics between wine and tourism industries

PRIMARY INDUSTRY ←→ SECONDARY INDUSTRY ←→ TERTIARY INDUSTRY	
WINE INDUSTRY	**TOURISM INDUSTRY**
SUPPLY-LED – subject to seasonal, temporal, global, technical and agricultural factors that set the supply of grapes and wine.	**DEMAND-DRIVEN** – subject to economic, consumption-led, competitive, demonstrative and demographic forces that determine demand for wine tourism.
PRICE TAKERS – single price is determined by wine producers, global wine prices, price of other alcoholic beverages (substitutes).	**PRICE-MAKERS** – price range is determined by nature of product/service offered, seasonal demand, value adding to experiences.
HOMOGENOUS PRODUCT – highest quality standard varietals or blends, long lead times for changes in production, consistent over time.	**HETEROGENEOUS PRODUCT/ SERVICE** – a range of options and offerings and short lead times to develop new products, changing over time.
COST MINIMISERS – seek more efficient production methods, technology intensive, innovate to maximise yield.	**PROFIT MAXIMISERS** – seek maximum returns through extensive marketing, labour intensive, imitate, renovate or renew rather than innovate.
Wealth creation through capital growth in value of land and buildings in the long term.	Wealth creation through profits and return on investment in the short term.

(Source: Carlsen, 2004:9)

Evidently, both industries are at complete opposite ends, but the need for wine tourism stakeholders to understand both is self-evident. However, despite both industries acknowledging benefits of working together, a lack of understanding of tourism in the wine industry (and vice versa) led wine tourism off to a slow start. Back then, there was little cohesion and cooperation between the wine and tourism industries, as suggested by Macionis (1997)[18] (cited in Hall and Johnson, 1998:64); tourism was unfamiliar with viticulture and the fundamentals surrounding wine, similarly, the wine industry lacked understanding in the service and hospitality industry. Nevertheless, attempts to incorporate tourism into the wine industry have been documented worldwide since the late 1990s, particularly Europe, the USA, Canada, South Africa, and Australia (Getz, 1998:23).

For wine tourism to be successful, both these industries should be correctly integrated. All stakeholders should be aware of their roles and how they contribute to the industry. Unlike Australia, Loubser (2004)[19] (cited in Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:52) identifies this as a problem for South African wineries. Of particular importance are wine makers' lack of tourism knowledge and their focus on cellar door sales rather than on tourists' experience. Confirming the view of Loubser, Bruwer (2003:429)

[18] Macionis, N. 1997. Wine tourism in Australia: emergence, development, and critical issues. Unpublished Masters of Arts thesis, Canberra, University of Canberra.
[19] Loubser, S.S. 2004. The role of wine tourism in establishing a successful South African wine industry. *Proceedings of the 2004 International Wine Tourism Conference,* Margaret River, Australia, 2-5 May.

discovered that only 4% of wineries along South African wine routes identified tourism as a direct stakeholder.

Loubser further refers to other problems that lie in the lack of meticulously implemented research, which yet have an ability to obtain investment funds to attract visitors. This means that human and financial resources that are invested in the wine tourism industry are not being used efficiently, and are hence being wasted. Moreover, at a local government level, wine tourism is not regarded as a development priority, neither is it regarded as a marketing priority by national tourism marketing authorities.

Although South African wine routes are well known internationally, these concerns are serious issues that have long-term consequences for the industry as a whole. This poses as a crucial problem, since in order for wine tourism to be successful, three domains that comprise the wine tourism system should be integrated, that is, the consumers, suppliers, and destination (Getz, 1998:26). Similarly, Thach (2007) advises that all stakeholders should work together to achieve success. Perhaps for the preceding reasons, South Africa's wine tourism industry lags behind that of Australia – a successful wine destination that is strongly supported by local, regional, and national authorities (Douglas, Douglas, and Derrett, 2001:215; Getz and Brown, 2006:147). There is, thus, an imperative need to understand each domain in order to better assimilate relevant players within the wine tourism industry.

Ultimately, the success of wine tourism is dependent on the synergy achieved from all stakeholders within the industry. Collectively, the wine tourism system directly impacts the tourist experience, which influences their future intentions. Hall *et al.* (2000)[20] (cited in Jiang, 2008:117) summarise this in an illustration depicted in Figure 2.2. The first block represents factors that affect the demand for wine tourism. Motivation and image are two particularly important factors – motivation is the driving force behind engaging in wine tourism products, and image plays a critical role in choosing which wine farm or wine region to visit. The second block displays stakeholders that supply tourists with the wine tourism experience. Wine farms are generally the core attractions; therefore, winery staff is required to be sufficiently knowledgeable in tourism aspects that affect their operations. This reiterates the necessity for both industries to recognise the importance of their contribution to the needs of the wine tourist.

[20] Hall, C.M., Johnson, G., Cambourne, B., Macionis, N., Mitchell, R. & Sharples, L. 2000. Wine tourism: an introduction. In Hall, C.M., Johnson, G., Cambourne, B. & Macionis, N. (eds). *Wine tourism around the world.* Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann: 1-23.

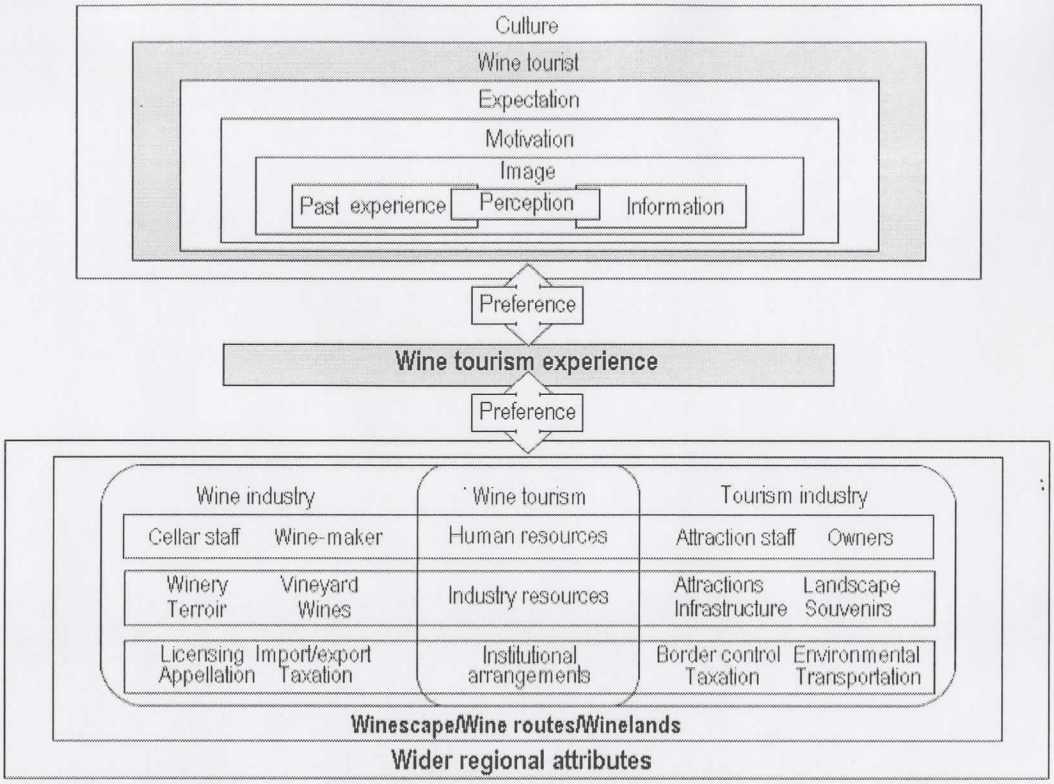


Figure 2.2: Wine tourism system

(Source: Jiang, 2008: 117 based on Hall, Johnson, Cambourne *et al.*, 2000:7[21])

Focusing on the supply-side, Getz *et al.* (cited in Cohen and Ben-Nun, 2009:22) listed factors that are necessary for wine tourism success. These include wine routes or trails that are well sign-posted; a strong tourism marketing organisation, which maintains a consistent wine-related image; wine festivals and related special events; and fine dining or gourmet restaurants. The authors further point out a need for joint marketing efforts by both the wine and tourism industries.

Although useful, these key factors for success are merely guidelines as Getz and Brown (2006:148) admonish that no one set of critical success factors will apply everywhere. Stakeholders in each wine tourism region should tailor their own strategies according to their own circumstances.

2.2.3 Wine tourism product

Kotler, Armstrong, Wong, and Saunders (2008:994) view a product as "*anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need*". Hoffman and Bateson (2001:4) state that products can be either a good or service, but several businesses involve a combination of the two. In essence, goods are tangible such as "*objects, devices, and things*", whereas services

[21] *Ibid.*

are intangible and can only be observed through "*deeds, efforts, or performances*".

Hoffman and Bateson further explain that the distinction between goods and services make it difficult for businesses to distinguish on which side they operate because some services contain elements of goods, and similarly, some goods consist of service elements. Due to this, several businesses suffer from what Levitt (1960:45) describes as marketing myopia. By defining a business too narrowly, companies can lose opportunities, which prevent them from reaching their entire target market. This failure to correctly define their purpose means that potential benefits they can offer the customer are neglected. An example would be the case of wine tourism in South Africa; as previously mentioned in section 2.2.2 (wine tourism system), the actions of wine farms (urging onsite sales and disregarding tourism as a crucial stakeholder) suggest that they believe that they are in the core business of selling wine (goods), rather than an experience (service); therefore, they were product-oriented and not customer-oriented. Although wine is the core attraction, Getz and Brown (2006:155) assert that they cannot survive alone. Hence, Morris and King (1998:219) recommend that wineries restructure their focus from a product-based emphasis to that of a *"tourism product service approach"*, since the ideal wine tourism product incorporates a combination of both.

In order to understand the wine tourism product, one should be familiar with the fundamental levels of a product. The three levels are: the core benefit, tangible product, and the augmented product (Swarbrooke, 2002:45). These levels are reworked for tourism products, as purported by Lewis and Chambers (1989)[22] (cited in Carmichael, 2005:190), which include the core benefit, facilitating services, and supporting services, as seen in Figure 2.3.

The core benefit refers to the intangible benefit, which is received based on the motivations, expectations, and experiences of the visitor (Carmichael, 2005:190), and these would differ for every individual visitor since each has their own set of personalities. For example, wine connoisseurs may visit cellar doors to expand their knowledge of wine, while others may choose a wine farm to relax in its beautiful setting, and some may visit for the food and wine at the cellar door restaurant. All these instances fulfil a need that drives visitors to wine farms. Overall, Mudie and Pirrie (2006:9) describe the core element as the product or service that the individual actually buys – thus, in the case of wine tourism, examples can include self-esteem, status, knowledge, recreation and relaxation. This is consistent with the view of

[22] Lewis, C.C. & Chambers, R.E. 1989. *Marketing Leadership in Hospitality*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Grönroos (2001)[23] (cited in Zehrer, 2009:335) who states that "*customers do not buy goods or services; rather, they buy the benefits and experiences that goods and services provide for them*".

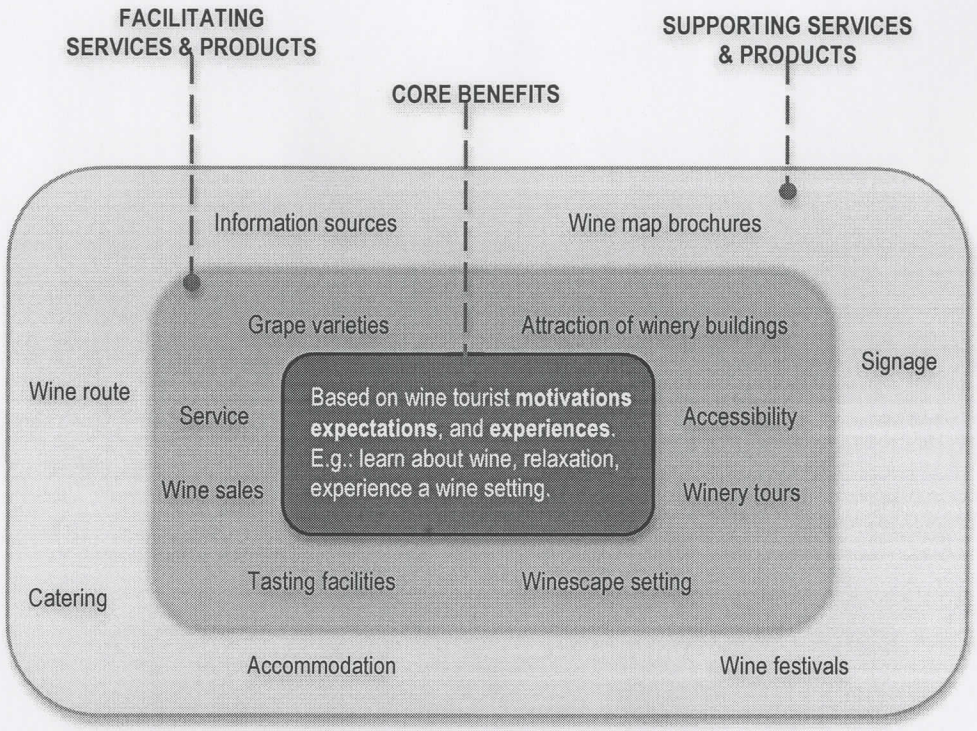


Figure 2.3: Three tourism product levels adapted for wine tourism
(Adapted from Carmichael, 2005:191)

The second level refers to facilitating services that are essential to the delivery of core benefits (Carmichael, 2005:190). Alant and Bruwer (2004:28) also perceive these as motivational pulling factors that draw visitors to the wine farm. These facilitating features cover a vast range of services and products due to the unique nature of core benefits that are desired. For example, grape variety influences the motivations of visitors as they would patron wine farms that specialise in their preference of wine. Furthermore, the cellar door and cellar staff would be required to conduct wine tasting sessions and offer wine sales. Similarly, a picnic on the wine estate requires that there is sufficient land that is suitable for visitors to relax, taking into account safety requirements as many bring the entire family, often with young children. Without these facilitating services, core benefits cannot be experienced.

Lastly, supporting services refer to any extras that may augment wine tourists' experiences (Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:10), for example, online information for

[23] Grönroos, C. 2001. A service quality model and its marketing implications. *European Journal of Marketing*, 18(4):36-44.

customers who seek convenience, clear signage when they arrive at the wine estate or even relationship marketing tactics that delight the visitor. Carmichael (2005:190) describes these as factors that represent customer perceptions of the product experience. Although these components are not compulsory for the experience of the core benefit, they can easily influence the overall perception. As a result, several businesses use supporting level components as a point of differentiation, which also increases their profit generating opportunities.

Another model, which also depicts the wine tourism product, can be seen in Figure 2.4. Developed by Grönroos (1987)[24] (cited in Morris and King, 1998:224), it indicates extended services of the wine tourism industry. The sepals are synonymous with the product levels in Figure 2.3. Specifically, management should correctly convey the needs of visitors to frontline staff so that they can be prepared to meet these needs through products and services that they offer. These three vital components support core and supplementary products and if any of these are not present, it may negatively affect the formation of customer perceptions, and hence, result in an unsatisfactory experience.

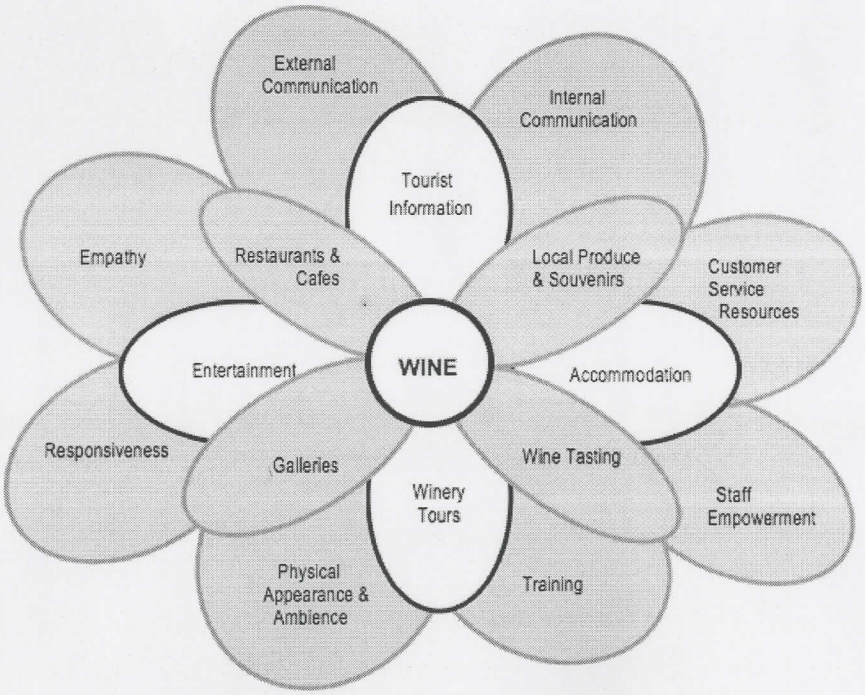


Figure 2.4: Flower of integrated wine tourism service
(Source: Morris and King, 1998:224)

[24] Grönroos, C. 1987. Developing the service offering – A source of competitive advantage. In Surprenant, C. (ed). *Add value to your service.* Chicago: American Marketing Association.

Summarily, the wine tourism product is a complex fusion of goods and services. Since wine tourism is experiential in nature (Sparks, 2007:1184), the service component plays an exceptionally vital role in the delivery of visitors' needs, more so than the physical product itself. This is supported by research that proved that services that are provided by the winery is *"the most enjoyable aspect of a visit to a winery"* (Getz and Brown, 2006:148). However, due to the nature of services, it is a challenge to ensure consistency. The following section explores characteristics of services and how they impact the wine tourism product.

2.2.3.1 Effects of service characteristics on the wine tourism product

Evidently, the pleasure of visiting wine farms is derived from both the physical features of the winescape, in addition to abstract elements such as the ambiance and the performance of winery staff. In order to fully comprehend the wine tourism product, it is necessary to understand the inherent characteristics of services. There are four characteristics, as discussed by Hoffman and Bateson (2001:28-42) and Mudie and Pirrie (2006:3-5). Over and above these characteristics, George (2008:26-30) supplements another eight attributes that are unique to the tourism industry. These twelve characteristics can be seen in Table 2.2 and are discussed below.

Table 2.2: Characteristics of services

1. Intangibility 2. Inseparability 3. Heterogeneity 4. Perishability	Hoffman and Bateson (2001:28-42) Mudie and Pirrie (2006:3-5)
1. Ownership 2. Fixed location 3. Seasonality 4. Loyalty 5. High costs 6. Distribution channels 7. Interdependence of tourism products 8. External shocks and events	George (2008:26-30)

- ***Intangibility***: this is the most basic distinguishing factor between goods and services. Unlike goods, services have no physical element, which means that they cannot be seen, felt, heard, tasted, or smelled prior to consumption (Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:3). This poses as a marketing challenge for businesses since consumers cannot experience the service until it is consumed, making it difficult for them to believe in the product. In order to combat this, customers search for tangible clues, use personal sources of information, and rely on the organisational image of the company (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:28-31).

Tangible cues refer to physical characteristics that assist customers in forming a perception of the service, for example, the appearance of winery staff, the quality of their wines, and even how well their fittings and décor are maintained. Personal sources of information is an important tool for customers as many rely on word of mouth (WOM) referrals from friends and relatives. This is particularly true in wine tourism where WOM referral is the most widely used source in the wine visitor decision-making process (Mitchell and Hall, 2004:47; Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:57; Sparks, 2007:1187). By relying on the opinions and judgments of others who have experienced the service before, visitors can reduce their perceived risk and uncertainty, however, it is also important to understand that these opinions are highly subjective due to each person's own set of expectations and perceptions. That said, visitors are sufficiently competent to evaluate the judgments of individuals that they know on a personal level. Lastly, customers find comfort in choosing familiar brand names when they are new to the product; therefore, it is in the best interest of businesses to develop and nurture their organisational image and brand.

- ***Inseparability***: unlike physical goods where they are first produced, stored, sold then consumed, services have no tangible element and cannot be stored; instead, they are produced and consumed simultaneously (Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:4). As a result, the service provider, the customer, the service, and even the presence of other customers are all interconnected, as purported by Hoffman and Bateson (2001:31). A perfect example can be seen in the case of a winery tour – the tour guide delivers the tour of the wine cellar and concurrently, wine visitors experience this service through their sense of sight, hearing, smell, and touch in the presence of each other.

  Again, customers use tangible clues to help them evaluate the impending service; the easiest would be to assess the appearance of the service provider such as dress code, neatness and cleanliness, their use of language, and interpersonal communication skills (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:31). These clues, in addition to staff behaviour and attitude, play a crucial role in the way that the overall service is perceived by the customer (Swarbrooke 2002:41). Strengths and weaknesses of staff are highly apparent and, therefore, are particularly vulnerable to evaluation. This implies that service quality is imperative, but Jago and Issaverdis (2001:18) express that high and consistent quality is much more difficult to achieve in the presence of these service characteristics. The characteristic of inseparability, as stated by Hoffman and Bateson (2001:31), thus, provides the "*greatest opportunity for both gains and*

losses in regard to customer satisfaction and retention".

- ***Heterogeneity***: this characteristic refers to the variability of services. This is one of the key problems in a labour-intensive industry. Since production and consumption is simultaneous, variation in service delivery is guaranteed, even if performed by the same person. This cause stems from different emotions and personalities that govern individuals; staff performance is highly affected by different moods that may fluctuate over the course of the day (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:39; Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:4). As a result, service quality cannot be controlled before it reaches the customer (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:38); hence, each experience encountered is never quite the same.

  In order to minimise this problem, Hoffman and Bateson (2001:39) propose two solutions, namely customisation and standardisation. The former refers to the customisation of each service for which the service provider may command a higher price. Although this may appear to be an appropriate solution, it is met with its own drawbacks. Firstly, despite resulting in a customised service, customers may be unwilling to pay the higher price. Secondly, it takes longer to produce a customised service and customers may not have the willingness or option to wait. Lastly, there is uncertainty, which is associated with customised services because customers can never be sure of what they will receive until it is delivered. Therefore, even with customised services, there will always be some risk associated with it. For these reasons, Hoffman and Bateson believe that customers would prefer standardisation over customisation, but ultimately the final choice depends on the needs of customers.

  The second solution, namely standardisation of services, refers to two options. The first option, which reduces variability, is to intensively train employees. In creating high standards and nurturing a respectable organisational culture, extreme variations in performance can be greatly reduced, although not entirely eliminated. Moreover, due to the significance that employees have on the company image, it would be wise to employ individuals who are passionate about their job. Companies should also ensure the satisfaction of their staff seeing that employees who are happy with their job and working environment are significantly more productive than those who are not (Lou and Homberg, 2007:136-137). This is evidently reflected in their performance, and hence, affects how they deliver the service.

The second option entirely eliminates variability by replacing human labour with machines. This is commonly seen in automated telephone messages, where the customer dials a series of numbers to eventually arrive at the correct department with which they wish to speak. Although it may be convenient, more efficient, and less costly, it lacks a sense of personalisation, which is often required to deliver a positively memorable experience. Mudie and Pirrie (2006) warn that too much standardisation can lead to 'MacDonaldisation', in which service providers take on the characteristics of fast food restaurants where the objective is fast, efficient, and predictable service. In the case of wine tourism this cannot be the case as the industry strongly relies on interaction with customers, as their needs are highly unique.

- ***Perishability:*** since services are intangible, they cannot be stored for later use (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:41; Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:5). They are produced and consumed simultaneously and, therefore, matching supply and demand may be problematic for marketers.

- ***Ownership:*** unlike tangible products, a tourism experience cannot be owned – only experienced through the access to services that generate a memory of the experience (George, 2008:26). For example, there is no transfer of ownership during a wine tasting session, however, it may lead visitors to purchase wine – which they can own – based on the experience that they encountered at wine tasting. This makes marketing in tourism relatively difficult as visitors only have their memories on which to reflect – it also explains why WOM is such a powerful marketing tool for tourism products.

- ***Fixed location:*** tourism destinations are geographically fixed; therefore, a combination of advertising and promotional activities is required to entice visitors to the destination (George, 2008:27). SWR is successful in this regard as they promote wine estates as a collective region that focuses on quality wine tourism experiences.

- ***Seasonality:*** most tourism offerings depend on the season, which means that demand may fluctuate during the year (George, 2008:27). It is common for tourists to take holidays during the summer months – this time coincides with the festive season in South Africa, therefore, demand during this period is greater. Wine festivals in various regions (e.g. Stellenbosch, Paarl, Franschhoek) also occur during specific months of the year and this attracts national and international visitors.

- ***Loyalty:*** loyalty in tourism is difficult to achieve since there tends to be an interval between visits to a destination – sometimes the region is visited only once by a visitor, therefore, George (2008:28) suggests that it is *"impossible to generalise about whether consumers are loyal or not to a particular tourism offering".* However, other literature indicates loyalty in terms of tourism offerings – they are merely demonstrated via other means. This is discussed in section 3.4 (customer loyalty).

- ***High costs:*** tourism organisations tend to be afflicted by high fixed costs and relatively low variable costs (George, 2008:29). These fixed costs still need to be paid even during off peak seasons, as they are required to operate the business. For example, wine estate restaurants are required to be open as long as the estate receives visitors. By doing so, overheads of running the restaurant are incurred – even when demand is low.

- ***Distribution channels:*** since the location of the destination is fixed, intermediaries are required to bring the consumer and the offerings together (George, 2008:29). These include organisations such as travel agencies and tour operators; they are said to heavily influence the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of tourists since they provide advice on destinations, accommodation, and handle bookings and requests. These distribution channels are more important for overseas tourists who visit South African wine estates since first-time visitors are unfamiliar with the destination; hence, their decision may be based on advice, which is provided by the travel agency. This is less of a problem for national visitors since WOM is mostly used as a source of reference.

- ***Interdependence of tourism products:*** a decision to take a holiday involves several complementary offerings (George, 2008:29). For example, a wine tourist based in Johannesburg who wishes to visit Stellenbosch, should consider the type of holiday (e.g. package tour, independent travel), the mode of transport to reach the destination (e.g. air, bus, car), accommodation (e.g. hotel, guest houses, friends and relatives), and mode of transport during the visit (e.g. rental car, with tour group, friends and relatives). Also, the types of attractions is important – for example, considering, which estates to visit based on the activities of interest.

- ***External shocks and events:*** the tourism industry is prone to uncontrollable factors that affect its demand (George, 2008:30). These include factors such as wars, disease, extreme weather conditions, political events, strikes, electricity and

power shortages, as well as economic factors. Some of these have recently been witnessed, for example, the dire worldwide economic situation, which reduced holidays in general. Furthermore, a country that took a big setback in its tourism sector was Mexico due to the H1N1 virus (Swine Flu) in 2009.

As seen in the preceding sections, the characteristics of services and tourism have a profound impact on the wine tourism experience, particularly at cellar door level. Experience is discussed in section 2.4 and customer satisfaction is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

2.2.3.2 Importance of cellar doors

Literature suggests that cellar door is an important component of the wine tourism product and plays a pivotal role in wine the tourism experience. Its significance is expressed in three benefits, which were recognised by Charters and O'Neill (2001:7) and O'Neill *et al.* (2002:344). These include distribution of wine at a low marginal cost; development of brand equity; and a chance to add value.

Previously, the focus of wineries was predominantly on the first benefit – cellar door sales (Morris and King, 1998:222). This can be attributed to two reasons – the first being the lack of intermediaries in the wine distribution channel, which allowed wineries to increase their profit margins (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:344; Thach, 2007); secondly, the wine industry was unfamiliar with the service and hospitality industry and, consequently, overlooked the importance of customers' experience (Macionis, 1997[25] cited in Hall and Johnson, 1998:64; Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:52).

With the benefit of the cellar door being an additional retail outlet for wineries, it is naturally a rational decision for winery owners to direct their efforts at sales. Statistics indicate that these on-site sales comprise a sizeable amount of their overall sales. As stated in section 1.3.1, the Margaret wine region in Australia reports that cellar door sales contribute 34% to their total revenue (King and Morris, 1997[26] cited in Williams and Dossa, 2003:3), and 20%-30% for wine regions in Southern Australia (Reilly, 1996[27] cited in Williams and Dossa, 2003:3). Two wine regions in France reported 19% (Burgundy) and 23% (Alsace) (Choisy, 1996[28] cited in Williams and Dossa, 2003:3). Hall and Johnson (1998:62) state a 20% figure for wineries in New Zealand.

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[25] Macionis, N. 1997. Wine tourism in Australia: emergence, development, and critical issues. Unpublished Masters of Arts thesis, Canberra, University of Canberra.
[26] King, C. & Morris, R. 1997. To taste or not to taste: to charge or not to charge. *Wine Industry Journal*, 12(4):381-384.
[27] Reilly. A. 1996. A marketing approach for small winemakers in regional areas. Unpublished Masters thesis, Business Administration, University of Adelaide.
[28] Choisy, C. 1996. Lepoinds du tourisme viti-vinicole. *Espaces*, 140:30-33.

In the case of South Africa, cellar door sales account for 78% of total revenue, with the remaining assigned to other wine tourism activities (Bruwer, 2003:433).

The significant discrepancy between South Africa and other regions lie in the motivations of wine tourists – South Africa's wine tourism market is comprised mostly of wine connoisseurs and those who are interested in wine whose main purpose of visiting cellar doors is to taste and purchase wine (Bruwer, 2003:431). O'Neill and Charters (2000:114) and O'Neill *et al.* (2002:345) state that the cellar door represents the "*complete profile of the winery*", and with first impressions being the most memorable, all aspects of the cellar door are critically important in the development of customer perceptions. These include the cellar door layout, appearance, ambiance, demeanour and attitude of staff, including the quality of their service. As seen in section 2.2.3.1, these aspects serve as tangible clues on which visitors base their perceptions, expectations, and ultimately their entire experience. As a result, the professionalism of winery staff can be regarded as the most influential aspect in the experience of the cellar door, even to the point where it affects visitors' decision regarding whether or not to purchase wine (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002: 345). Thus, the cellar door poses an excellent opportunity to connect emotionally with the visitor (Alonso, Sheridan, and Scherrer, 2008:978), which influences how the winery brand develops in the minds of customers.

Two critical success factors for building brand equity have been identified as *"perceived wine quality"* and *"perceptions of fair pricing relative to quality"* (Nowak and Newton, 2006:157). Cellar doors can take advantage of this at their tasting rooms where visitors can experience the quality of their wines. Findings from the study by Alonso, Sheridan, and Scherrer (2008:982) also agree with the benefits of this opportunity, stating that the best way to convince a customer is to engage them in a face-to-face relationship. Similarly, Anderson and Jacobsen (2000:65) believe that customer contact paves the way to create loyalty. This way, even if they decide not to purchase wine, they still gain something valuable – getting to know the brand and the people behind it – hence winery managers opt to invest in a tasting room as part of their brand development even though its economic benefits are not immediately apparent (Alonso *et al.*, 2008:983).

Visits to the cellar door exemplify what Mitchell and Orwig (2002:31) describe as *customer experience tourism* (CET) whereby companies provide customers with a visual presentation of the brand through tours that display their operations, production process, history, and historical significance. The aim of this strategy is to increase the customer's personal involvement with the brand, which, in turn, forms a bond

between the two. Exposure to this experience can provide greater understanding of the product, reinforce brand image, increase WOM communication, and may ultimately translate into brand loyalty. Although wine tourists may not necessarily witness the wine production process, the cellar door provides an equal opportunity to experience first-hand attributes of the wine and wine brand (Mitchell and Hall, 2004:41).

Furthermore, this experience develops a sense of familiarity that helps to reduce perceived risks associated with new wineries or products. In several cases, with the exception of South Africa, most wine visitors are on vacation while visiting wine farms and, therefore, have little likelihood of returning in the short term; consequently, wine farms aim to create loyalty to the brand (instead of the cellar door) so that visitors will purchase their wines when they are back home as well as share their positive experiences with friends and relatives (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:342).

Lastly, the chance to add value is a particularly important opportunity for cellar doors. Due to the unique and different needs of visitors, there is ample potential for wine farms to create additional value to attract customers. These include the likes of restaurants, wine museums, cellar tours, picnics on the estate, grape stomping and even wine making activities (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:345; Alonso *et al.*, 2008:978). Each of these services has an ability of becoming a differentiating factor for wineries. These value added services transform the core product into an experience, which results in increased revenue-generating opportunities (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:5). However, because they are easily imitable (majority of wine farms have restaurants, picnic facilities and wine tours), wineries cannot rely solely on these additional services to sustain long-term revenue or achieve competitive advantage. Hence, several academics and practitioners advocate building loyalty.

Summarily, the cellar door can be regarded as the first step in relationship building. By getting to know the visitor, wine farms can tailor services that they offer to meet the needs and wants of visitors. In this encounter, wine farms' performance is exposed to evaluation based on visitor perceptions and expectations. The next step would be to determine, based on their experience outcome, whether they are keen to foster a relationship with the wine farm. In order to foster these relationships, O'Neill *et al.* (2002:345) state that it must be planned and managed correctly; another critical aspect that is required is a high level of service quality (O'Neill and Charters, 2000:115), because without this, there would be little to distinguish one wine farm experience from another. Evidently, the cellar door centres itself on service quality and creating customer loyalty, and these two important aspects are discussed in

detail in Chapter Three.

2.3 Consumer behavioural aspects of wine tourists

Wine tourism is a complex industry in the sense that it requires basic understanding of both the wine and tourism industries in addition to consumer behaviour, and since consumer behaviour appears to be the greatest interest to marketers, this area of study seems to be more abundant than other researched areas of wine tourism. The purpose of understanding wine tourist behaviour is two-fold; firstly, to better serve their needs and, secondly, to identify the most valuable and profitable customers so that long-term revenue can be maximised through loyal relationships.

2.3.1 Profile of wine tourists

Based on the nature of wine tourism, it can be inferred that not all wine consumers are wine tourists, but all wine tourists are wine drinkers, since they are mainly motivated by wine to engage in wine tourism activities (Hall and Mitchell, 2001:316). As a result, the market is broad, and ranges from occasional to frequent drinkers. Despite its broadness, literature suggests that wine tourists generally are mature, well educated, and have professional occupations that place them in the moderate to high income bracket, along with disposable time to partake in wine related activities (Hall and Mitchell, 2001:316; Getz and Brown, 2006:149; Galloway *et al.*, 2008:955). Nevertheless, Bruwer (2003:431) advises that "*profiles of wine tourists in one country or region should not be automatically assumed to be the same as in another, or even between one wine estate and another*".

Recent years have seen a change in demographics, which vary substantially between wine regions. For instance, the profile of wine tourists in Canada appears to be older than those in Australia and South Africa. A study by Carmichael (2005:196) showed that 30% of visitors to the Ontario wine region were between 41 and 50 years old; 60% completed university, while 20% possess postgraduate degrees; 73% have professional jobs; 44% of them earn annual incomes exceeding CAD$90,000[29]; and a high percentage (76%) of visitors were residents of Ontario.

In a study concerning Calgary (Getz and Brown, 2006:150), also in Canada, results proved to be different to those conducted by Carmichael (2005). Most (34%) of the Calgary respondents were between 50 and 59 years of age; 30% were self-employed, while 21% were retired; and 30% earned between CAD$100 and CAD$159,000, while 20% earned CAD$160,000 or more. The differences in age and

[29] Exchange rate at 01 September 1999 (period of study): 1USD=1.485CAD.

income may possibly be attributed to the fact that the Calgary respondents were long distance visitors vacationing at the wine region. Together, half were self-employed or retired, which means that they have more disposable time and money to travel and do not necessarily choose wine regions that are in close proximity to their residence. Another possibility is that perhaps the Calgary wine region offers products and services that appeal particularly to this age group.

Regarding Australia, three studies are compared. The first two, by O'Neill and Charters (2000:117) and O'Neill *et al.* (2002:349) (covering Western and Southern Australia), rendered similar results. Both indicated that the typical wine tourist is between the ages of 25 and 44 (approximately 61%), and well educated with 73% in managerial or professional capacities. In contrast, the research by Galloway *et al.* (2008:955) concerning Western and Southern Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria regions, indicated a higher visitor age bracket of 30 – 50 years of age. Other characteristics regarding education and income match those studies of O'Neill and Charters (2000) and O'Neill *et al.* (2002). Overall, with a majority of visits being intra-state and local in all three studies, it is evident that Australia has a strong domestic wine tourism market.

Research pertaining to South African wine visitor profiles (and wine tourism in general) has been underprovided. However, based on one Cape Winelands study by Tassiopoulos *et al.* (2004:55), it appears that the profile of domestic wine visitors is closer to that of Australia than Canada. The study showed that 24 – 35 year olds comprised the highest group (38.8%), followed by those between 18 and 24 (20%). The existence of such a strong youth market is likely owing to the student community (at University of Stellenbosch), which is situated in the area of investigation. A total of 15% was in the 35 – 44 years old category and even less for older age groups. South Africa also has a considerably high incidence (58.5%) of female visitors compared to other wine regions where the split is roughly equal. Like Australia, domestic visitors comprise the bulk (91%) of total visitors, with 73% on day trips as they live close by.

Summarily, the profile of the wine tourist is more or less the same, besides the characteristic of age, which varies between different wine regions. Clearly, the profile merely outlines basic demographics of the wine visitor. It is ineffective in uncovering their motivations that are essential to determine reasons for their interest in wine tourism, or even choice of wine farms. Segmentation based on non-demographic variables, conversely, will provide a better understanding of the wine tourist.

2.3.2 Wine tourist segments

In the wine tourism industry, several approaches and a combination of approaches have been used to classify the wine tourist. The classification of these tourists is not only necessary in order to understand the market segment, or to target a particular group with marketing initiatives, but also for sampling reasons – for example, excluding or including wine tourists in a study based on their wine purchasing habits or even frequency of visits to wine regions. This section provides an overview of the segments that were identified, starting with earlier ones that were established and concluding with the most recent typologies. These are then compared with each other for similarities.

Using motivation as the key variable, Johnson (1998)[30] (cited in Mitchell and Hall, 2004:69) proposed two types of wine tourists – the *specialist* and *generalist*. Specialist wine tourists are motivated to engage in wine-related activities based on their interest in wine, which suggests that they possess high, if not extensive wine knowledge. On the contrary, generalist tourists engage in the same activities for the key purpose of recreation, which suggests that they are not knowledgeable about wine and that they would rather engage in ancillary activities, perhaps along the lines of picnics or wine stomping. This approach confirms that while demographics of these wine tourists may be similar, their motivations are completely divergent.

Also using a psychological construct, Zaichkowsky (1985)[31] (cited in Galloway *et al.*, 2008:951) employed the variable of *involvement* (high, medium, or low). He defines it as "*a person's perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values, and interests*". This approach, as stated by Galloway *et al.*, has been applied in the wine tourism field by several academics. It has been found that individuals with high involvement consume more wine than those who are lower in wine involvement (Goldsmith and d'Hauteville, 1998[32] cited in Galloway *et al.*, 2008:951). They also use more complex cues (region, style, winemaker), whereas lower involvement individuals base their decisions on price, variety and brand (Lockshin and Spawton, 2001[33] cited in Galloway *et al.*, 2008:951). Therefore, it can be inferred that wine tourists with high involvement are more particular in their choices regarding wine product features, and hence earn more and are more knowledgeable about wine than those of medium or low involvement.

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[30] Johnson, G. R. 1998. Wine tourism in New Zealand: A national survey of wineries 1997. Unpublished Diploma in Tourism dissertation, University of Otago.
[31] Zaichkowsky, J.L.1985. Measuring the involvement construct. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12(3):341-352.
[32] Goldsmith, R. & d'Hauteville, F. 1998. Heavy wine consumption: Empirical and theoretical perspectives. *British Food Journal*, 100(4):184–190.
[33] Lockshin, L. & Spawton, T. 2001. Using involvement and brand equity to develop a wine tourism strategy. *International Journal of Wine Marketing*, 13(1): 72–78.

Using the lifestyle segmentation approach adopted by the Movimento del Turismo del Vino, Mitchell *et al.*[34] (cited in Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002:313) identified four segments applicable to the Italian wine tourist. These segments were found to be more specific in terms of demography than those in other wine regions. Their classifications and descriptions are presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Classification of Italian wine tourists

The Professional
30–45 years old, knows wines and the wine world, can discuss the fine points of the wines with the winemaker, and can competently judge a wines virtues and faults; always interested in new things, and willing to devote considerable time and energy to their discovery.
The Impassioned Neophyte
25–30 years old, well-off, likes wines and sees them as a vehicle through which to cement friendships, enjoy foods, and explore the countryside; generally travels with friends, some of whom may be Professional, and always has a wine guide handy; eager to learn, but less serious about wine than the Professional.
The Hanger-On
40–50 years old, wealthy, attracted to wines because knowing something about them is a mark of distinction; is satisfied with a knowledge of just the basics, and is more easily swayed by the comments of others than those belonging to the previous categories; is also drawn to famous names, and more easily impressed by appearances; sometimes asks for a discount.
The Drinker
50–60 years old, visits wineries as part of a group on Sundays, treating them as an alternative to a bar, gulps the wine and asks for more, also asks to buy in bulk.

(Source: Mitchell *et al.*, 2000[35] cited in Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002:313)

Charters and Ali-Knight (2002:315), building on the work of Hall (1996) (cited in Hall and Macionis[36] by Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002:312), classify wine tourists into four categories based on psychological and psychographic constructs. The typologies are: *wine lovers* (comprised of *connoisseur* and *general* wine lovers), *wine interested*, *wine novices*, and the *hanger on.* Their characteristics are summarised in Table 2.4.

Based on the description by Charters and Ali-Knight, the *wine lover* in Australia appears to be slightly different to the *wine lover* (in particular *the wine connoisseur*) in South Africa. While Australian *wine lovers* are less interested in ancillary activities such as wine tours, Scott (2008:7) indicates that *wine connoisseurs* to the SWR show some interest in these tours. Scott states that "*wine connoisseurs are regarded as special visitors and consequently are given VIP-treatment*". This special treatment is demonstrated in the choice of tour presenters of which 80% are winemakers. These private tours are also "*more intimate and exceptionally informative*". Therefore, a

[34] Mitchell, R., Hall, C.M. & McIntosh, A. 2000. Wine tourism and consumer behaviour. In Hall, C.M., Sharples, L., Cambourne, B. & Macionis, N. (eds). *Wine tourism around the world: development, management, and markets.* Oxford: Butterworh-Heinneman. 115-135.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] Hall, C.M. & Macionis, N. 1998. Wine tourism in Australia and New Zealand. In Butler, R.M., Hall, C.M. & Jenkins, J (eds). *Tourism and Recreation in Rural Areas.* England: Wiley.

distinction should be made between wine tours that are given to the general public, and those that are offered to the wine specialist.

Table 2.4: Characteristics of wine lover, wine interested, wine novice, and hanger-on.

Wine lover	Wine Interested	Wine Novice	Hanger-On
• Mostly male • Highly knowledgeable and enthusiastic about wine/continuous learning • Wants to understand link between food and wine • Visits wineries primarily to buy, learn about, and taste wine • Their knowledge mostly comes from wine tastings (81%) followed by wine books (74%) • Less interested in ancillary activities, focus is on wine • Wine connoisseurs display the same characteristics but are even more dedicated to gaining wine knowledge • Highly involved in the purchase of wine • Likely to join winery mailing list	• Interested in learning about wine but not the link between food and wine • Motivated by opportunity to buy wine and to improve tasting skills • Their knowledge mostly comes from wine tastings (73%) • Enjoy visiting different wineries, suggesting their interest in wine tourism and not wine alone • Makes up a majority of the market	• Much less knowledgeable than wine lover and wine interested but are keen on learning • Wine purchasing and tasting not their priority, but 62% learn about wine through tasting sessions • No interest in wine consumption process • Prefers winery tours, possibly to build basic understanding of wine • Experience of winery tour most important to them, influences whether they will convert to *wine interested*	• No interest in wine • Happen to visit as part of a group that has decided to visit the winery • Comprises only a small percentage

(Adapted from Charters and Ali-Knight, 2002:315-316 and Scott, 2008:5)

A method called Wine-Related Lifestyle (WRL) segmentation, which was developed by Bruwer *et al.* (2002) uses a hybrid of demographics, consumption behaviour, and situational constructs as a basis for segmenting wine consumers. Their results rendered five segments, which are applicable to the Australian wine market namely *purposeful inconspicuous premium wine drinker*, *ritual oriented conspicuous wine enthusiast*, *enjoyment seeking social wine drinker*, *fashion/image-oriented wine drinker*, and *basic wine drinker*. In 2007 the study was reconstructed and the segments were revised as follows (Bruwer and Li, 2007:29-30): *conservative, knowledgeable wine drinkers* (19.2% of the market); *enjoyment-oriented, social wine drinkers* (16.2%); *basic wine drinkers* (23.5%); *mature time-rich wine drinkers* (18.2%); and *young professional wine drinkers* (22.9%). Characteristics of the identified segments can be seen in Table 2.5. These are more narrow descriptions of typologies that are purported by Charters and Ali-Knight (2002:315-316).

Table 2.5: Wine-Related Lifestyle (WRL) segmentation of the Australian wine market

	Conservative, knowledgeable wine drinkers	Enjoyment-oriented, social wine drinkers	Basic wine drinkers	Mature time-rich wine drinkers	Young professional wine drinkers
Demographics	• Mostly male (57%) • Mostly between 45-55 years (35%) followed by 56-65 • 38% have tertiary level education • Highest incidence of Master's degree • 35% earn less than $50,000, while 22% earn more than $100,001 • 20% are retired and 17% work as professionals	• Mostly female (65%) • 38% between 45-55 years followed by 19% each for age bans 25-34 and 56-65 • 25% have tertiary level education • 47% earn less than $50,000, while 17% earn more than $100,001 • 17% are retired and 12% work as professionals	• Mostly male (56%) • 23% are between 45-55 and 65+, 15% are between 41-44 • 24% have tertiary level education • Highest incidence of Doctorate degree • 57% earn less than $50,000, and 6% earn more than $100,001 • 28% are retired, while 11% work as associated professionals	• Mostly male (55%) • Majority (29%) over 65 years of age, followed by 45-55 (25%) • 32% have tertiary education • Highest incidence of Bachelor's degree • 56% earn less than $50,000 and 9% earn more than $100,001 • 43% are retired and 16% work as professionals	• Mostly female (57%) • 29% between 45-55 years, followed by 20% between 56-65 • 33% have tertiary education • 45% earn less than US$46,000, while 14% earn more than US$91,000 • 21% are professionals and 19% are retired
Consumption & purchasing behaviour	• Drinks mostly red wine (53%) • Buys at specialty liquor stores (47%) and cellar doors (22%) • Drinks every day (34%) to a few times a week (48%) • 48% spend under $15 per bottle, while 47% between $15-$25	• Mostly white wine (45%) • Buys at specialty liquor stores (55%) and pubs (16%), followed by cellar doors (14%) • Drinks a few times a week (52%) and once a week (20%) • Majority (75%) spend under $15 per bottle	• Mostly red wine (45%) • Buys at specialty liquor stores (62%) and cellar doors (13%) • Drinks a few times a week (45%) and everyday (22%) • Majority (79%) spend under $15 per bottle	• Mostly red wine (47%) • Buys at specialty liquor stores (57%) and cellar doors (17%) • Drinks every day (38%) and few times a week (42%) • 77% spend less than $15 per bottle, while 40% spend between $15-$25	• Mostly red wine (57%) • Buys at specialty liquor stores (57%) and cellar doors (14%) • Drinks a few times a week (43%), every day (22%), and once a week (22%) • 59% spend less than $15 per bottle, 40% spend between $15-$25
Situational characteristics	All segments consume wine at home and at social occasions away from home, with the exception of *basic wine drinkers* who mainly consume wine on special occasions away from home				

(Adapted from Bruwer *et al.*, 2002: 234-237 and Bruwer and Li, 2007:29-30)

The study by Galloway *et al.* (2008) classifies wine tourists according to their sensation seeking behaviour. Individuals were divided into two groups – *lower sensation seekers* and *higher sensation seekers*. More than half (52%) of wine tourists fell into the first category, while the remaining (48%) were classified as higher sensation seekers. In general, comparing both segments, it was found that higher sensation seekers (Galloway *et al.*, 2008:962):

- have a higher monthly expenditure on wine (AUS$169)[37];
- buy more bottles of wine (15) per month (therefore, the average per bottle spend is AUD$11.30);
- drink more bottles of wine (10) per month;
- averaged 7 visits to wineries in the previous year;
- are more likely to use the Internet as a source of information about wineries;
- participate in more activities during a visit to a wine region;
- have strong learning, stimulation, and indulgence incentives to visit a wine region; and
- are more likely to venture off the beaten track during a visit.

The outcomes of these segmentation approaches confirm that no stereotypical wine tourist exists. Nevertheless, they are useful to identify subgroups of the general wine tourist. Moreover, several of these typologies have common characteristics amongst each other. For instance, *wine lovers*, *specialist tourists*, *the professional, conservative and knowledgeable wine drinkers*, and *mature time-rich wine drinkers* are all analogous and can be considered as highly involved. These individuals are serious about wine and are undoubtedly knowledgeable; their higher education status provides them with occupations in high-income brackets; their desire for knowledge means that they are highly involved and are likely to form relationships with wineries – an important aspect for relationship marketing.

Conversely, *generalist tourists*, *impassioned neophyte*, *hanger-on* (Italian), *wine interested*, *wine novices*, *young professionals, enjoyment-oriented social wine drinkers*, and *basic wine drinkers* have considerably less wine knowledge as they are more focused on relaxation and social aspects that are associated with wine. This means that they are less confined to the tasting room, as they would rather engage in tourism-related activities (for instance, wine tours, social events at the winery, wine festivals, regional attractions, and so on). This category of wine tourists are less involved than its main counterpart.

The drinker and Charter and Ali-Knight's *hanger-on* have either extremely little or no interest in wine and possibly only regard it as a mere beverage. They would never visit a wine farm unless accompanying others; therefore, this segment is not financially feasible to target unless there exists a possibility to successfully convert them into the *interested* segment. Comparisons of these typologies are listed in Table

[37] Exchange rate at period of study (estimated at 2005): 1USD=1.3.14AUD.

2.6 below.

Table 2.6: Comparison of wine tourist typologies

Johnson (1998)	Movimento del Tourismo del Vino (1995)	Charters and Ali-Knight (2002)	Bruwer and Li (2007)
Specialist	The Professional	Wine lovers (Connoisseur and general)	Conservative, knowledgeable wine drinkers Mature, time-rich wine drinkers
Generalist	The Impassioned Neophyte The Hanger-On	Wine interested Wine novice	Enjoyment-oriented, social wine drinkers Young professional wine drinkers Basic wine drinkers
	The Drinker	Hanger-on	

According to research conducted by Bruwer (2003:431) and Tassiopoulos *et al.* (2004:55), it appears that the South African wine tourist falls into the category of sophisticated drinkers. Normally *wine interested* individuals dominate the Australian market and a total of 3.3% are *wine lovers*, as discovered by Charters and Ali-Knight (2002:316); however, in South Africa it is quite the contrary. Bruwer (2003:431) uncovered that a remarkable 53.3% of the South African wine tourism market are *wine lovers*; 27.8% are *wine interested*; and 15.9% are *curious tourists* (comparable to *wine novices*). Tassiopoulos *et al.* (2004:55) indicate that 40.3% of wine tourists are of the high usage category (visiting wineries more than four times a year). Medium usage (1 to 3 winery visits per annum) tourists contribute 37.6%, and low usage tourists make up 22.1% (first time visitors or those who visit less than once a year). This is indicative of a strong domestic wine tourism market, even more so than that of Australia's.

Although tourist profiling is highly useful to identify profitable segments whose needs can be fulfilled, it is inadequate to establish reasons behind their decision to visit wine farms and their engagement in particular wine-related activities. Moreover, Hall and Macionis (1998)[38] (cited in Bruwer, 2003:431) point out that each size of the market segments depend on: individual characteristics of each winery and wine region in terms of accessibility; the profile of the wine; types of wine produced; marketing and promotion; attractiveness; and facilities. Nevertheless, based on the profiles identified and contrary to Carlsen (2004:7), it is evident that a distinct market for wine tourism exists. The next logical step is to determine their motivations to engage in wine tourism.

[38] Hall, C.M. & Macionis, N. 1998. Wine tourism in Australia and New Zealand. In Butler, R.W., Hall, C.M. & Jenkins, J.M. (eds.). *Tourism and Recreation in Rural Areas.* England: John Wiley & Sons: 197-221.

2.3.3 Wine tourist motivation

O'Neill *et al.* (2002:345) state that uncovering wine tourist motivation is essential for the success of wine tourism, since it is the force behind all behaviour (Crompton, 1979:409). This section provides some theoretical background of motivation, which is then applied to wine tourist motivations that are based on extant literature. This brings one closer to understanding the wine tourist.

2.3.3.1 Theory of motivation

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:83) classify motivation as the "*driving force within individuals that impels them to action*". This urge is a result of tension, which is produced by an unfulfilled need, which individuals attempt to diminish by pursuing activities that they believe will fulfil their needs.

All individuals are driven by motivation to fulfil a need. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:83) identify two types: primary (innate) and secondary (acquired) needs. Primary needs are required in order to sustain biological life; these include the likes of air, water, food, clothing, and shelter. Secondary needs, conversely, are learned through an individual's path of life, specifically through experiences, culture, environment, and education. The need for self-esteem, prestige, affection, power and learning are examples of acquired needs.

Once people become motivated, their behaviour become goal-oriented. There are two types of goals: generic goals and product-specific goals (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:84). Generic goals pertain to general classes of goals that can be regarded as a means to fulfil a need, for example, a wine tourist wanting to visit a wine farm to purchase wine, whereas product-specific goals relate to specifically branded products or services that individuals believe will satisfy their goals. In the case of the wine tourist, in choosing to visit, say, Muratie wine estate to buy their 2006 Shiraz, the goal becomes product-specific.

Goals that individuals choose depend on their personal experiences, physical capacity, prevailing cultural norms and values, and accessibility of the goal in the physical and social environment (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:84). They also tend to select goals that reflect their own self-image. Schiffman and Kanuk further affirm that a product that is perceived as matching a consumer's self-image has a greater probability of being selected than one that is not. For example, a *wine connoisseur* will purchase and consume a wine brand/vintage of exceptionally high quality and price as he perceives himself to be wealthy, successful, and highly knowledgeable about wine; accordingly, his behaviour and choices will symbolically represent his

self-image and, at the same time, satisfy his needs.

Consumer behaviourists have also identified other types of motivation that impel individuals to action. These include *rational* and *emotional* motives. Rational motives assumes that consumers behave rationally when they consider all the alternatives and choose the one that gives them the best utility (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:88), which involves considering aspects such as the size, weight, and price of the product. Rational motives are often used when comparing two similar products. Emotional motives involve personal or subjective criteria such as pride, fear, status, and affection (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:88).

Figure 2.5 illustrates the process of motivation. Unfulfilled needs trigger an urge or tension that drives the individual to engage in specific behaviour that ultimately reduces the tension by fulfilling the need. This process is continuous given that new needs emerge as old needs are satisfied (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:90).

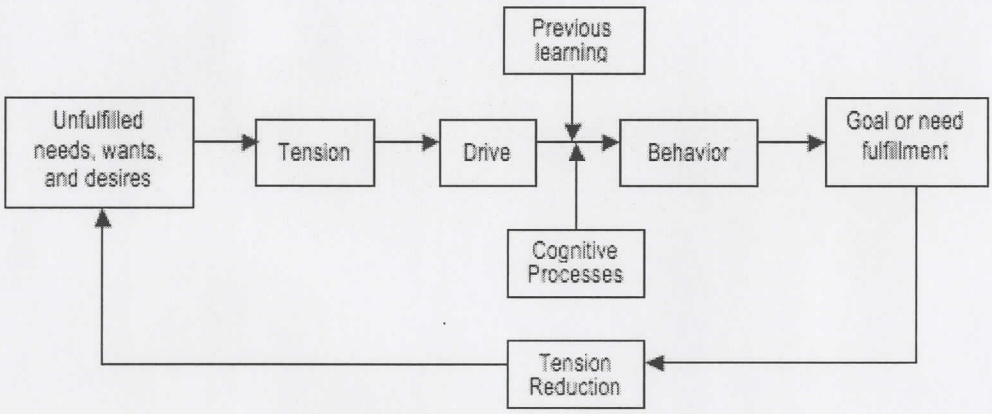


Figure 2.5: Model of the motivation process
(Source: Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:83)

In attempts to understand consumer motivations, several theories have been proposed. A classic view conceived by Abraham Maslow, referred to as the Hierarchy of Needs (Ross, 1994:17; Blythe, 2005:235; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:97), is illustrated in Figure 2.6. Maslow's theory is based on five levels of human needs, which are ranked in order of importance. Individuals begin with the lowest level of needs, and once these are satisfied, move to the next level of needs and progress their way up the hierarchy (Ross, 1994:18; Blythe, 2005:235).



Figure 2.6: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

(Source: Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:99)

Physiological needs are the most fundamental needs (synonymous with primary needs as, previously stipulated). This level of need is never permanently satisfied, since they need to be continuous because without these one cannot survive. Once these have been sufficiently satisfied, individuals progress to *safety and security needs*. These needs include education, health care, insurance policies, and a general need to feel in control of one's life and environment. *Social needs* refer to one's need for affection, friendship, belonging, and acceptance in society. Due to the importance of social motives, advertisers tend to emphasise this in their advertisements. The next level, *egoistic needs*, relate to an individual's need for self-acceptance and success, which are further reflected in their need for status, reputation, prestige, and recognition by others. Lastly, the need for *self-actualisation* refers to a person's desire to fulfil his/her potential; however, this rarely occurs as individuals do not adequately satisfy their ego needs to progress to this level (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007:97-100).

Ross (1994:18) observes that several academics fail to notice Maslow's reservations about his own theory, which he subsequently modified. His reason being that a person does not necessarily need to proceed from the lowest level to the highest. In fact, he stated that *"one did not have to satisfy the needs at one level fully before moving onto the next, and therefore people could be partially satisfied and partially dissatisfied at all levels in the hierarchy at the same time"*. This is observed in the wine tourist's motivation in section 2.3.3.2.

Despite it being widely used in several fields, Dann (1977:185) contends that motivation research does not explain why people travel, which led him to investigate this under-researched subject. His study, regarding visitors' attitudes to Barbados,

suggested that people travel for reasons, which are based on two factors: *push factors* and *pull factors* (Dann, 1977:186). *Push factors*, which Crompton refers to as socio-psychological factors (1979:410), are reasons that make an individual want to travel (e.g. nostalgia, escape from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, and facilitation of social interaction).Conversely, *pull factors* are those that draw the tourist to the attraction (e.g. landscape, grape variety, climate, novelty and education), which Crompton (1979:410) refers to as cultural motives.

Since push factors are antecedent to pull factors, motivation to travel is thus derived from push factors. Dann (1977:186-187) further suggests that *anomie* (the desire to escape triggered by a personal state of isolation) and *ego-enhancement* are key factors that push people to travel. It appears that these two factors correspond to two of Maslow's needs: social and ego needs. Due to their state of isolation, anomic tourists feel a need to belong, namely social need. Ego-enhancement tourists, conversely, are motivated to travel so that they can display their achievement, which, in turn, provides them with recognition and self-esteem.

There also seems to be a strong presence of both social and ego needs. Due to the linkage between food and wine and their association with socialisation, Tikkanen (2007:728) identifies this as a social need. A straightforward example is the wine festival or event where one can engage in social interaction. Ego needs are also closely connected to social needs, since without social interaction one cannot display their status and sense of achievement. This is consistent with Maslow's renewed theory, which proposes that an individual can experience more than one level of need at a particular time (see section 2.3.3.1). Furthermore, wine as a beverage, is closely tied with social and esteem needs, which further offers a plausible explanation regarding why individuals engage in wine tourism.

The engagement of wine tourism activities can be explained by all these motives, which are established in the following section.

2.3.3.2 Uncovering wine tourist motives

Literature indicates that wine tourist motives are derived from general tourist motives, as proposed by Swarbrooke and Horner (1999:54). The authors identified six tourism motivators that are seen in Table 2.7. All the wine tourism motives can be categorised into one of the six tourism motives.

Table 2.7: Tourism motivators

Physical	relaxation, exercise, health	*Motives depend on:* • *Personality* • *Lifestyle* • *Past experiences* • *Past life* • *Perceptions* • *Image*
Cultural	sight-seeing, experiencing new cultures	
Status	exclusivity, ostentatious spending opportunities	
Personal development	increase knowledge, learn new skill	
Emotional	visiting friends/relatives, the need to satisfy others	
Personal	nostalgia, romance	

(Adapted from Swarbrooke and Horner, 1999:54)

Due to wine tourism being a niche market, the motives behind engaging in wine-related activities are fairly straightforward, irrespective of wine region. The motives are also self-evident in the classic definition proposed by Hall and Macionis (1998)[39] (cited in Cohen and Ben-Nun, 2009:21) referring to wine tourism as "*visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals…for which grape wine tasting and or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivation for visitors*".

Furthermore, literature suggests that motivations to engage in wine tourism can generally be divided into two groups, namely wine-related and tourism-related motives (Carmichael, 2005:187; Getz and Brown, 2006:151). Wine-related motives refer to the likes of tasting, learning, and purchasing wine, whereas tourism-related motives can include relaxation, socialisation, and enjoying the local setting. Clearly, this is based on the wine tourist's level of interest, which Charters and Ali-Knight (2002:317) deem as the best predictor of their motivation to visit wine farms. These motives, according to Thach (2007), are listed in Table 2.8 below.

Table 2.8: Wine- and tourism-related motives for engaging in wine tourism

Wine-related motives	*Application to tourism motives*	Tourism-related motives	*Application to tourism motives*
Taste wine	*Personal development*	To be in a rural setting (beauty of vineyards)	*Physical, personal*
Purchase wine	*Physical, status,*	To appreciate architecture and art	*Cultural, personal*
Gain wine knowledge	*Personal development*	To learn about green aspects of eco-tourism	*Personal development, emotional*
Experience wine setting (meet winemaker, cellar tours)	*Physical, cultural,*		
Enjoy wine culture	*Physical, cultural, status, personal*		
Match food and wine	*Personal development, status*		
Have fun (wine festivals)	*Physical, cultural, status*		
Enjoy health aspects of wine	*Physical*		

(Adapted from Thach, 2007)

[39] Hall, C.M. & Macionis , N. 1998. Wine Tourism in Australia and New Zealand . In: Butler, R., Hall, C.M. & Jenkins, J. (eds.) *Tourism and Recreation in Rural Areas.* Chichester: Wiley.

The study by Alant and Bruwer (2004:32), which covers the South Australia region of Coonawarra and McLaren Vale, divided wine tourists into first-time and repeat visitors. In both regions and amongst both types of visitors, the main purpose for their visit was to *'taste and buy wine'*. *'Holiday'* was ranked second amongst first-time visitors, while *'relaxation'* and to *'experience a diversity of pleasures in local food and wine'*, was seen for repeat visitors. Key motives of these tourists are all wine-related and are characteristics displayed by *wine lovers* and *wine interested*; these are shown in Table 2.9 below.

Table 2.9: Wine tourist motives at South Australian wine regions

Motive	Orientation
To taste wine	Wine-related
To have a nice tasting experience	Wine-related
To buy wine	Wine-related
To enjoy different wines	Wine-related
To find interesting and special wines	Wine-related

(Adapted from Alant and Bruwer, 2004: 32)

Examining another wine region (in Canada), Carmichael (2005:195) found that visitors to the Niagara wine region were firstly motivated by tourism-related aspects rather than wine-related aspects. In order of importance (on a scale of 1 to 7 with 7 being most important), the key motives are listed in Table 2.10. It was also found that a total of 9.6% live in the wine region and less than half (46%) of respondents stated that the main reason for their visit to the region was specifically for the wineries. This is comparable to the study by Getz and Brown (2006:151) who covered the Calgary wine region. Wine-related reasons for visits to wineries were chosen by 46% of visitors. These statistics suggest that wine tourists who visit the wine regions in Canada lean toward the typologies of *generalist tourists* and *wine interested*.

Table 2.10: Tourist motives at the Niagara wine region

Motive	Mean	Orientation
Rest and relax	5.58	Tourism-related
View attractive scenery	5.19	Tourism-related
Have a unique experience	4.85	Tourism-related
Purchase wine	4.25	Wine-related
Education	3.69	Wine-related
Contact with family and friends	2.95	Tourism-related

(Adapted from Carmichael, 2005:195)

In the case of South Africa, motivations are highly wine-related – similar to the motives of South Australian wine tourists. The table below (2.11) shows both the

motivations of South African wine tourists, in general, in addition to wine tourists that visit the Western Cape. Key motivators for both were to taste and purchase wine.

Table 2.11: Motives of South African and Western Cape wine tourists

South Africa	Western Cape
Wine tasting and purchasing (95%)	Sample wines (64%)
Experience country setting/vineyards (71%)	Buy wines (53%)
Winery tours (54%)	Socialise with family and friends (30%)
Socialising with family and friends (39%)	Sight-see (23%)
Festivals/events (31%)	Eat at the winery restaurant (22%)
Eating at winery (27%)	Tour the winery (15%)
Entertainment (19%)	

(Adapted from Bruwer, 2003:430 and Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:57)

It was also found that most visitors (91%) to the Cape Winelands were domestic (Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:55), considering that they are within less than one-hour drive range from the city. Based on this proximity advantage, South Africans – particularly Cape Town residents – have more opportunity to make unplanned visits to these wine routes compared to their worldwide counterparts. Research by Reilly (1996)[40] reveals similar results that indicated that wineries closest to the city achieved the highest frequency of visits (Getz, 1998:20).

Evidently, all these statistics confirm Dann (1977:186) and Crompton's (1979:416-421) motives, which are listed in section 2.3.3.1. The above also fall into all the motivation types, which are purported by Swarbrooke and Horner (1999:54) in section 2.3.4.2.

Traditionally, the consumption of wine performed symbolic roles as a situation definer and status indicator (Anon, n.d.c). It is believed that all alcoholic drinks encompass a symbolic meaning, which also shapes the drinker's behaviour. For example, a widespread practice would be the consumption of champagne to celebrate an event in contrast to beer, which would be consumed at informal occasions. Wine appears to be more flexible as it can be consumed for celebrations or over a meal with friends, with the latter becoming increasingly prevalent in modern society (Thach, 2007).

Generally, wine is regarded as a high-status beverage that represents social status, with the exception of France where wine drinking is considered as ordinary. However, the shift in consumer lifestyle patterns and the increasingly abundant choices of

[40] Reilly, A. 1996. A Marketing Approach for Small Winemakers in Regional Areas. Unpublished thesis, Master of Business Administration, University of Adelaide.

beverages have changed consumption patterns. This is evident for wine consumers, as wine is no longer reserved for celebratory circumstances, but for general relaxation-oriented occasions too. This signals the existence of an implicit relationship between consumers and their choice for wine, and can be related to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. According to the profile of wine visitors – although further research is required to confirm this – it can be proposed that the general segment of *wine lovers* have a need for 'self-esteem' or 'self-actualisation'. *Wine novices* tend to initiate their interest in wine through 'social needs', which are likely to be influenced by family or friends.

Evidently, motivation greatly assists to determine reasons why individuals engage in wine tourism activities and can help wineries to better market their products to relevant segments. Still, segmenting and understanding wine tourists is only half of the process – consistent service quality is as important.

2.4 Wine tourism experience

Due to the highly experiential nature of wine tourism (Sparks, 2007:1184), the importance of the wine tourist's experience has been emphasised both implicitly and explicitly throughout numerous studies (see Griffin and Loersch, 2006; Carmichael, 2005; Getz and Brown, 2006; Nowak and Newton, 2006; Sparks, 2007; Cohen and Ben-Nun, 2009). Meyer and Schwager (2007)[41] (cited in Verhoef *et al.*, 2009:32) describe the customer experience as a highly personal encounter, which is caused by exposure to direct and indirect contact with a company. In recognising its valuable consequences, wineries have placed more effort to ensure that their attraction provides a unique experience in all aspects (Thach, 2007).

Cohen and Ben-Nun (2009:22) point out that "*wine tourism experiences are much more than merely drinking wine or enjoying the experience of wine*". Rather, they are a culmination of various unique experiences such as enjoying the scenery and visiting other attractions in the area. Carmichael (2005:188-189) divides the wine tourism experience into two categories: *the regional rural experience* (wine region) and *activity place experiences* (winery). The former suggests that the rural landscape is an essential part of the wine tourism experience as it provides a pleasant diversion from visual elements experienced in everyday life. The ambience, atmosphere, surrounding environment, regional culture and cuisine, as well as local wine styles are examples that affect the regional rural experience. Activity place experiences relate to experiences that are encountered at the winery itself. Here, service, wine

[41] Meyer, C. & Schwager, A. 2007. Understanding customer experience. *Harvard Business Review*, 117-126, February.

characteristics, winery environment and price are important variables, which determine the tourist's experience.

The study by Getz and Brown (2006:156) concluded that the wine tourism experience involves three critical features that are based on the perceptions of Calgary wine tourists: the core wine product, the core destination appeal, and the cultural product. These features are illustrated in Figure 2.7. Features within the core products are ones that are identified to be most important to the wine tourist (listed in descending order). Related features are ones with factor scores of 3.00 or greater, thus they are not as important as the core features, but are significantly relevant to be included. These three features are comparable to that of Carmichael's (2005:188-189) regional rural and activity place experiences. Using factor analysis, the core destination appeal and core wine product were also identified in Spark's (2007:1187) study, which is referred to as the *destination experience* and *core wine experience*.

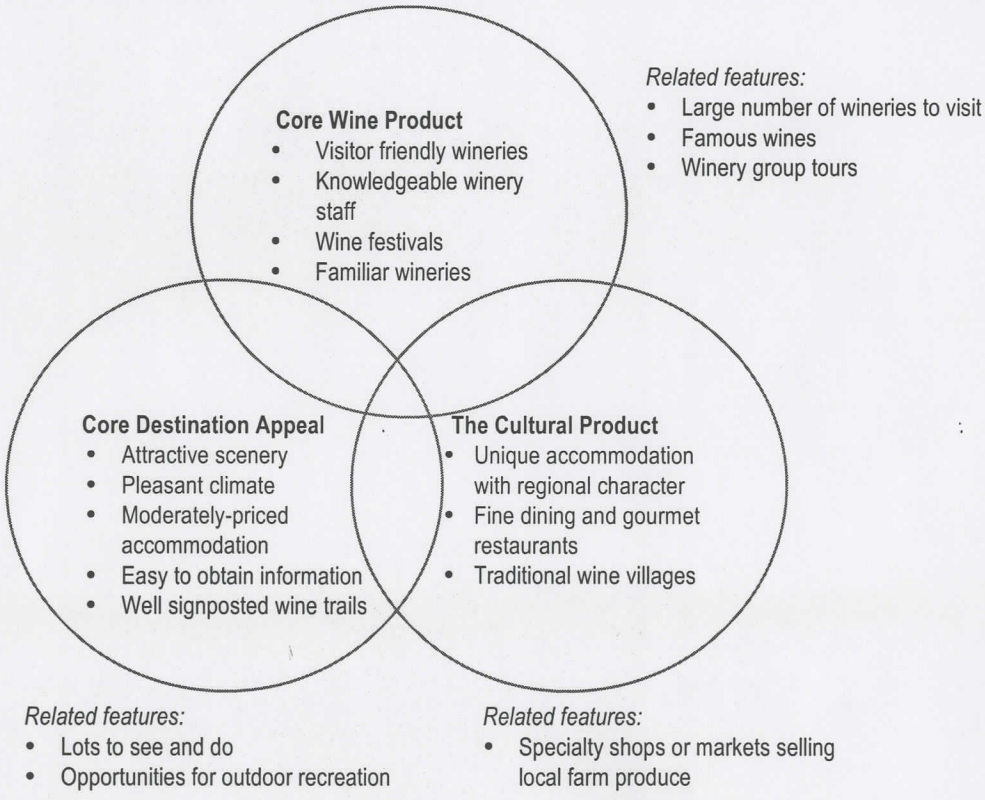


Figure 2.7: Critical features of the wine tourism experience from a consumer perspective
(Source: Getz and Brown, 2006:156)

Generally, studies pertaining to wine tourism experiences are gathered from actual wine tourists. Cohen and Ben-Nun (2009) researched the important dimensions of the wine tourism experience of non-visitors. Specifically, respondents in their research were Israeli residents who could be potential wine tourists. The top twenty features

that are pertinent to their wine tourism experience are listed in Table 2.12. A majority of these features relate to the core wine product presented by Getz and Brown. Features that are associated with destination appeal and cultural products were present but scored much lower (<3.50 for cultural product). Although further research is required to confirm this, these statistics suggest that wine tourism in Israel is largely confined to the core wine product.

Table 2.12: Mean scores of perceived importance of wine tourism features according to potential wine tourists

Feature	Mean	Application to features by Getz and Brown (2006)
1. Winery offers wine tasting	4.26	Core wine product
2. I will receive info about the wine making process	4.22	Core wine product
3. There is a special atmosphere in the winery	4.08	Core wine product
4. There is a cellar door tour	4.05	Core wine product
5. The winery staff is polite and pleasant	4.04	Core wine product
6. The weather is comfortable for visits	3.95	Destination appeal
7. The internal appearance of the winery	3.94	Core wine product
8. There is a beautiful scenery	3.94	Destination appeal
9. I will receive info about combining wine and food	3.88	Core wine product
10. The region is quiet and calm	3.82	Destination appeal
11. The winery staff is very familiar with wine	3.80	Core wine product
12. Quality of the environment (such as place without air pollution)	3.79	Destination appeal
13. Road access to the winery is convenient for visitors	3.74	Core wine product
14. I will have the opportunity to talk to wine maker	3.73	Core wine product
15. I will receive info about the winery	3.73	Core wine product
16. I can spend time with friends at attraction/activities located in the region	3.73	-
17. There is a vineyard door tour	3.67	Core wine product
18. I will have the opportunity to make wine	3.62	Core wine product
19. The roads are well signed	3.59	Destination appeal
20. I will receive info about the winery's region	3.56	Destination appeal

(Source: Cohen and Ben-Nun, 2009:24)

Summarily, the wine tourism experience is multi-faceted and the entire experience thus confirms the importance of a closely integrated system between all relevant stakeholders, as advised by Getz (1998:26). Evidently, visual aspects of the wine region or estate that draw visitors to the area is a major contributor to the entire wine tourism experience, but it should be remembered that it is the ability and willingness of service providers that determine visitors' overall sentiments of their experience. Therefore, this leads to implications of service quality in the following chapter.

2.5 Summary

This chapter showed that wine tourism is a relatively young industry that carries huge potential. However, there is more work to be done in terms of amalgamating the wine and tourism industries to provide a uniform offering. Despite this, the Western Cape, particularly Stellenbosch, has an active wine tourism market owing to the strong supporting services and products that are in close proximity to the wine regions. This

also serves as a plausible conjecture regarding why the South African wine tourism market is dominated by domestic visitors in relation to its global counterparts. Similarly, it may also explain why the South African wine and tourism industries are still relatively separate, as domestic visitors – especially locals – rely less on tourism services such as accommodation, transportation and advice on attractions than international visitors.

Although supporting services and products play a pivotal role in the wine tourism experience, the core product is the one that draws visitors to the estates. Therefore, apart from the requirement of a beautiful winescape setting, the key point to remember from this chapter is the importance of the wine estate's performance at the cellar door, as it is generally the first point of contact with the wine estate brand and hence, the ideal place to form emotional bonds that remain with visitors long after they depart.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPLICATIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY

3.1 Introduction

In a highly competitive business environment, service quality has become an important source of competitive differentiation (O'Neill and Charters, 2000:120; Wong, 2004:365), which is applicable to several businesses across a myriad of industries. Due to the inherent nature of services, as seen in section 2.2.3.1, the consequences of service quality have the greatest impact on organisations that are service-dominant. However, it is important to note that product-dominant businesses are not exempt from delivering quality service, neither should they lower its priority in pursuit of short-term profits by using a sales-oriented mentality. This viewpoint stems from the pressure of today's business environment, where service quality has become critical for the survival of businesses (Rozman, Potočnik, Pažek, Borec, Majkovič, and Bohanec, 2009:629), whether in goods or service markets.

Furthermore, contemporary consumers are highly educated and exceptionally well informed. With a vast number of competitors entering the market, consumers have consequently become spoilt for choice. Compared to the mid 1900s, bargaining power has now shifted to the consumer. Equipped with substantial knowledge, they are price conscious, but at the same time they seek quality; therefore, it can be inferred that value for money often governs their choices. The power and position that modern consumers hold leads Gitomer (1998:36) to describe them with phrases such as: more demanding; less forgiving; harder to satisfy; and less loyal. This points to the significance of service quality, as without it, a company is merely an inferior alternative. Harris and Jago (2001)[42] (cited in Jago and Issaverdis, 2001:18) recognise the importance of consistent quality in both products and services because high quality has become an "*essential rather than desirable feature*".

Another incentive to invest in service quality is the fact that constantly recruiting new customers to replace defected ones proves to be costly to any organisation; therefore, it is logical to provide quality service so that customers choose to remain with a company (Buchanan and Gillies, 1990[43]; Fornell, 1992[44] cited in Palmer and O'Neill, 2003:254; Wong, 2004:371) and more importantly, at their own will.

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[42] Harris, R. & Jago, L. 2001. Professional accreditation in the Australian Tourism Industry: an uncertain future. *Tourism Management*, 22(4):383-390.

[43] Buchanan, R.W.T. & Gillies, C.S. 1990. Value managed relationships: the key to customer retention and profitability. *European Management Journal*, 8(4):523-526.

[44] Fornell, C.S. 1992. A national consumer satisfaction barometer: the Swedish experience. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(1):6-21.

The consequences of service quality have not only an immediate effect, but also a long-term one. This is purported in the view that the quality of service instantly translates into customer (dis)satisfaction (Palmer and O'Neill, 2003:255), which determines customer loyalty (Söderlund, 1998; Lou and Homberg, 2007; Russell-Bennett, McColl-Kennedy, and Coote, 2007), and ultimately impacts the financial outcomes of a company (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1996; Söderlund, 1998, Caruana, 2000; Reichheld, 2003). This sequence is depicted in Figure 3.1. The following sections provide a theoretical background of service quality and its consequences, which justify why it should remain a top priority for managers and practitioners, particularly at cellar doors.

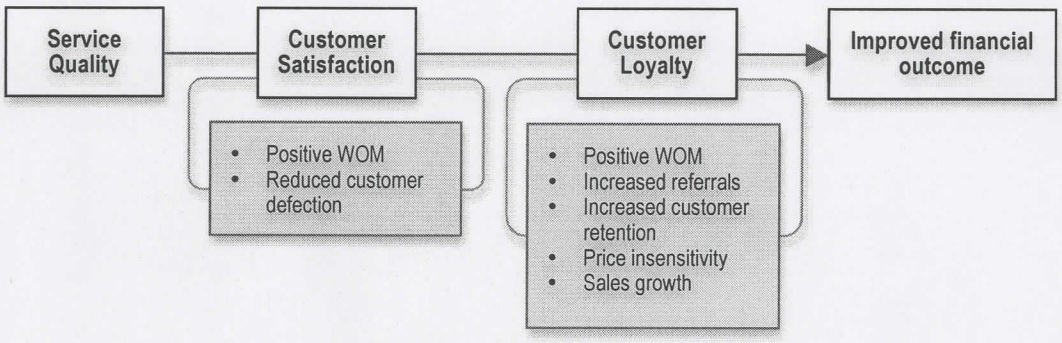


Figure 3.1: Impact of service quality

3.2 Link between service quality and customer satisfaction

The term *quality* has become pervasively used by companies to describe their products and services. Generally, hearing this term conjures up perceptions of excellence and superiority that often comes at a high price. This superficial view, however, is an inadequate explanation of service quality. In fact, Mudie and Pirrie (2006:89) assert that quality does not encompass the popular meaning of '*best*' in any absolute sense; to be more precise, it means '*best for certain customer conditions*'. These conditions are dependent on the actual use and price of the product or service. This is referred to as the value approach to quality.

Specifically, perceived value is the trade-off between what customers should sacrifice in order to gain the benefits: perceived benefits versus perceived sacrifice. Therefore, quality is inextricably linked to cost. This means that value represents quality (Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:88); and hence, is highly subjective as it depends on individual needs (Palmer, 2005:76). In essence, superior quality for one customer may represent only mediocre quality for another. This highlights a need to understand the value that customers assign to the offering.

Since service quality is highly subjective, it should be analysed from a customer's perspective. This view is supported by several authors: Slater (1994:24) who emphasises that quality must be defined by the customer; Gitomer (1998:87) who states that the only perception that is relevant is that of the customer's; and Grönroos (2007:73) who believes that service quality is "*whatever the customer perceives it to be*".

Fundamentally, these perceptions assist the formation of customer expectations – and service quality can be described as the conformation to these expectations. Hence, service quality is determined by the juxtaposition of perceptions and expectations. This point of view is substantiated by Caruana (2000:813), Zeithaml *et al.* (1990)[45] and Grönroos (1990)[46] (both cited in Faché, 2000:357), Coye (2004:54), Crosby (1984)[47] (cited in Palmer, 2005:261) and Mudie and Pirrie (2006:89).

This concept closely links service quality with customer satisfaction considering that the foundation of the latter is also built on, and inextricably linked to, perceptions and expectations. In fact, like service quality, customer satisfaction is regarded as the comparison between customer expectations and their perception of the actual service (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:298; Casado Díaz and Máz Ruíz, 2002:125; Coye, 2004:54). This may initially be a cause for confusion as theory presently purports that:

both Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction = Perceptions – Expectations.

Essentially, this implies that service quality and customer satisfaction are identical based on their theoretical composition; this provides a reason why both terms are often used interchangeably (Caruana, 2000:811). According to Mudie and Pirrie (2006:8), the above equation is also known as the first law of service; although it is correct, a slight disparity does exist. This can be explained, in the opinions of Hoffman and Bateson (2001:313), Coye (2004:56) and Mudie and Pirrie (2006:8), by the different levels of expectations. Expectations pertaining to service quality are set at a higher standard than those of customer satisfaction. In order to achieve customer satisfaction, only a modest level of expectations needs to be fulfilled. This means that customer satisfaction can occur in the absence of quality service.

An additional explanation regarding their distinction can be attributed to the different approach in which expectations regarding satisfaction and quality are defined (Caruana, 2000:815-1816; Coye, 2004:55). The distinction between service quality

[45] Zeithaml, V., Parasuraman, A. & Berry, L. 1990. *Delivering Quality Service*. New York: The Free Press.
[46] Grönroos, C. 1990. *Service Management and Marketing*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
[47] Crosby, P.B. 1984. *Quality without tears*. New York: New American Library.

and customer satisfaction will become clearer in the ensuing sections.

3.2.1 Dynamics of customer expectations and perceptions

3.2.1.1 Customer expectations

As previously explained, expectations are used as a benchmark with which to assess a customer's level of satisfaction regarding the outcome of a service encounter. Hence, customers perceive a service delivery to be of high quality if their expectation has been exceeded; similarly, low quality is perceived if their expectation has not been met (Palmer, 2005:80). However, accurately assessing service quality and customer satisfaction remains a challenge due to variations in the term *expectations*.

Pertaining to satisfaction literature, expectations reflect anticipated performance (Churchill and Suprenant, 1982[48] cited in Caruana, 2000:816), which is also referred to as probability expectations (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:313), or predictive expectations (Coye, 2004:55). In service quality literature, expectations indicate normative standards of future wants (Boulding *et al.*, 1993[49] cited in Caruana, 2000:816). These normative expectations were also identified by various authors cited in Coye (2004:55); however, each had slightly different meanings regarding normative expectations. For example, Miller (1977)[50] indicates that it is what customers wish or hope for, while Zeithaml *et al.* (1990)[51] state that it is what they expect from an excellent service provider. These two are completely different situations, but are both classified as normative expectations. Similar to Zeithaml *et al.* (1990)[52], Coye (2004:55) further adds that normative expectations reflect what customers believe service providers "*should offer rather than would offer*" – these are called *should* expectations and they may conflict with customers' own needs and wants, since what customers believe should be offered, may not necessarily reflect the actual desire of the customer. For instance, a wine novice may believe that a wine estate should have a restaurant although they may have no desire to dine there. Nevertheless, the absence of this should expectation could result in lower perceptions of the service provider. Thus, the term customer expectations used herein is consistent with the concept of *should* expectations.

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[48] Churchill, G.A. Jr. & Suprenant, C. 1982. An investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 19, November: 491-504.

[49] Boulding, W., Kalra, A., Staelin, R. & Zeithaml, V. 1993. A dynamic process model of service quality: from expectations to behavioural intentions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 30, 7-27, February.

[50] Miller, J.A. 1977. Studying satisfaction, modifying models, eliciting expectations, posing problems, and making meaningful measurements. In Hunt, H.K (ed). *Conceptualisation and Measurement of Customer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction*. Bloomington, IN: School of Business, Indiana University.

[51] Zeithaml, V.A, Parasuraman, A. & Berry, L.L. 1990. *Delivering service quality: balancing customer perceptions and expectations*. NY: The Free Press.

[52] *Ibid.*

According to Mudie and Pirrie (2006:7), expectations are generally developed prior to the usage of a service through factors, which are illustrated in Figure 3.2. These represent the antecedents of expectations that contribute to what customers believe will (predictive) or should (normative) happen during a service encounter. If service providers do not know what customers expect, the outcome will result in service failure (Faché, 2000:359).

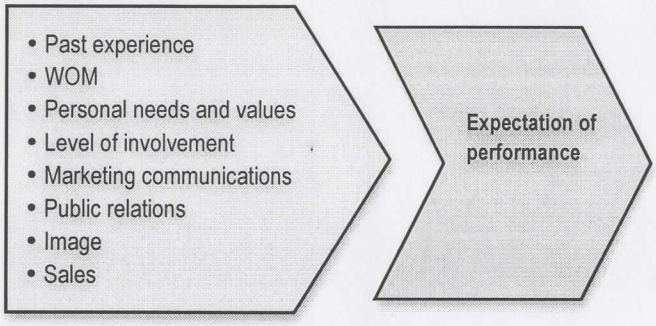


Figure 3.2: Antecedents of expectations
(Adapted from Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:241 and Grönroos, 2007:77)

Of these factors, *past experience* and *WOM* have the greatest influence on expectations (Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:241). Personal knowledge from past experiences can be described as a key factor that shapes customer expectations and attitudes (Keh and Lee, 2006:128). Wine tourists who experienced a pleasant encounter indicated that they would return. Similarly, WOM also strongly influences what customers believe will likely happen, as this form of communication is considered to be credible (Mitchell and Orwig, 2002:31), and according to Gitomer (1998:81), it is fifty times more powerful than paid forms of promotion.

The factors *personal needs* and *customer values* also influence customer expectations (Grönroos, 2007:76). Due to the fact that they are quite unique, expectations that arise from these needs are consequently diverse. This is clearly displayed by the interests of different wine tourist segments, as discussed in section 2.3.2.

Level of involvement in the purchase also plays an important role in the formation of expectations. This is particularly true for the wine tourism industry as it is service-dominant. Carmichael (2005:201) expresses that wine tourists are highly involved in the production of the wine tourism experience. The degree of involvement is also positively correlated with wine consumption, as determined in section 2.3.2 (wine tourist segments). Generally, the more involved the customer is in the production

process, the higher their expectations will be.

Marketing attempts by companies is a major factor, which influences customer expectations, particularly if they are unfamiliar with the service offering. Coye (2004:62) maintains that the purpose of *marketing communications* has two goals; firstly, to create desire and, secondly, to ensure that customers develop clear expectations about the capabilities of the service provider so that they do not become misinformed. However, companies often over-promise and under-deliver, which tends to lead to service failure (Gitomer, 1998:59). Therefore, traditional marketing – although necessary – is much less credible than WOM communication.

The last three factors, namely *public relations*, *image* and *sales* further assist how expectations are shaped. A favourable image and stable sales can indicate quality of sufficient standard, which customers may feel, is satisfactorily adequate to reduce risks that are associated with choosing a new service provider. All these antecedents affect the expectation of performance and are used as a measure to which perceptions of actual delivery are compared.

Expectations vary according to four different levels, as depicted in Figure 3.3. The left end represents low expectations while the right end indicates high expectations. Between these two points one can find minimum tolerable, adequate, desired and ideal expectations. The idea is that any performance below minimum tolerable will result in dissatisfaction, while any performance equal to or better than the minimum tolerable will result in satisfaction. This can also be applied to ideal expectations; specifically, customers will only be satisfied if their ideal expectations are met – anything below the ideal will result in dissatisfaction. However, it is important to note that expectations and the zone of tolerance are not fixed; it has been proven that they can, in fact, fluctuate during the service consumption (Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:242). This is attributed to the heterogeneity characteristic of services.

These fluctuations in expectations are derived from cues, which originate from two situations: interaction with the physical environment and customer-to-customer interactions or observations (Coye, 2004:67). These cues can strengthen an original expectation, weaken an original expectation, create a completely new expectation, or maintain the original expectation (i.e. no change). Thus, expectations are highly volatile during a service encounter; and with the passage of time they may even change completely (Faché, 2000:357; Grönroos, 2007:99).

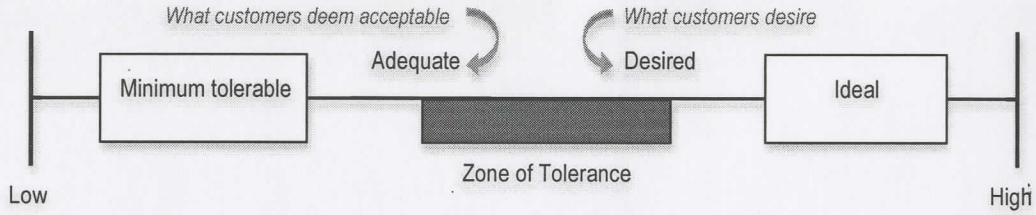


Figure 3.3: Levels of expectations
(Source: Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:242)

According to Ojasalo (2001)[53] (cited in Grönroos, 2007:100-101), customer expectations in the long-term can be divided into three categories: *fuzzy*, *explicit* and *implicit expectations*. *Fuzzy expectations* refer to the situation where customers expect their problem to be solved by the service provider, yet, they are uncertain of what exactly should be done. *Explicit expectations* refer to those that are clear in customers' minds prior to the service processes, and can be divided into *realistic* and *unrealistic* expectations. *Unrealistic expectations* arise when customers overestimate the capability of companies to meet their needs; the key would be for service providers to gradually convert these unrealistic expectations into realistic ones so that they become achievable. Lastly, *implicit expectations* refer to those that are "*so obvious*" (Grönroos, 2007:101) to the customer that they are never clearly expressed. In their presence, customers do not consciously think about them; however, in their absence, customer dissatisfaction arises.

Consequently, service providers should help customers to define their fuzzy expectations and sculpt their implicit expectations into realistic explicit expectations to ensure that the subsequent service encounter is what the customer expected.

3.2.1.2 Customer perceptions

Akin to expectations, customer perceptions play a pivotal role in the process of assessing quality and satisfaction. The assessment occurs according to the customer's perspective – the way they recognise and interpret stimuli helps them to form perceptions that ultimately contribute to their beliefs. However, the accuracy of these perceptions are seldom questioned because consumers simply assume that the way they see things is the way they really are or the way they should be.

[53] Ojasalo, J. 2001. Managing customer expectations in professional services, *Managing Service Quality*, 11(3):200-212.

Rather than the act of objectively absorbing stimuli in the environment, Sheth *et al.* (1999)[54] (cited in Palmer and O'Neill, 2003:257) argue that customer perceptions are moulded by a combination of three factors: *stimulus characteristics*, *context* and *situational variables*. With *stimulus characteristics*, perceptions are formed according to the sensory characteristic and information content of the stimuli. It is also said that stimuli that are different from those around them are more likely to be detected. The second factor, namely *context* of the stimulus, also influences the formation of perceptions. Lastly, *situational variables* in which the information is received such as social, cultural, personal characteristics and prior experience, greatly influence perceptions. These – especially situational variables – all explain why two individuals can see the same event in different ways.

Perceptions can be formed pre- or post-consumption, but what matters most is perceptions that are developed after the experience because the sum of these individual encounters contributes to the overall perception of the service provider. Perceptions of quality experienced by the customer are affected by two dimensions, as depicted in Figure 3.4 – technical quality of the service outcome and functional quality of the service process (Grönroos, 2007:73-74). Technical quality refers to *what* customers receive in their interactions with a service provider, whereas functional quality refers to *how* the process of the technical quality is received. Taking the example of wine tourism, technical quality could include a wine tasting session and/or purchase of wine at a wine estate; functional quality is more subjective and can be affected by various factors such as professionalism of front-line staff, the presence of other customers, wine availability and efficiency of payment methods.

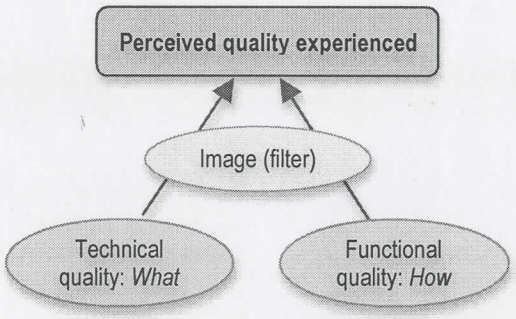


Figure 3.4: Dimensions of perceived quality experienced
(Source: Grönroos, 2007:74)

The company's image also affects a customer's perception of quality in a way that any mistake under a favourable image would result in a customer that is easy to

[54] Sheth, J.N., Mittal, B. & Newman, B.I. 1999. *Customer behaviour: Consumer Behaviour and Beyond*. New York: Dryden Press.

appease with minimal negative behavioural effects. Conversely, should the image be unfavourable, any trivial mistake would seem considerably worse than it actually is. Therefore, comparable to Grönroos, Caruana (2000:814) asserts that image is a filter that plays a critical role in influencing the perception of quality. For example, if a customer perceives the image to be unfavourable, errors such as packing the wrong bottle of wine or lack of enthusiasm to serve can translate into highly dissatisfied customers who may communicate negative WOM and never return, which in the long-run reduces the wine farm's reputation and profitability. Even the dissatisfaction of other present customers (i.e. cues from customer-to-customer interaction or observations) can further strengthen any unfavourable image already perceived. Furthermore, reputation takes time to build and as a result, each service episode or encounter should be executed suitably in order to maintain a perceived service quality that is no less than acceptable to the customer.

In order to achieve the total perception of quality, the perceived experience should be matched with the expectations of it (Grönroos, 1984[55] cited in Wong, 2004:367). Combining these two factors results in Figure 3.5. As previously explained, this can be described as quality, customer satisfaction or the first law of service. Palmer and O'Neill (2003:256) also refer to this as the disconfirmation model of expectations, which is further discussed in section 3.3 (conditions of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction).

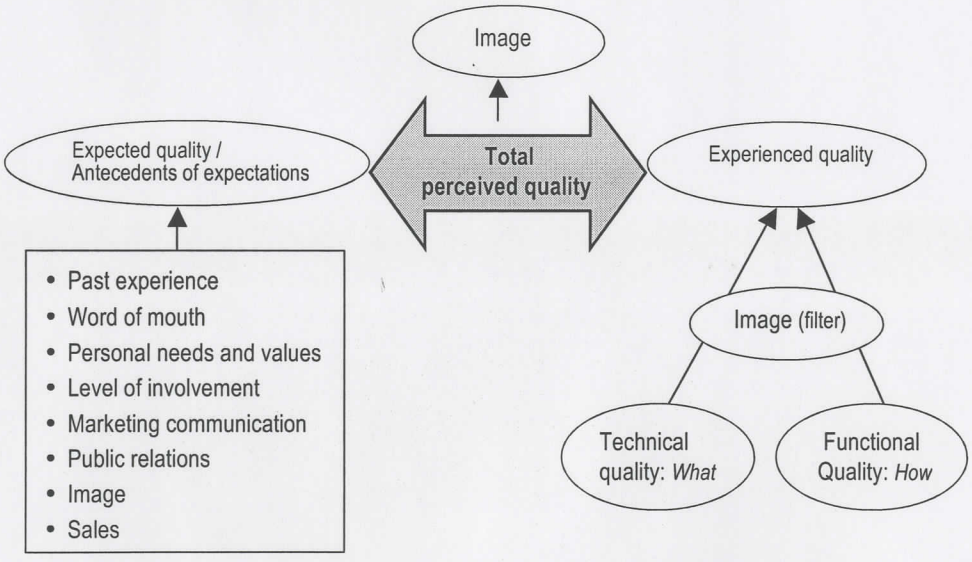


Figure 3.5: Total perceived quality
(Adapted from Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:241 and Grönroos, 2007:77)

[55] Grönroos, C. 1984. A service quality model and its marketing implications. *European Journal of Marketing*, 18(4):36-44.

It is important to note that perceptions, like expectations, do change with the passage of time as suggested by Abercrombie (1967)[56] (cited in Palmer and O'Neill, 2003:257) and George (2008:172). Palmer and O'Neill (2003:266-268) share more insight into this theory by examining customer perceptions of service quality at two different points in time. Their study confirmed three outcomes. Firstly, perceptions decline over time due to rising expectations; these tend to relegate perceptions of services experienced in the past. Secondly, tangible elements of a service encounter decline less than intangible elements as they act to "*stabilise perceptions*" (Palmer and O'Neill, 2003:267). Lastly, perceptions of important items decline less than those of trivial items as customers are more involved with those that are valuable to them. Palmer and O'Neill suggest that the change in perceptions over time can better explain repeat-buying behaviour than perceptions acquired immediately after consumption. Specifically, the consumer's re-purchase intentions are determined by their perceptions at the time of repurchase and not by those experienced post-consumption. This implies that quality of wine (tangible) has a major opportunity to manipulate the perception of quality, particularly amongst the segment of wine lovers and connoisseurs.

Essentially, perceived service quality is dependent on customer expectations and how these expectations are met. Palmer (2005:49) states that the level of performance of a service determines its quality. In wine tourism, how the offering is delivered strongly impacts the perception of service quality (Carmichael, 2005:198). Thus, the process of fulfilling customer expectations is highly critical (functional quality). This is confirmed by Grönroos' (2007:89-90) criteria for good perceived service quality, as seen in Table 3.1; each criterion can be attributed to a quality dimension. All criteria, apart from *accessibility and flexibility* and *servicescape*, are related to the short- as well as long-term performance of contact personnel, which are deemed necessary to meet the needs and expectations of customers. Contact personnel are discussed in detail in section 3.3.2.

Table 3.1. Criteria for good perceived service quality

Criteria	Quality dimension
1. Professionalism and skills	Outcome-related → technical
2. Reputation and credibility	Image-related → image
3. Attitudes and behaviour 4. Accessibility and flexibility 5. Reliability and trustworthiness 6. Service recovery 7. Servicescape	Process related → functional

(Adapted from Grönroos, 2007:89-90)

[56] Abercrombie, M.L.J. 1967. *The Anatomy of Judgment – An Investigation into the Process of Perception and Reasoning*. 4th ed. London: Hutchinson & Co.

Therefore, it is evident that customer expectations and perceptions are the foundation of understanding customer satisfaction and their link to quality. Zeithaml *et al.* (1996:32) recommend that service providers should identify service attributes that are important to customers so that they are equipped to meet customer expectations and perceptions.

Gitomer (1998:107) identified several advantages of delivering great service, which include: goodwill; referrals; customer loyalty; creation of memorable experiences; and strategic ways to achieve differentiation. Service quality is also linked to customer satisfaction, loyalty, price insensitivity, sales growth and market share (Bell, Auh, and Smalley, 2005:169). Nowak and Newton (2006:158) point out that excellent customer service is a key factor in gaining share of heart, which is the essential element in developing loyalty. Thus, in the long run, service quality has a direct impact on the financial outcomes of a company (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996:31).

In order to increase service quality standards, and thereby the perception of quality, some Australian wine estates in Victoria have adopted an accreditation program (Jago and Issaverdis, 2001:19). This program originated from the tourism industry and focuses on the experience of the cellar door (tourism aspect) rather than the quality of the wines. By being accredited, wine estates enhance their image, as tourists see that they are conforming to industry standards, which signal quality (Jago and Issaverdis, 2001:19). Thus, wine tourists will more likely choose an accredited wine estate to maximise their possibility of guaranteeing a pleasant experience. The study by Wang *et al.* (2009:402-403), regarding tourist satisfaction, confirmed that expectations, destination image, perceived quality, in addition to perceived value, are antecedent to achieving satisfaction.

3.3 Conditions of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction

As seen in the preceding section, customer satisfaction can be viewed as fulfilling customer expectations. Customers are satisfied when their perceptions of the service delivery are on par with their expectations, and dissatisfied when their perceptions of the service experience fall short of their expectations. In the case where their perceptions exceed their expectations, customers are described as being delighted. These scenarios are depicted in Table 3.2. The consequences of these three scenarios all impact the behavioural intentions of customers, each in their own way. Needless to say, customer satisfaction or delight results in positive behavioural intentions, while dissatisfaction engenders the opposite effect.

Table 3.2: Conditions of customer satisfaction, delight and dissatisfaction

Customer satisfaction / confirmation of expectations occurs where *Perceptions = expectations*
Customer delight / positive disconfirmation of expectations occurs where *Perceptions > expectations*
Customer dissatisfaction / negative disconfirmation of expectations occurs where *Perceptions < expectations*

The positive behavioural intentions exhibited by content customers have been widely documented in satisfaction literature. However, Söderlund (1998:170) suggests that theories derived from these literatures are skewed to the extremes of the customer satisfaction continuum. Essentially, knowledge of customer satisfaction stems from very satisfied or very dissatisfied customers. This poses as a problem because the relationship between customer satisfaction and a given behavioural variable is most likely different in different parts of a customer satisfaction scale. For instance, a service provider seeks to increase repurchase behaviour by increasing the level of satisfaction – this is a practical strategy considering the positive relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions. Despite this, an increase in customer satisfaction does not generate an equal increase in repurchase behaviour from customers at different levels of the satisfaction scale (e.g. high, moderate, low). In this case, the strategy will only be effective if targeted at customers who are already highly satisfied.

Therefore, to say that satisfied customers engender positive behavioural intentions would be inaccurate because theoretically, customer satisfaction occurs where perceptions are equal to expectations. Merely meeting expectations is insufficient to trigger auspicious reactions because the experience is what the customer predicted or expected (Nowak and Newton, 2006:159). In other words, it is nothing out of the ordinary; thus, service providers should either fall short of or go beyond a predicted experience in order to achieve a response from customers. Gitomer's (1998:50) ladder of customer service in Table 3.3 confirms that behavioural responses of *satisfied* customers are rather tepid. Only with *loyal*, *very satisfied*, and levels below *apathetic* customers will some form of behaviour be voluntarily displayed. Consequently, the regularly used term *customer satisfaction* – particularly with reference to its benefits or outcomes – is, in fact, indicative of customer delight or highly satisfied customers. Not surprisingly, this level of satisfaction is consistent with service quality; Bell *et al.* (2005:169) reveal that superior service quality produces the same outcomes as customer delight (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Ladder of customer service

	The customer is:	WOM?	Referrals?	Repurchase?
Top rung	LOYAL	Tells everyone about you	Refers everyone proactively	Always returns to buy
Middle rung	VERY SATISFIED	Tells a few people	Refers a few people	Sometimes returns
Lowest rung	SATISFIED	May tell someone, if asked	If asked, may refer	If convenient, may buy
	Underground level	LOWEST ACCEPTABLE LEVEL (minimum tolerable)		
One rung under	APATHETIC	Tells no one	Likely no one	Maybe yes, probably not
Bell rung	UNHAPPY	Tells at least 10 people	For sure no one	After a few years, maybe
Rung wrong	DID WRONG	Tells at least 25 people	Absolutely no one	Only by force
Dumb rung	PISSED	Tells everyone who will listen	Absolutely no one	Never
All rung out	LAW SUIT	Tells the whole city	Anyone but you (reverse referral)	Definitely never

(Source: Gitomer, 1998:50)

3.3.1 Outcomes of customer (dis)satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is said to influence behavioural intentions in a positive way, while dissatisfaction achieves the opposite effect. Common behavioural responses include WOM communication, repurchases, feedback to the supplier, and loyalty. These are listed in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Outcomes of customer satisfaction

Positive WOM	• Gitomer (1998) • Söderlund (1998) • Hoffman and Bateson (2001) • Wong (2004) • Van der Wiele *et al.* (2005) • Nowak and Newton (2006)
Repurchase	• Hoffman and Bateson (2001) • Van der Wiele *et al.* (2005) • Nowak and Newton (2006) • Lou and Homberg (2007)
Feedback to supplier	• Söderlund (1998) • Van der Wiele *et al.* (2005)
Retention/ Lower switching	• Gitomer (1998) • Hoffman and Bateson (2001) • Wong (2004)
Loyalty	• Wong (2004) • Bell *et al.*, (2005) • Van der Wiele *et al.* (2005) • Lou and Homberg (2007) • Russell-Bennett *et al.* (2007) • Wang *et al.* (2009)

3.3.1.1 Word of mouth (WOM) communication

When customers are satisfied with their service encounter, they tend to share their experience with others; this confirms the positive association between customer satisfaction and WOM in high levels of customer satisfaction (Söderlund, 1998:174), and has proven to be a prevalent behavioural outcome amongst satisfied customers (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:299; Wong, 2004:365; van de Wiele *et al.* 2005:533). This positive WOM is demonstrated by telling others about one's experience with a service; some may even go further to refer others to the service, as in the case of loyal and highly satisfied customers. However, even if they do not actively refer others to the service (satisfied customers), simply communicating their experience creates positive pre-consumption perceptions of the service provider, in addition to free favourable publicity, which may ultimately translate into new customers.

Similarly, customer dissatisfaction generates WOM communication, but in a negative manner (Söderlund, 1998:174). These customers can damage a service provider's reputation and image by spreading unfavourable WOM to others. They can also complain to the service provider in the hope that their situation will be promptly resolved. However, Zemke (1995:5), Palmer (2005:289) and Mudie and Pirrie (2006:247) all agree that dissatisfied customers do not bother to complain to the service provider; Palmer suggests that they simply change suppliers. Furthermore, it has been found that 91% of customers who leave have no intention of returning, while 96% will not tell suppliers the reason why they left (Zemke, 1995:4; Gitomer, 1998:60; Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:297); however, they will tell, on average, 9-10 people about their experience (Zemke, 1995:5).

In wine tourism, WOM can be regarded as the most important, as well as effective method of advertising. Several studies reveal that wine tourists visit specific wine estates based on the recommendation of friends and relatives (Charters and O'Neill, 2001:11; Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:57; Sparks, 2007:1187; Western Cape Tourism Barometer, 2007:37). The study by Tassiopoulos *et al.* revealed that a majority (39%) of tourists use recommendation as their source of information, followed by past experiences (36%), and travel guides (17%). Similarly, results from the Western Cape Tourism Barometer also indicate that recommendations were by far the most prevalent source of information, with 53% using this source.

3.3.1.2 Repurchases

Repurchasing behaviour is said to occur when customers are satisfied with their experience (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:299; Nowak and Newton, 2006:158; Lou and Homberg, 2007:133). It is also strongly related to WOM communication; Zemke

(1995:5) claims that WOM communication has double the impact paid advertising has on customer repurchase decisions.

Generally, satisfied customers who return are easier to cross-sell to (van der Wiele, 2005:533). Studies have shown that repeat wine tourists tend to purchase additional items; these tourists also have a higher average spend compared to first-time visitors (Nowak and Newton, 2006:158). The study by the Western Cape Tourism Barometer (2007:39) specifically indicated that repeat visitors spend on average R394 compared to first time visitors who spend approximately R300.

These repurchases are based on trust that the supplier will dispense the service in a similar way to the customer's previous experience. Needless to say, trust can only be nurtured over time – one encounter at a time to accumulate an overall pattern of consistency (Pelletier, 2005:11).

Although repurchasing is a common positive behavioural response, it does not always occur following a state of satisfaction. If customers are only satisfied, they are not loyal enough to reject other brands of services. Therefore, these customers most likely use multiple suppliers (e.g. wines from different estates) or only occasionally repurchase when the need arises. Nevertheless, customers who purchase once in a while are better than those who never return at all. As seen in section 3.3.1.1 (WOM communication), customers who do not return are those who are highly dissatisfied with the service; they will, however, probably repurchase if they do not have any other choice. This situation is further explained in section 3.4 (customer loyalty).

3.3.1.3 Feedback to supplier

Söderlund's (1998:176) study showed that feedback to the supplier is conditional on the level of satisfaction; a low level of satisfaction produces negative association; while a high level produces positive association. This means that highly satisfied customers are more inclined to compliment (Söderlund, 1998:174), or offer suggestions to suppliers (van der Wiele *et al.*, 2005:533). Conversely, dissatisfied customers are more likely to complain (Casado Díaz and Más Ruíz, 2002:132). However, as already established in section 3.3.1.1 (WOM communication), a majority of these customers do not bother to complain, possibly because the costs of complaining outweigh the benefits. These benefits and costs are summarised in Table 3.5. Thus, a customer's predisposition to complain is ultimately contingent on their level of dissatisfaction. Highly dissatisfied customers are more likely to endure the costs than merely dissatisfied customers.

Table 3.5: Costs and benefits of complaining to service provider

COSTS	Inconvenience	• Special trip to complain • Form-filling, letter writing • Forgo service during complaint
	Uncertainty	• Difficulty finding correct complaint procedure • No indication of the action that will be taken
	Unpleasant	• Treated rudely, have to hassle • Feel guilty, embarrassed
BENEFITS	Emotional	• Chance to assert rights, vent anger, and receive an apology
	Functional	• Refund, replacement, repair
	Altruistic	• Other customers prevented from experiencing dissatisfaction • Would feel guilty about not complaining
	Product improvement	• Organisation would improve its offering

(Source: Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:252)

3.3.1.4 Customer retention/lower switching

The degree of customer satisfaction is said to influence switching behaviours (Wong, 2004:365); the more satisfied the customer is, the more likely they will remain with the service provider, even if a competitor offers the same service at a lower rate (Hoffman and Bateson, 2001:299). The rationale behind this can be deduced by risk avoidance behaviour – in their work, Woratschek and Horbel (2005:43) and Galloway *et al.* (2008) discovered that variety (or sensation) seekers are difficult to retain even if they are very satisfied, simply because they take pleasure in diverse experiences. Conversely, risk adverse customers behave in the opposite way; to reduce risks associated with purchasing a service, these customers would rather remain with the company that they know already meets their needs.

3.3.1.5 Loyalty

It is widely accepted that customer satisfaction, in the form of positive disconfirmation, encourages loyalty (Wong, 2004:365; Bell *et al.*, 2005:169; van der Wiele, 2005:533; Lou and Homberg, 2007:133; Russell-Bennett *et al.*, 2007:1255; Wang *et al.*, 2009:403). The rationale behind this is the fact that satisfied customers actively engage in repurchases, which makes them loyal to the service. However, several scholars dismiss this notion as loyalty; section 3.4 (customer loyalty) clarifies this difference in opinion. Nevertheless, customer satisfaction is, in general, antecedent to customer loyalty (Söderlund, 1998:169; Caruana, 2000:817).

3.3.2 Impact of service recovery on customer dissatisfaction

Due to the volatile nature of services, coupled with unique expectations and perceptions, service providers cannot guarantee perfect service at each customer encounter. This ultimately results in customer dissatisfaction (when expectations exceed perceptions), which is normally comprised of factual and emotional problems

(Grönroos, 2007:126). As much as companies want to avoid service failures, they cannot be fully prevented – it is bound to happen at some stage of a business operation.

When service failure occurs, it impacts the customer's experience in an unpleasant way. Halstead *et al.* (1993)[57] (cited in Palmer, 2005:89) identified two effects that failure has on customers. The first, called the *halo effect*, negatively influences customer perceptions in a way that any similar action, which caused the problem, will automatically be associated with failure. The *domino effect*, on the other hand, occurs when a service failure causes customers to be more critical of subsequent minor mistakes; this tends to reduce their zone of tolerance, thereby accelerating the onset of dissatisfaction or anger.

Reasons behind service failures can, as previously discussed, include uncertainty of customer wants or needs and unrealistic customer expectations that have developed due to miscommunication. Hence, service failure can be attributed to service providers as well as customers (Palmer, 2005:89; Grönroos, 2007:125); in fact, Zemke (1995:7) states that customers cause 30% of problems that are reported to companies. Nevertheless, customers still expect something to be done about their dissatisfaction.

Casado Díaz and Más Ruíz (2002:132) believe this negative disconfirmation of expectations would not result in simple dissatisfaction, but rather in anger. This emotion affects customer behavioural intentions in a negative way (Wong, 2004:367), by increasing the propensity to complain and reducing the desire to repurchase from the supplier (Casado Díaz and Más Ruíz, 2002:132). However, from a more positive perspective, the authors note that customers tend to be more tolerant for temporary causes of dissatisfaction than they are for stable causes.

Furthermore, Folkes *et al.* (1987)[58] (cited in Casado Díaz & Más Ruíz, 2002:123) state that punctuality is a decisive factor, which determines successful service performance; this is particularly important for customers who value timeliness and reliability. More importantly, customers are affected by subjective perceived time rather than the real or objective time; thus, the longer the customer feels they have waited, the angrier they become. Since service failures are inevitable, service quality, in the opinion of Zemke (1995:3), can also be measured by how companies respond

[57] Halstead, D., Drogue, C. & Cooper, M.B. 1993. Product warranties and post purchase service: a model of consumer satisfaction without complaint resolution. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 7(1):33-40.
[58] Folkes, V.S., Koletsky, S. & Graham, J. 1987. A field study of causal inferences and consumer reaction: the view from the airport. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(March):534-539.

to these failures.

"*The cost of fixing the wrong, making amends, making it right, creating a memorable recovery – and adding something unexpected to the customer is always less than the cost of an upset customer and a negative story about you that is retold for years*". Such is the opinion of Gitomer (1998:34). Consequently, the key would be to invest in service recovery procedures so that damaged relationships can be salvaged. Normally, it is the purpose of customer service centres to handle and resolve complaints; however, in a small and intimate setting such as those of wine estates, it is not feasible to dedicate an entire department to this purpose. As a result, contact personnel are often required to have the skills and authority to handle such issues.

The importance of service recovery procedures stems from an opportunity to respond to service failures. This opportunity is highly critical since the customer's perception of bad service is the measure of the supplier's failure (Gitomer, 1998:87). Grönroos (2007:125) states: "*the real test of the customer orientation of a service provider takes place when a service failure has occurred*". Hence, this opportunity allows service providers to demonstrate their commitment to the service, and if some form of trust has already been established between the customer and supplier, then any reasonable attempt at reparation would be easier to accept (Pelletier, 2005:5).

According to Zemke (1995:7), when customers experience problems, they expect three things: what they were promised in the first place, some personal attention and a decent apology. However, over the years, customers have become more demanding; they expect more than a mere apology and what was initially promised. Grönroos (2007:131) identifies five expectations: an apology, fair compensation, caring treatment, value-added atonement and kept promises about the service recovery. Customers' perceptions can be strengthened, maintained, or weakened by the outcome of the service recovery. It is important that customers are completely satisfied by the atonement; in this case, their perceptions of quality are enhanced and they are more likely to purchase additional products than customers who encountered no problems at all (Zemke, 1995:1-2). When customers regain the supplier's trust – often through witnessing the ability and willingness to fix a problem – their commitment to the supplier is deepened (Grönroos, 2007:125).

Consequently, service recovery plays an important role in developing customer loyalty and relationships. Without service recovery procedures, suppliers can lose a considerable number of customers to competitors – a loss that is certainly preventable. However, this should not be taken to imply that it is acceptable to fail

and rely on prompt recovery procedures because frequent service failures will, all the same, result in customer switching.

Since dissatisfaction arises from negative emotions, Zemke's (1995:42) rule of thumb is to "*fix the person, then the problem*". This is the responsibility of contact personnel, which is discussed in the following section.

3.3.1 Importance of contact personnel

Since contact personnel are inseparable from the service delivery, they are critical constituents in the delivery process (Woratschek and Horbel, 2005:46); by functioning as tangible cues, they assist customers to judge the image of the service provider (Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:5). Hence, contact personnel strongly influence overall customer perceptions of service quality (Wong, 2004:365;). Table 3.1, as previously discussed, also substantiates Wong's view.

In order to avoid an unfavourable image of the service provider, contact employees are required to possess sufficient knowledge and skills to meet the needs of customers (Zemke, 1995:26). It is important to note that meeting these needs may not necessarily result in a favourable image; customers may feel indifferent if their needs are merely fulfilled because it meets their basic expectation. Moreover, employees are doing the bare minimum if customers are merely satisfied. This can be achieved in the absence of employee enthusiasm. Hence, Woratschek and Horbel (2005:46) indicate that it is the ability, as well as the motivation of employees that have an important impact on customer satisfaction. This means that not only should employees be adequately trained to meet customer expectations, they should also be motivated to do so. By being enthusiastic, having a positive attitude, and the ability to listen, Gitomer (1998:208) and Pelletier (2005:55) believe that quality service will prevail. Pelletier explains that skills can be taught but attitude is an inherent attribute of a persons' character that is difficult to change; and as a result, companies should seek employees who have the right attitude rather than skill set. Consequently, it can be suggested that employee skills alone are required to fulfil customer expectations, but together with motivation, it will result in positive disconfirmation of expectations or, alternatively, customer delight.

That said, it is not always easy to motivate employees, particularly if they do not enjoy their job. Hoffman and Bateson (2001:32) state that employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction are directly related; thus, employees should be treated like internal customers of a company because satisfied employees can take better care of customers (Palmer, 2005:441; George, 2008:33). This internal marketing is said to be

one of the three types of marketing required for tourism marketing to succeed. The other two are external and interactive marketing. Conceptualised by Bitner (1995)[59] (cited in George, 2008:33), they are referred to as the services marketing triangle and can be seen in Figure 3.6. The right hand side entails external marketing activities employed by service providers to influence customer expectations and perceptions. The left hand side indicates the importance of internal marketing, specifically the recruitment and training of staff to enable promises that are made to customers. The bottom – interactive marketing – is where service delivery takes place via interaction between customers and contact staff. It is here that customers measure their perceptions against their expectations, thereby determining whether they are dissatisfied, satisfied or delighted.



Figure 3.6: Services marketing triangle

(Source: George, 2008:33 based on Bitner, 1995[60])

Given that employees are involved in two of the three marketing domains, they are imperative for the success of a company. Carefully selected employees should be trained and empowered to meet the needs of customers. It has been said that poor service delivery and training are the root of customer dissatisfaction (Gitomer, 1998:60). Often, employees are only interested in their own welfare and not that of the customer or company that they work for. These employees do not take training seriously and are not prepared to serve customers in a memorable way (Gitomer, 1998:27). This behaviour can result from a lack of trust or belief in the company (Pelletier, 2005:12).

Pelletier (2005:3) states that not only is trust essential between customers and employees, but it is equally important between employees and the company. Moreover, trust can only be built gradually over time (Pelletier, 2005:11). How

[59] Bitner, M.J. 1995. Building service relationships: it's all about the promises. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 23(4):246-251.
[60] *Ibid.*

employees feel about their place in the organisation certainly affects their performance. It has been confirmed that satisfied employees are antecedent to satisfied customers (Palmer, 2005:443). The idea is to foster loyal employees because, like loyal customers, they generate higher revenue for the company by reducing recruitment and training costs; in addition, they work more efficiently and effectively (Mudie and Pirrie, 2006:144). Wetsch (2005:37) adds that overall satisfaction with an organisation is positively related to trust.

Since the cellar door experience can only occur through human interaction, several academics and practitioners agree that front-line staff (recruitment and training) plays a critical role in the satisfaction of wine tourists (Tassiopoulos *et al.*, 2004:61; Wong, 2004:365; Carmichael, 2005:189; Nowak and Newton, 2006:160), and eventually, the success of cellar doors (O'Neill *et al.* 2002:345). Their professionalism and behaviour, regardless on what scale, is detected by wine tourists and ultimately dictates their overall experience. In particular, friendliness, courteousness, knowledge and overall service are important attributes, which influence the decision of whether or not to buy (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:345; O'Neill and Charters, 2000:120). A lack of these attributes – especially friendliness – is consistent with some of Gitomer's (1998:59-60) reasons behind service failure. As a result, quality of service has been identified as a critical success factor in the wine tourism industry, since it is antecedent to wine tourist satisfaction and impacts behavioural intentions (O'Neill and Charters, 2000:114-155), and ultimately leads to loyalty (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:344; Caruana, 2000:812). This highlights the significant impact that contact employees have on the customer and company's profit. Thus, employee training should be conducted on a regular basis (Slater, 1994:22).

3.4 Customer loyalty

As discussed in the preceding section, customer satisfaction, specifically the state of delight, leads to customer loyalty over time. Considering the positive link between profitability and loyalty (Söderlund, 1998:170-171), repeat purchases "*are the bedrock of any business*" (Caruana, 2000:811), particularly in a competitive environment where retaining profitable customers has become increasingly difficult (Leverin and Liljander, 2006:233).

In the opinion of Gitomer (1998:244), the ability of a company to convert satisfied customers into loyal ones is the fulcrum of their long-term success. The necessity of retaining customers is explained by Zemke (1995:5) who states that profit from a single customer who has remained with a supplier for five years, can be up to 377% more profitable than new customers. In a similar vein, Butscher (2002:24) points out

that a 5% reduction in customer defections can increase profits by 25% - 85%. This is particularly important since constantly seeking new customers to replace lapsed ones proves to be costly, especially in the niche market of wine tourism. The number of wine farms grows annually and all these rivals seek the same, or similar, segment of customers. With a myriad of options, customers are more difficult to retain, even with great service. Therefore, it is vital that wine farms offer added value together with consistent superior service to establish win-win relationships that convert satisfied customers into loyal ones.

Although loyalty is the next logical step from satisfaction, its concept is not as straightforward as it seems. Given that loyalty is often seen as repurchases, this behaviour – without considering attitudinal dimensions – is, in fact, disguised as loyalty. The perception of loyalty under this circumstance is misleading; thus, it is known as loyalty under negative or no commitment (Liljander and Strandvik, 1993[61] cited in Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:27-28), false loyalty (Anderson and Jacobsen, 2000:60), or spurious loyalty (Wetsch, 2005:32). Both these descriptions maintain that customers purchase a particular product or service purely because they have no other choice, and should an opportunity arise, they will certainly switch suppliers. This means that the high probability of erroneously classifying an indifferent or a dissatisfied customer as loyal, based on his or her continued purchases, is not excluded. Evidently, this shows that repurchases can occur in the absence of loyalty. This view is also strongly held by Reichheld (2003:48).

Conversely, true loyalty, occurs when customers do not consider other options in spite of changes in factors such as price (Dick and Basu, 1994[62] cited in Wetsch, 2005:32). Opposing this view, Bridson, Evans, and Hickman (2008:364) question the possibility of generating such fidelity in customers in this modern day and age. Other authors such as Anderson and Jacobsen (2000:55) assume a more casual view, which states that true loyalty is established when customers become advocates for the company, without incentive to do so. Gitomer (1998:25) adds that truly loyal customers will "*fight before they switch*"; moreover, they are willing to risk their reputation in the referral or defence of a supplier (Reichheld, 2003:48).

Pertinent to false loyalty, key obstacles that prevent customers from defecting include lack of alternatives and high switching costs. In the case of the former obstacle,

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[61] Liljander, V. & Strandvik, T. 1993. Different Comparison Standards as Determinants of Service Quality, *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behaviour*, 6:118-32.

[62] Dick, A.S. & Basu, K.1994. Customer loyalty: toward an integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22, 99-113.

customers are forced to use a supplier, as pointed out by Anderson and Jacobsen. High switching cost is also a common barrier to exit (Grönhaug and Gilly, 1991[63] cited in Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:26; Büschken, 2004:9). Another reason why customers stay is because they are simply indifferent (Reichheld, 2003:48). Thus, loyalty cannot be explained by behavioural measures alone; an attitudinal dimension should be considered in order to determine true loyalty (Leverin and Liljander, 2006:234-235; Russell-Bennett *et al.*, 2007:1253; Bridson *et al.*, 2008:366; Wang *et al.*, 2009:299).

Attitudinal dimensions can be determined by an individual's personal preference – willingly choosing to use a particular supplier in the long-term displays their satisfaction and loyalty, and so too does the act of referring others to the service. Naturally, their preference is shaped by previous experiences (Keh and Lee, 2006:128). Russell-Bennett *et al.* (2007:1255) found that in a small business service setting, attitudinal loyalty is positively related to behavioural loyalty; specifically, repurchases follow a positive experience with a service. It is a combination of attitudinal and behavioural loyalty that converts customers into loyal advocates. Figure 3.7, the ladder of customer loyalty, shows that all customers begin as prospects that focus on one-off transactions. At this stage, customers test the service provider to see if they meet their needs. Eventually, suppliers that go beyond their minimum requirements will witness their customers ascend the loyalty ladder and become willing to form long-term relationships with the company. Evidently, attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty are crucial elements, which establish this relationship.

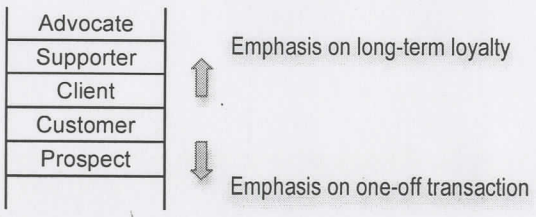


Figure 3.7: Ladder of customer loyalty

(Source: Palmer, 2005:160 based on Christopher *et al.*, 1991[64])

Often, switching costs are introduced in order to keep customers loyal. Although Büschken (2004:37) advocates the creation of switching costs to retain customers, there are ethical questions, which surround its use; specifically, customers may be forced to use a supplier against their preference, and become an "*economic hostage*". False loyalty is, thus, only beneficial for the supplier, and it is not

[63] Grönhaug, K. & Gilly, M.C. 1991. A Transaction Cost Approach to Consumer Dissatisfaction and Complaint Actions. *Journal of Economic Psychology*. 12:165-83.

[64] Christopher, M., Payne, A. & Ballantyne, D. 1991. *Relationship Marketing - Bringing Quality, Customer Service and Marketing Together*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

sustainable in the long run. Locking unwilling customers in increases or maintains their share of wallet, but there is no emotional attachment to the supplier; this means that their attitudinal loyalty will either be non-existent or negative. This raises the important issue of emotional bonding.

Rather than tying customers down to maintain their share of wallet, service providers should, instead, create share of heart through emotional bonding. This measure is strongly recommended by Nowak and Newton (2006:157-158) for the wine tourism industry – specifically, at the cellar door. Apart from being a strong indicator of loyalty, the authors propose that strong bonds create competitive advantage; because customers develop a personal attachment, they are less likely to be poached by competitors. Therefore, creating emotional bonds that influence customers' attitudes is also a practical and strategic defence against aggressive promotional efforts by rivals.

That said, this theoretical concept of loyalty cannot be followed straightforwardly for wine tourism due to the nature of the industry. Wine tourism is a leisure, and often luxury, activity that some individuals can do without, or even afford. Hence, the purchase of a particular wine brand or visitations to wine estates are undertaken at the customer's own will and preference. Consequently, it can be assumed that false loyalty in wine tourism is non-existent: wine tourists are highly unlikely forced to visit specific wine farms; they are also unlikely to purchase wine based on indifference. Their choices are based on personal preferences and recommendations. Subsequently, this highlights the unfeasibility of achieving true loyalty to only one wine brand or farm.

Despite the high satisfaction level in wine tourism based on WOM referrals and positive past experiences (Charters and O'Neill, 2001:11), wine tourists cannot be described as truly loyal mostly owing to the variety seeking nature associated with wine tourism. Exploring various wine farms and experimenting with different wines is a dominant part of the appeal. Therefore, it is plausible to deduce that, although repurchases are common, loyalty amongst wine visitors is largely attitudinal. This is particularly true for variety seekers, as suggested by Woratschek and Horbel (2005:54). Traditionally, variety seekers are considered as "*bad customers*", but the authors maintain that the positive influence of satisfaction on recommendations is significantly stronger than the negative influence of variety seeking behaviour. This means that despite a great experience, variety seekers will switch, but they will also spread positive WOM regarding their encounter.

Woratschek and Horbel further state that variety seekers are also considered as experts or opinion leaders due to their extensive experience from which they can compare different wine brands and services. Subsequently, this suggests that wine lovers and connoisseurs would have had to undergo a period of variety seeking in order to accumulate the extensive knowledge they have before settling on specific preferences. Therefore, based on the nature of the industry, switching does not necessarily have an adverse effect, nor does it equate to disloyalty. The key is to create emotional attachments that prompt positive referrals; this is the foundation upon which reputation is built (Woratschek and Horbel, 2005:55), as well as the measurement of loyalty success (Gitomer, 1998:259). Qualitative findings by Alonso *et al.* (2008:983) indicate that building loyalty and brand recognition is particularly important in wine tourism. In effect, wine farms should convert their visitors into their marketing department, a tactic advocated by Reichheld (2003:49).

It should also be remembered that wine farms strive for loyalty to the brand and not to the cellar door. The cellar door acts as a doorway to nurture brand loyalty, as seen in section 2.2.3.2 (importance of cellar doors). However, it appears that South Africa has a high repeat visitation rate (38%) to the cellar door (Western Cape Tourism Barometer, 2007:38). This suggests that customers not only enjoy the wine brand, but also the wine estate environment, which increases attitudinal and behavioural loyalty to the brand, as well as the service.

A widely accepted method to increase loyalty is through use of loyalty programs (Keh and Lee, 2006:127) – also known as loyalty schemes or customer clubs. Apart from engendering loyalty, the intention of these programs is to create regular two-way communication between the customer and the company (Butscher, 2002:15). Butscher (2002:24) also explains that this communication allows companies to identify its most profitable customers – namely, the 20% of customers who generate 80% of the company's profit. This shows the importance of acquiring a customer database; according to O'Neill *et al.* (2002:344), creating brand loyalty is, in effect, the creation of customer databases. In the opinion of Dowling and Uncles (1997)[65] (cited in Bridson *et al.*, 2008:364), loyalty programs are viewed as "*rewarding information collection*".

Although these programs are aimed at creating loyalty, some academics such as O'Malley and Prothero (2004) and Bridson *et al.* (2008) find problems with these initiatives. Apart from being expensive to implement and maintain (Butscher,

[65] Dowling, G.R. & Uncles, M. 1997. Do customer loyalty programs really work? *Sloan Management Review*, Summer, 71–82.

2002:34), companies encourage behavioural loyalty rather than reward truly loyal customers (O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1290). This had led to, what Bridson *et al.* (2008:364) term "*cherry picking*". In essence, customers engage promiscuously in multiple loyalty programs in an attempt to take advantage of the best deals available. Although further research should be conducted, it can also be argued that these customers are the ones with higher education levels (such as in the case of wine visitors), which make them less satisfied and loyal (Caruana, 2000:821-822). Therefore, ascertaining true loyalty through repeat purchases remains perilous, as seen previously.

There are also negative connotations that are associated with loyalty programs. Some customers believe they are implemented to assist companies to up-sell, cross-sell or lock customers into exchange relationships instead of existing for the benefit of the customer (O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1291-1292). Similarly, Anderson and Jacobsen (2000:56) state that companies act in their own interest, while saying they care about their customers. Benefits from these programs are not even formulated according to the preferences of customers; in fact, Butscher (2002:34) indicates that rewards are "*derived from the manager's gut feeling*". Therefore, customer loyalty programs often fail to recruit new customers or achieve additional sales from existing customers (Bridson *et al.*, 2008:365). Rather than "*rewarding information collection*", companies should reward their truly loyal customers; this can only occur if customers are involved in the formulation of rewards.

While the above indicate the negative association and problems with loyalty programs, literature does, in general, support a positive relationship between customer clubs and loyalty (Bridson *et al.*, 2008:367). When comparing customers who received benefits, such as gifts and discounts, and those who received complimentary thank you notes, it was found that customers who received benefits were more loyal (Kendrick, 1998[66] cited in Bridson *et al.*, 2008:367); these customers are also more likely to engage in WOM communication (Wirtz and Chew, 2002[67] cited in Bridson *et al.*, 2008:367).

According to Keh and Lee (2006) and de Wulf and Oderkerken-Schröeder (2003)[68] (cited in Russell-Bennett *et al.*, 2003:367), the types of rewards, in addition to the

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[66] Kendrick, A. 1998. Promotional products vs. price promotion in fostering customer loyalty: a report of two controlled field experiments. *The Journal of Services Marketing*, 12(4):312–326.

[67] Wirtz, J. & Chew, P., 2002. The effects of incentives, deal proneness, satisfaction and tie strength on word-of-mouth behavior. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 13(2):141–162.

[68] de Wulf, K. & Odekerken-Schröder, G. 2003. Assessing the impact of a retailer's relationship efforts on consumers' attitudes and behavior. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 10:95–108.

timing of their dispense, also have affects on the degree of customer loyalty. Bridson *et al.* (2008:365) distinguish between hard and soft rewards. Hard rewards hold economic value and are tangible elements such as gifts and discounts whereas soft rewards are emotionally oriented such as in the case of receiving preferential treatment. Since soft rewards make customers feel special in comparison to other customers, these rewards have a stronger impact on building loyalty and, therefore, would be valuable by increasing cellar door loyalty. Similarly, Keh and Lee (2006:127) also distinguish between types of rewards, which is further established between the timing of the rewards. Pertaining to types, direct and indirect rewards were identified; direct rewards are those that are related to the main service whereas indirect rewards are unrelated. Regarding timing, rewards can be delayed or immediate; delayed rewards are redeemed at a later stage while immediate rewards are redeemed together in the same period of the main service.

In the context of customer satisfaction, Keh and Lee (2006:129) found that different states of satisfaction require specific types of rewards. Specifically, when customers are dissatisfied, direct and immediate rewards are more appropriate. The authors explain that this is to buffer the displeasure felt. Conversely, delayed and direct rewards will build loyalty for satisfied customers, especially if the reward is of high value (Banks *et al.*, 1992[69] cited in Keh and Lee, 2006:129). This supports Butscher's (2002:33) view that loyalty, which is based on value, is necessary for customer retention. Customers choose rewards that are most valuable to them, which explains the general tendency to select delayed, direct rewards. Consequently, apart from their typical loyalty programs, wine farms should also take the types and timing of rewards under consideration and apply it in their service recovery procedures. This view coincides with Butscher (2002:24) who believes that loyalty programs can win back customers.

Summarily, a poor loyalty programs will not create loyal customers (Butscher, 2002:30). It is the value that they carry for customers that deem whether or not they are effective (Butscher, 2002:34). Therefore, loyalty clubs or programs should be meticulously planned and implemented; furthermore, it is not the name of the program but the concept and the philosophy behind it that is crucial. The necessary elements of a loyalty program are illustrated in Figure 3.8. These elements should all be aligned in order to deliver a valuable program to loyal customers. Given that more

[69] Banks, W.C., McQuater, G.V., Anthony, J.R. & Ward, W.E. 1992. Delayed Gratification in Blacks: A Critical Review. In Burlew, K.h., Banks, W.C., McAdoo, H.M. & Azibo, D.A. (eds). *African American Psychology: Theory, Research and Practices*. London: Sage Publications: 330–345.

than half (57%) of South African wine tourists belong to a loyalty club (Getz and Brown, 2006:150), it is important that wine farms are aware of the goals, composition and impact of their loyalty programs, particularly when dealing with a segment of the market that is highly educated and affluent, since their perception of value will be much higher than the average individual.

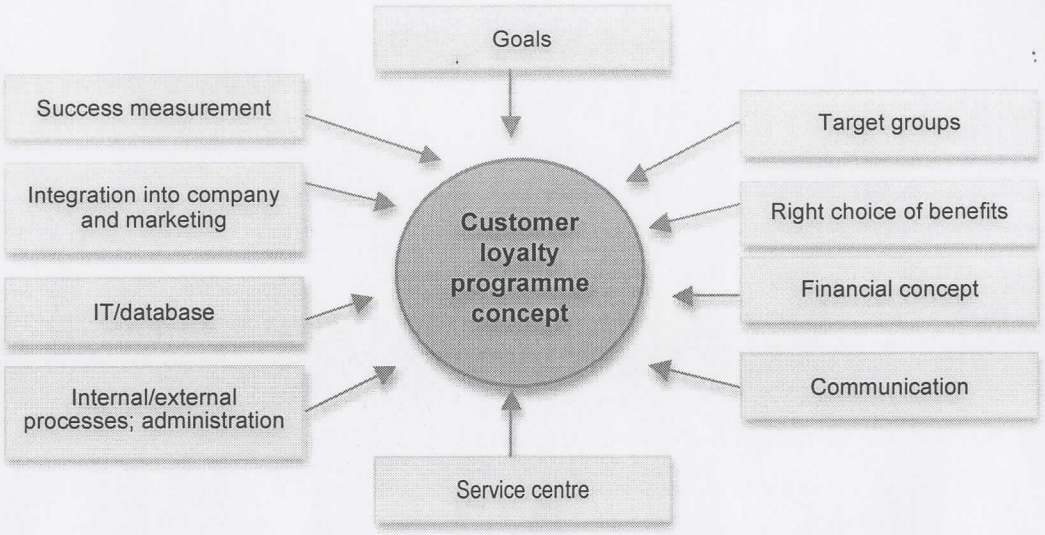


Figure 3.8: Elements of a customer loyalty program concept

(Source: Butscher, 2002:32)

Fundamentally, achieving true loyalty is necessary in order to sustain long-term profitability and, therefore, the survival of the wine farm. Taking into consideration the nature of the industry, it is important to understand that wine farms require a balance of attitudinal and behavioural loyalty amongst its customers. Since wine farms are leisure-oriented, their visitation rates are low compared to other services – this highlights the necessity of attitudinal loyalty, since it is this type of loyalty that generates positive WOM communication, which, in turn, attracts new customers. This, as previously explained by Russell-Bennett *et al.*, will promote new and repeat purchases.

Although the objectives of each wine farm may be different, their general aim is to develop loyalty to the brand, and each wine farm will have a different approach to arrive at that goal. Evidently, each strategy to achieve this may be similar or even vastly different, but a widely accepted starting point is the quality of service. In particular, friendliness of staff has a positive link to customer loyalty (Gitomer, 1998:93); this is especially true in the wine tourism industry (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002:344). Similarly, Wong (2004:371) noticed that the customer's enjoyment of the experience is said to be the best predictor of loyalty.

Overall, wine visitors will be loyal if wine farms "*give them a reason, and a means, to be loyal*" (Nixon, 1998:215). This highlights the necessity of having an unambiguous, thoroughly planned and well-maintained loyalty program that holds value for the customer. This loyalty, over time, will develop into close a relationship that benefits both parties. Therefore, relationship marketing strategies are necessary to preserve customer loyalty.

3.5 Relationship marketing

As its name suggests, relationship marketing is a strategy, which is implemented to maintain ongoing relationships of a learning nature with key customers (Peppers *et al.*, 1999:51; Büschken, 2004:109), in addition to other stakeholder groups (O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1286). It has also been described as a defensive strategy since it aims to reduce customer attrition by establishing long-term relationships that are beneficial to both parties (Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:22). Thus, relationship marketing concentrates on the lifetime value of a customer rather than on the value of single transactions (Ward and Dagger, 2007:281).

Relationship marketing was first introduced in the 1980s due to changes in the business environment (Leverin and Liljander, 2006:233). According to Sheth (2002:590), three specific changes prompted the concept of relationship marketing. The first change was the energy crisis of the 1970s, which led to intense global competition. During this period, businesses realised the necessity of prioritising customer retention rather than acquisition. The second change was the emergence of services marketing and because services are based on transactions, they can be recorded to analyse customer loyalty (Peppers and Rogers, 1993[70] cited in Sheth, 2002:590). Lastly, the need to improve quality at a lower cost prompted supplier partnering; this collaborative attitude, consequently, yielded relational and interactive business exchanges. Another rationale behind the growth of relationship marketing is its ability to reach target audiences – compared to mass media advertising – and tailor services to meet their specific needs (Handen, 2000:8).

To date, these factors are evidently still applicable, and even more so within the wine tourism industry. Rising competition, coupled with sophisticated consumers, make relationships difficult to initiate and maintain. However, considering the niche market of wine tourism, if implemented correctly, win-win relationships can be built since the needs and wants of wine visitors are more specific. Forming relationships in the wine tourism industry may be easier since wine farms tend to be small, and often family-

[70] Peppers, D. & Rogers, M. 1993. *The One-to-One Future: Building Relationships One Customer at a Time*. NY: Doubleday.

run businesses; their small scale status makes it easier to establish intimate relationships with customers.

An important aspect of relationship marketing is that it should "*not only be built on such factors as good prices, but also on emotions*" (Butscher, 2002:30). The work of Wong (2004) also stresses that the role emotions play in long-term customer behaviour. Similarly, Storbacka *et al.* (1994:26) believe that the only way to extend relationships is to ensure that customers are satisfied because if this is not achieved and switching costs do not exist, customers will defect, which means that the relationship is terminated. However, it is also worthy to note that customers in a loyal relationship have a greater zone of tolerance, which means that they are prepared to absorb some unfavourable evaluations before expressing their dissatisfaction and, subsequently, defecting. Ultimately, strong relationships will, itself, become emotional switching costs that do not impose unethical issues (Büschken, 2004:111). Therefore, it is in service providers' best interest to establish and nurture bonds that are founded on favourable emotions.

However, it should not be assumed that relationships can be formed with all customers, since not all will generate sustainable profit for the service provider. This is one of the three relationship marketing assumptions proposed by Ward and Dagger (2007:282). Therefore, relationship marketing should be selective and targeted at appropriate customers. The second assumption states that the relationship should be maintained for as long as it can be beneficial to both parties because over time the relationship strength is assumed to increase. Ward and Dagger (2007:282) explain that the more frequent contact the customer has with the company, the greater the opportunity for the relationship to strengthen. Lastly, it is assumed that customers who place greater importance on relationships are more receptive to efforts made by companies; this will, therefore, also strengthen their relationship.

Peppers *et al.* (1999:156) state that customers who place greater importance on relationships are those whose needs vary – or commonly known as being highly involved, and thus find learning relationships attractive. This is highly beneficial to the wine tourism industry, particularly because customer experience is largely comprised of personal interaction, which makes it effective for relationship building (Leverin and Liljander, 2006:232). As a result, in order for service providers to use the advantage of the position they are given, it is essential for them to uncover relationship dimensions that are most important to these customers.

These assumptions are closely tied with relationship strength (Ward and Dagger, 2007:287), to which other academics have also contributed their theories. Table 3.6 lists factors that influence the strength of the relationship between customer and company. Wong's (2004:370-371) work indicates that relationship quality is dependant on the emotional satisfaction derived; specifically, "*feelings of happiness*". Naturally, customers that are delighted on a regular basis will ultimately become loyal, and loyalty is the basis on which relationships are built (Woratschek and Horbel, 2005:46). Taking a broader view, Storbacka *et al.* (1994:28-29) identify extrinsic and intrinsic variables that affect relationship strength. Extrinsic factors refer to market concentration – the number of sellers to buyers, which ultimately determine the balance of power. Intrinsic factors refer to how critical episodes are handled during the relationship period (service quality).

Table 3.6: Factors that influence relationship strength

Emotional satisfaction	(Wong, 2004:370)
Extrinsic and intrinsic factors	(Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:28-29)
Frequency of usage	(Bonnemaizon *et al.*, 2007:283-284; Ward and Dagger, 2007:282)
Level of involvement	Bonnemaizon *et al.*, 2007:283-284
Relationship dimension	(Ward and Dagger, 2007:282)
Duration of relationship	(Ward and Dagger, 2007:282; Liljander and Strandvik, 1995[71] cited in Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:27)
Bonds: legal, economic, technical, geographical, time, knowledge, cultural, ideological, psychological, social.	(Liljander and Strandvik, 1995[72] cited in Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:27)

As seen previously, frequency of usage, relationship dimensions and relationship duration also play a part in determining the strength of a relationship (Ward and Dagger, 2007:282). Bonnemaizon, Cova, and Louyot (2007:283-284) also add level of involvement – the higher the involvement, the stronger the relationship can become. According to Liljander and Strandvik (1995)[73] (cited in Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:27), it is bonds that determine relationship strength. These bonds are: legal; economic; technical; geographical; time; knowledge; social; cultural; ideological; and psychological. The first five bonds are said to prevent customers from switching even in the presence of low service quality. These bonds are consistent with the switching costs, which were discussed in section 3.4 (customer loyalty). Similarly, the existence of these bonds suggests that customers do not willingly engage relationships. This questions whether the relationship is ethical or not, as customers are forced into this position and do not benefit emotionally from it.

[71] Liljander, V. & Strandvik, T. 1995. The Nature of Customer Relationships in Services. In Swartz, T.A., Bowen, D.E. & Brown, S.W. (eds). *Advances in Services Marketing and Management*, vol 4. London: JAI Press.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid.*

The key purpose of relationship marketing is to generate sustainable profit through customer retention. This is achieved through customer relationship management (CRM). It is a universal method of engaging in relationship marketing, which is also used in customer loyalty programs (O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1286). The two are closely linked as CRM uses information collected from loyal customers to establish a relationship (Bridson *et al.*, 2008:364). Figure 3.9 illustrates the path that CRM takes starting from customer acquisition through to long-term relationship management. Anderson and Jacobsen (2000:57) compare relationship marketing to the process of courtship. Here, trust and mutual loyalty should be built gradually and selectively with appropriate customers. How this process is executed will determine whether newly acquired customers will escalate to the level of loyalty.

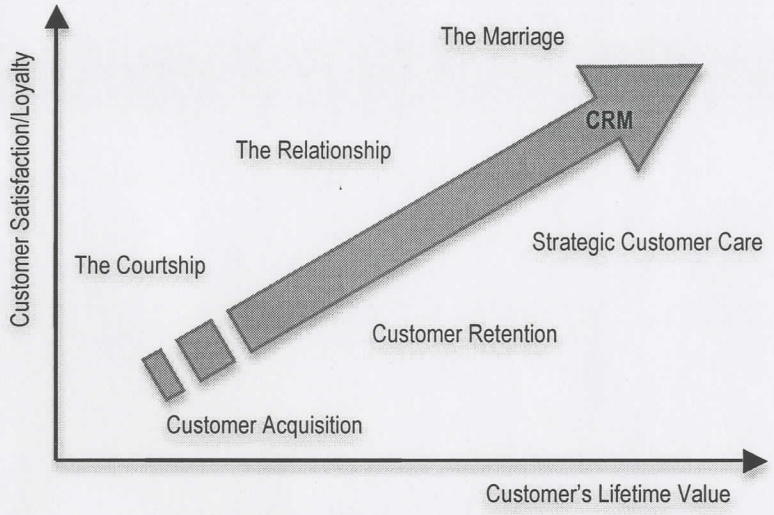


Figure 3.9: Path to strategic customer care
(Source: Anderson and Jacobsen, 2000:57)

As seen previously, loyalty is largely achieved via benefit cards. However, apart from providing these tangible benefits, service providers should extend the loyalty program to relationship marketing by enforcing regular interaction and communication with customers to ensure learning from both parties. Needless to say, customers should be willing to participate in this relationship. It may be obvious, however, that customers who have reached this point are automatically loyal, but types of loyalty should be considered – behavioural or attitudinal. It can be suggested that behaviourally loyal customers may not necessarily want to develop a learning relationship with service providers and would rather "*cherry-pick*", but the opposite can be suggested for attitudinally loyal customers. Therefore, the entire program – in addition to the service encounters – should be designed to target customers emotionally and implemented with the same dedication in order to achieve the full affect of CRM.

According to Handen (2000:11), there are four types of CRM: *win back or save*, *prospecting*, *loyalty*, and *cross-sell or up-sell*. It commences with prospecting where suitable customers are acquired for the development of a relationship. This courtship translates into a relationship where achieving long-term true loyalty is the goal. During this relationship type of CRM, the strategy chosen will depend on what the relationship requires. These CRM types are briefly explained in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7: Types of CRM

1. Win back or save:	get back selected customers through service recovery. Best if contact is made within first week of defection than in the fourth week.	Performance can improve by 10%-20%.
2. Prospecting:	the key is to win new first-time customers	
3. Loyalty:	keep customers attitudinally satisfied because repeat purchases does not equate to true loyalty.	Performance can improve by 15%-20%.
4. Cross-sell or up-sell:	identify complementary or upgraded offerings that customers would like as this would expand their purchases and make them more profitable.	

(Source: Handen, 2000:11)

in order to assist implementation of the strategies, four general steps for relationship marketing have been outlined by Peppers *et al.* (1999:152-155). Firstly, the service provider should identify its customers. The second step involves differentiating the customers, and the third involves interacting with them. Lastly, the company's behaviour should be customised according to the needs of their key customers. This is akin to being customer-focused, which Leverin and Liljander (2006:234) believe is the foundation of relationship marketing.

Three steps should be followed in order to become customer-oriented (Minocha, 2000:309). These are to understand their customer completely, align the company's capabilities to deliver what customers perceive as heightened value, and facilitate the immediacy of information availability both inside and outside the organisation. These steps can be incorporated with the ones identified by Peppers *et al.* Despite the company's effort to achieve customer-focus, it cannot be overstressed that CRM will only work if the customer permits such a relationship; moreover, the commitment should be ongoing and communication between both parties should exist (Bridson *et al.*, 2008:364). Bell *et al.* (2005:170) add that customer perceptions of service change with time and, thus, should be tracked. This has also been discussed previously in section 3.2.1.2 (customer perceptions).

Other integral elements of relationship marketing include trust, commitment and mutual benefit (O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1286). Wetsch (2005:38) also strongly believes that trust is particularly important and can be seen as an antecedent to loyalty and relationship commitment. Moreover, it requires time because loyalty should be earned, and the most practical way to achieve this is to create frequent opportunities for interaction and communication (Grönroos, 2007:36). Grönroos further points out that it is the customer that determines whether a relationship has developed, and not the service provider. Consequently, wine farms should not be excessively persuasive or determined in their quest to further their purpose otherwise their tactics will be perceived as intrusive to the customer.

By following tailoring the service to suit the business, implementing steps correctly and diligently maintaining their efforts, many benefits will ensue. These benefits are listed in Table 3.8. It should not be surprising that, over time, the main consequence results in augmented profit. This is because the CRM strategy triggers a small change of acquiring customers and turning them into loyal ones. The benefit of this action ripples throughout all relevant areas; for example, this focused strategy prevents overspending on low-value clients and under-spending on high value ones. This relationship also shortens the lead-time on transactions in addition to the marketing cycle, which improves productivity. This, in turn, further escalates customer satisfaction and in this state customers become less price sensitive and are more open to cross- or up-selling. These benefits are appreciated not only by companies, but by customers too. If the service provider knows what to offer the customer and serve them enthusiastically, there is no reason why they would willingly want to switch. This would require a new learning curve with the new company, which naturally includes risks and uncertainties.

Table 3.8: Benefits of relationship marketing

Benefits for the Service Provider	
Strong relationship quality over time	(Ward and Dagger, 2007:283)
Increases value of customer base	(Peppers *et al.*, 1999:151)
Increase in profit	(Reichheld, 2003:48; Woratschek and Horbel, 2005:44)
Reduction in costs	(Peppers *et al.*, 1999:156; Handen, 2000:8); Woratschek and Horbel, 2005:44)
More focused strategies	(Handen, 2000:8; O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1287)
Improves productivity	(McDonough, 2001[74] cited in Wetsch, 2005:30)
Shortens marketing cycle	(Handen, 2000:8)
Easy to track effectiveness of campaigns	(Handen, 2000:8)
Increases loyalty and decreases price sensitivity	(O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1287)
Increased cross-selling and up-selling	(Peppers *et al.*, 1999:156; O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1287; Bell *et al.*, 2005:170)
Higher levels of customer satisfaction	(Peppers *et al.*, 1999:156; Burghard and Galimi, 2000[75] cited in Wetsch, 2005:30)
Customer retention	(Peppers *et al.*, 1999:152)
Benefits for the Customer	
Reduction in risk	(Bell *et al.*, 2005:170; Woratschek and Horbel, 2005:44)
Convenience through faster cycle times	(Peppers *et al.*, 1999:156)

Evidently, these benefits are what all companies want to achieve and although they may appear simple to accomplish, a total of 30% of companies successfully reap these benefits. The high failure rate of CRM is a key problem. According to Büschken (2004:3) and Dyche (2002)[76] (cited in Ward and Dagger, 2007:283), 60% - 70% of CRM strategies fail. It appears that the reason for this is that the companies are not customer-centric, as is apparent shortly. In addition, most companies do not fully understand the concept behind relationship marketing, but "*jump the bandwagon*" in hopes to achieve greater profits (Peppers *et al.*, 1999:151). They put too much resources and money into it even when the benefits do not exceed their costs, which is problematic since CRM tactics are expensive. They are also not aware that not all customers are profitable, and thus, relationship marketing should be selective and targeted (Storbacka *et al.*, 1994:31; Sheth, 2002:591).

Another critical error stems from a lack of customer-focus. Ballantyne (2004)[77] (cited in Bonnemaizon *et al.*, 2007:51) states that businesses engage in relationship marketing without paying attention to the way they generate value for customers. This

[74] McDonough, D. 2001. How CRM can save the economy. *CRM Daily*: 22, October 2001.
[75] Burghard, C.,Galimi, J. 2000. Customer Relationship Management – New MCO Catalyst. *Gartner Advisory*, January.
[76] Dyche, J. 2002. *The Relationship Marketing Handbook: A Business Guide to Customer Relationship Management*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Addison-Wesley.
[77] Ballantyne, D. 2004. Relationship specific knowledge. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 19(2):114–123.

sentiment is shared by Wetsch (2005:30-31) who noticed that customers are not given an opportunity to provide their input in terms of their preferences. This problem was also seen in the implementation of rewards and benefits in section 3.4 (customer loyalty). Wetsch (2005:32) further points out that the personal aspect of relationships is being lost to technology as companies focus on technology as a key to improve customer loyalty. This impact of technology was predicted by Sheth (2002:591). In essence, businesses appear to be profit-driven without considering customers' feelings. This was confirmed by a study by O'Malley and Prothero (2004:1286-1290).

General findings from their research reveal a high level of distrust and suspicion regarding relationship marketing. This is problematic since trust is an integral part of establishing a relationship. The respondents feel that businesses emphasise the notions of customer relationships rather than the pursuit of profit, but in reality they are incapable or reluctant to give customers what they want and need, or even the after-care service. These businesses are described as being "*too big and impersonal*" (O'Malley and Prothero, 2004:1290). They advertise their concern for the customer only to encourage business exchange, and although emotional benefits are the key focus in recent advertising methods, since they emotionally connect with the customer (Bonnemaizon *et al.*, 2007:55), it is based on a lie if the advertised promise is not fulfilled. In such cases, relationship marketing is superficial and will not be fruitful in the long-term since it is adopted for the good of the business and not the customer.

Evidently, businesses should understand the concept of relationship marketing before they embark on its implementation, as suggested by Ward and Dagger (2007:287). In order to further minimise these potential problems, relationship marketing requires a mechanism, which measures, monitors, and manages the strategy. Gulycz (2000:321) advocates the Strategic Performance Alignment, which is based on three measures: the organisation's understanding of its customers; the understanding of its own company; and its commitment to continuous improvement of service quality. However, this is based on the company's own views. A customer approach is needed. This approach is explored in the next chapter.

Summarily, relationship marketing may provide substantial benefits to a business if implemented carefully. It is sensible that Gitomer (1998:56) suggests that businesses reverse their budget by spending more on their existing and loyal customers rather than consistently seeking new ones. Ultimately, this would depend on the nature of the business. In the case of wine tourism, wine farms should seek to balance both. Moreover, establishing a relationship with wine visitors is easier, since wine estates

are small, making it easier to manage. The cellar door also proves as an ideal opportunity to earn the trust of customers, which makes it easier to establish a long-term relationship with them (Charters and O'Neill, 2001:8), since it is at this first contact where staff can show customers their dedication, professionalism, knowledge, and enthusiasm and provide them with a superior customer experience.

This is particularly important because Bonnemaizon *et al.* (2007:55) believe that CRM will eventually evolve into customer experience management, and the best way to create customer value is to ensure an excellent experience whenever the customer meets the company. Therefore, according to O'Malley and Prothero (2004:1287) and van der Wiele *et al.* (2005:529), relationship marketing is an essential source of achieving competitive advantage in the modern competitive business environment.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has further substantiated the important role that service quality plays. Customer satisfaction is, in fact, no longer adequate in ensuring repeat visits or purchases; wine estates should strive for customer delight in order to achieve a competitive edge, and the most beneficial way – for both the estate and visitors – to do so is through world-class customer service.

By delivering superior service to leave a strong and favourable impression, wine farms have a greater chance of converting customers into loyal advocates that have a high lifetime value. The wine tourism industry should bear this in mind, particularly since their customers can only be truly loyal in an attitudinal sense. In the opinion of Storbacka *et al.* (1994:22), this is a strategic method to protect their customer base.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses several suitable research approaches and motivates the chosen methodology in which the objectives, as set out in Chapter One, are achieved. To reiterate, these objectives include, firstly, whether the mystery visitor research method is an appropriate vehicle to measure and facilitate customer satisfaction and relationships in the context of wine tourism. Secondly, it aims to measure the service quality of selected cellar doors along the SWR and determine whether there are service quality discrepancies within the wine region and to what extent these can be recognised within the region. Finally, it tries to identify problem areas regarding service quality.

The key valuable aspect of this research pertains to the first objective, which, if confirmed, the mystery visitor research method has potential to become a conventional standard to measure customer satisfaction in addition to facilitating customer relationships. This is a valuable contribution as mystery visitors, although frequently employed in retail settings, has yet to be applied to the wine tourism industry. Literature in Chapter Two and Three recognise the importance of customer satisfaction, service quality, customer loyalty and relationships; therefore, primary research implemented at the renowned wine region of Stellenbosch to further support and complement the examined literature will provide, in this regard, a greater dimension of knowledge.

This chapter, thus, describes details of the research strategy adopted to address the aforementioned objectives, including the method of data collection, sample selection, research instruments, in addition to limitations of the chosen research strategy and its implementation. A summary is depicted in Figure 4.1.

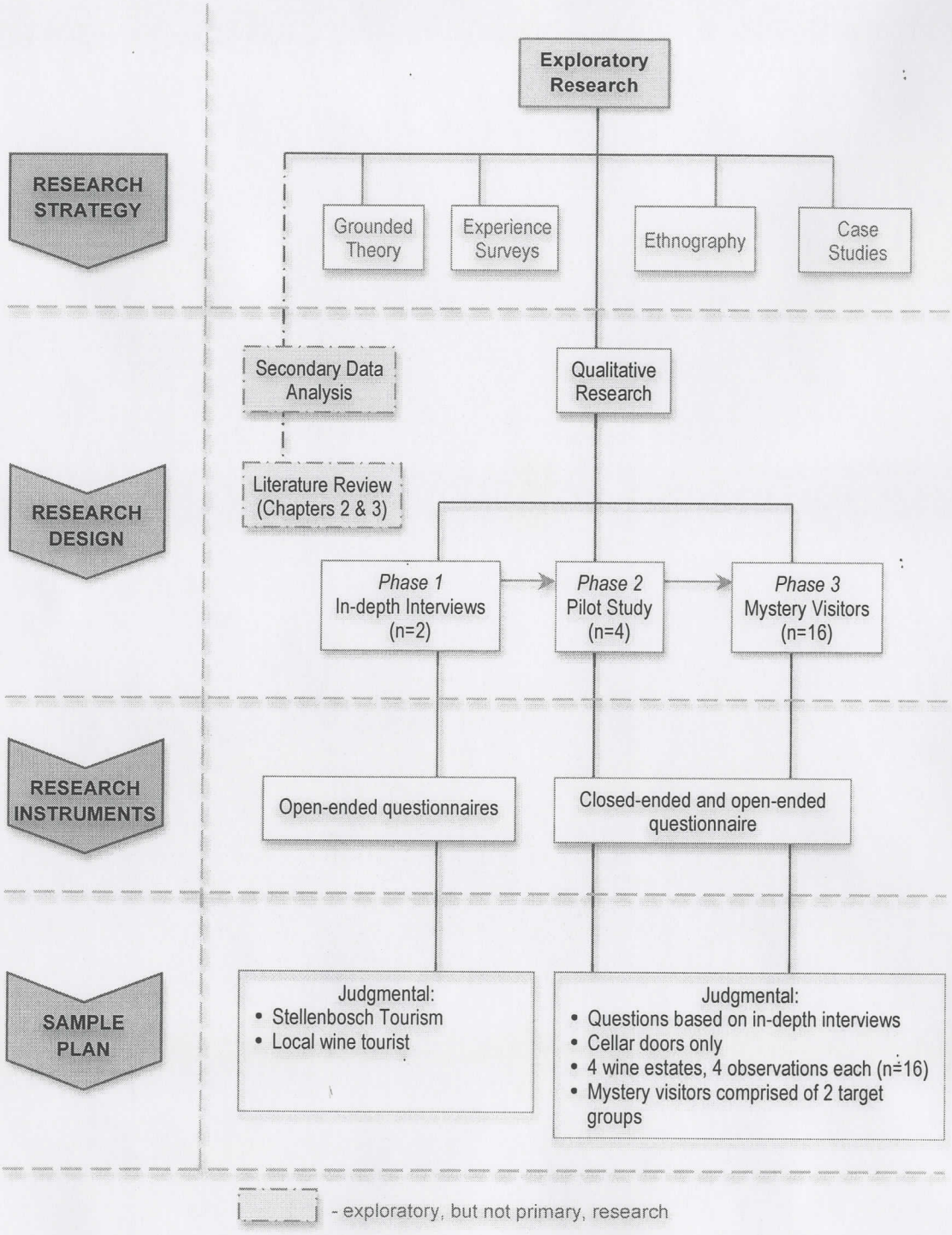


Figure 4.1: Overview of primary research design and methodology

4.2 Research strategy

Following the suggestion of Biggam (2008:95), the research strategy is chosen based on how best it can fulfil the research objectives. Thus, considering the objectives of this study, as mentioned earlier in section 4.1, the research, therefore, naturally adopts an exploratory approach and the motivation for it is henceforth discussed.

Exploratory research seeks to explore an unfamiliar situation; therefore, it is often adopted to help narrow the scope of a research topic (Zikmund, 2003:53). This means that exploratory research is conducted during the early stage of the research process, as further noted by Zikmund. It can provide answers and motivations to in-depth questions such as "*what is the nature of any customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction?*", or "*how does sub-standard service delivery affect the visitor's experience?*", or to "*describe the kind of experience visitors expect from a wine farm*". As these types of questions are pertinent to the study, it makes the exploratory approach highly fitting for the investigation at hand.

To further justify its exploratory nature, this study is the first to employ mystery visitors in the wine tourism industry, and hence, due to the topic's lack of initial insight, the research commences without any preconceptions as to what will be discovered. Also, the low number of respondents is indicative of an exploratory approach as opposed to a descriptive one; with the latter, volume in terms of sample size is required, reason being that it needs to be representative of a population[78] (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:218). In the case of this investigation, the area of study would represent the total population, since this approach does not seek to generalise the results, but to determine whether the mystery visitor vehicle works for the specified wine farms. Lastly, the key method – mystery visitors – is derived from an observational technique, which is exploratory by nature (Aaker, Kumar, and Day, 2000:203; Haydam, 2008:1-2).

By employing this approach, the research study profits from three benefits identified by George (2008:108). Firstly, it can illuminate a vague situation. Secondly, it can identify other areas that should be addressed through additional research. Thirdly, it facilitates discovery of ideas that may pose as potential business opportunities. These benefits have been accounted for through secondary data analysis in addition to in-depth interviews and mystery visits. Barbour (2008:30) also adds the benefit of flexibility – the research focus can be altered to accommodate for changes should a new or different emphasis be found in preliminary findings. This also means that the sample size and strategies can be augmented or refined as the study unfolds.

[78] By means of drawing a probability sample.

Despite these benefits, there are two key disadvantages of this approach that are noteworthy. The first pertains to generalisability (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:202; Barbour, 2008:30). Since the sample size tends to be rather small, and the fact that a non-probability sample is drawn, it cannot be representative of a population. However, considering the objectives, the purpose is to obtain insight as to whether mystery visitors can be used as a conventional vehicle to measure customer satisfaction and not to achieve a representative sample. Moreover, exploratory research is hardly employed as a stand-alone method; it is usually paired with descriptive research such as customer satisfaction surveys to provide an additional dimension to the research under investigation. Secondly, some methods of exploratory research are subject to issues related to ethics (Barbour, 2008:30). This largely depends on the nature of the research; for example, probing issues that are highly personal without careful consideration and sensitivity may constitute a breach of ethics. However, the purpose of this study relates to service quality and experience at wine farms; therefore, neither of these two problems affect this research study.

Exploratory research comprises of several methods. Haydam (2008:1-2) identifies these methods as: grounded theory; experience surveys; qualitative research; ethnography; and case studies. Other methods also include secondary data analysis and pilot studies (Zikmund, 2003:53). For this investigation, secondary data analysis and a qualitative method were chosen. These are discussed in the following section.

4.3 Research design

As previously illustrated in Figure 4.1, secondary data analysis and qualitative research are techniques that were used to conduct the research. Although the former is an exploratory approach, it is only briefly discussed (in section 4.3.1), as it does not form part of the primary research, which is the key focus of this chapter.

The research was conducted in three phases. The first phase consisted of in-depth interviews from both the supply- and demand-side of the industry. The results from these interviews assisted in the formulation of mystery visitor questionnaires. Note that focus groups were not considered for this phase due to budgetary and time constraints and the difficulty of getting hold of participants on especially the supply side of the industry to participate in the study. See section 4.4.1 in this regard.

The second phase was implementation of four pilot studies to ensure that the questionnaire was unambiguous and understandable to mystery visitors so that it works as anticipated. It is also seen as the intermediate phase of the research design. The final phase was implementation of mystery visits based on the accepted

pilot studies. All these results were combined, analysed and integrated with the secondary data to produce the final research report, which provide recommendations and conclusions.

4.3.1 Secondary data analysis

This method is an examination of secondary data sources. Unlike primary data, secondary data is collected by persons other than the researcher, which makes it the cheapest and easiest means of access to information (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:102-103). Secondary data analysis of this study was sourced from external published data, predominantly journals. Relevant data was collected and analysed to form a literature review, which constitutes Chapter Two and Three of this study.

Although it provides sufficient background to the study, it cannot solve the research problem, as it was not collected for the purpose of this specific research. It has, however, helped to define the parameter of the primary research, and also served as a reference against which to compare the results of the primary data.

4.3.2 Qualitative research

According to Aaker *et al.* (2000:184) and George (2008:108), qualitative research's focus is on the interpretation of words rather than numbers, and is designed primarily for exploratory purposes to obtain in-depth insight from a relatively small number of respondents. Hence, its uses and benefits are no different from the ones discussed under section 4.2 (research strategy).

This type of research employs the use of in-depth interviews, pilot study, and observation technique, as discussed below.

4.3.2.1 In-depth interviews

Interviews are the most popular method of obtaining information. Traditionally, interviews that are conducted face-to-face between interviewee and interviewer are referred to as individual in-depth interviews (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:187). However, in the last decade telephone and email interviews have also become a common method (Thomas, 2003:63), as they are more convenient time-wise. Despite this, the traditional form of interview is still the most prominent method.

In-depth interviews was chosen as one of the research tools for this study due to its key advantage – flexibility and ability for personal control (Thomas, 2003:66), which is highly useful when probing broad topics. The presence of both individuals and their interaction helps to provide a deeper meaning that enhances the quality of the

information. For example, the tone, posture, and reaction of the interviewee are all valuable in contributing to the topic at hand. More importantly, results of the interviews were used to construct the mystery visitor questionnaire to ensure that the right aspects were measured. Therefore, in-depth interviews add an additional dimension to the study, which increases its validity.

As mentioned, the in-depth interviews were included to ensure that the mystery visits measure the right aspects. Without the in-depth interviews, one can only speculate factors that are important to wine tourists during their visit; hence, the mystery visit results would neither be valuable nor practical for use. Therefore, to ensure this study is effective, an addition of in-depth interviews was favoured. Simultaneously, the in-depth interviews improved the quality of the quantitative research by adding a dimension that addressed the feelings, opinions, and motivations of respondents.

4.3.2.2 Pilot study

Considering the fact that words are subject to individual interpretation, it is important that research instruments, especially questionnaires, are tested before they are implemented on a large scale (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:185). This testing is referred to as a pilot study, and since it is a trial study, it is only required to be done on a small scale. Its key purpose is to ensure that possible misinterpretation of questions is avoided – specifically, to ensure that the questionnaire works as expected. Therefore, any problem areas identified in the pilot study were corrected before full-scale mystery visits were deployed.

For this research project, four pilot studies were conducted in the third week of January 2010. No amendment to the questionnaire was required.

4.3.2.3 Observation through the use of mystery visitors

The observational research method involves a researcher watching over and/or listening to events, and then recording what occurred. Observational techniques can be direct – where the researcher sees first-hand the event, or mediated – where the researcher sees or hears a reproduction of an earlier event (Thomas, 2003:60). Zikmund (2003:57) states that common reasons for using this method is to observe the actions of personnel and to comparatively shop to learn prices at competing stores.

There are four typical roles that the researcher can assume (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2007:286-288), which are illustrated in Figure 4.2. The y-axis represents the researcher's identity, which can be revealed or concealed – equivalent to

Vanderstoep and Johnston's (2009:239) overt or covert observation. The x-axis represents the researcher's degree of interaction in the event, where they can either observe the event or participate in it. The type of observation relevant to mystery visitors is one of *complete participant* (Wilson, 1998:149; Calvert, 2005:24; Miller *et al.*, 2005:119), since the researchers' identities are concealed while they partake in the cellar door experience, emulating a wine tourist.

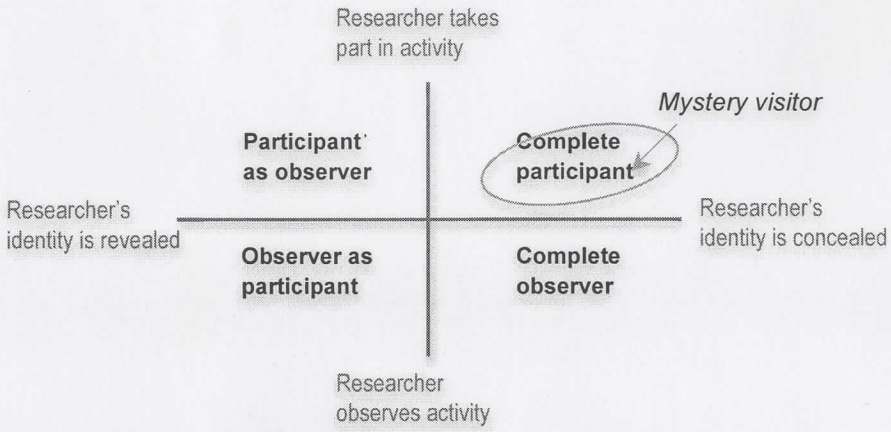


Figure 4.2: Typology of participant observation research roles
(Adapted from Saunders *et al.*, 2007:287)

Due to the nature of this technique, the key benefit arises from its ability to accurately record events, since they are observed as they naturally occur (Barbour, 2008:17). This also provides an opportunity for events that normally would not be observed to be documented such as spontaneous, unplanned and unexpected events (Thomas, 2003:62). In addition, emotions experienced by participant observers are 'real' (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:293), which allows them to truthfully account for the experience of a typical wine tourist. Saunders *et al.* also state that essentially, all data that is collected is useful; this is consistent with exploratory research in the sense that any insight collected is valuable in order to understand an unfamiliar situation.

The main disadvantage associated with observation techniques is the issue of ethics (Flick, 2006:49; Saunders *et al.*, 2007:200); this is addressed in section 4.3.2.3.1 (mystery visitors). Furthermore, given the fact that this method does not rely on reports from respondents (Zikmund, 2003:57), observer bias is a common problem (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:207). However, this can be avoided by designing precise questions and employing suitable researchers. The cost and time, which are required to conduct observations are also considered as shortfalls in this method (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:207; Saunders *et al.*, 2007:293); however, from another vantage point, these two downfalls are part of the reason why observational methods can provide such

rich and accurate data.

As already mentioned, the type of observation used in this study is one of *complete participation* by using mystery visitors. This is explained in the following section.

4.3.2.3.1 Mystery visitors

The term mystery visitor is analogous to mystery shopper and mystery customer. They all maintain the same concept; therefore, to fit the context of this study, the term mystery *shopper* is substituted with *visitor*. This method is derived from observational techniques that are often used in cultural anthropology (Wilson, 1998:148). The following are also alternative names for mystery shopping: secret shopping; spotters; anonymous audits; virtual customers; employee evaluations; performance audits; and telephone checks (Michelson, n.d).

As seen previously, mystery shopping is a form of covert participant observation. Its concept surrounds the use of trained researchers to behave in typical ways of the organisation's customers in order to anonymously evaluate the organisation based on pre-established objectives. Most commonly, this method is used to evaluate customer service quality (Michelson, n.d.; Hesselink and van der Wiele, 2003; Calvert, 2005:26; Miller *et al.*, 2005:125; Swarc, 2005:52). Table 4.1 shows other aspects that can be measured by using mystery shopping. Not only are these measured between the customer and contact personnel, they can also be measured between customers and/or physical or technical resources (Wilson, 1998:150).

Table 4.1: Uses of mystery shopping

Identify the service quality process	van der Wiele *et al.*, 2005:534
Assess employee compliance with procedures	Swarc, 2005:52
Effectiveness and quality of staff	Miller *et al.*, 2005:125
Link staff performance to reward systems	Wilson, 1998:34
To determine whether sales and service meets customers' expectations	Miller *et al.*, 2005:125
Assess the physical aspects of establishments	Miller *et al.*, 2005:125
Identify training needs	Michelson, n.d
Improve processes and staff behaviour	Anon, 2003:1; Wilson, 1998:34; Erstad, 1998:34; Calvert, 2005:25
Identify discrimination	Norris, 2004:746; van der Wiele *et al.*, 2005:534
Benchmark against competitors	Wilson, 1998:34; Swarc, 2004:52; Calvert, 2005:25; van der Wiele *et al.*, 2005:534
Facilitate development of customer relationships	Michelson, n.d

Due to its versatility, it suits almost any type of service and retail businesses (Calvert, 2005:26). Table 4.2 indicates industries in which mystery shoppers have been used. Evidently, mystery customer studies are seen more often in two specific sectors, namely banking and tourism and hospitality. The reason for this can be explained by Swarc (2005:11), who states that mystery shopping is ideal to measure the two dimensions of service industries: the basic feature (core product) sought by customers, and the service experience at the time of consumption (inseparability). This is one of the key motives behind the decision to use mystery visitors for this study.

Table 4.2: Sectors that employ the use of mystery customers

Fast food, Cafes	Erstad, 1998:34, Finn and Kayande, 1999
Financial	Erstad, 1998:34; Wilson, 1998:148; Anon, 2003; van der Wiele *et al.*, 2005:535
Government departments	Lehman, 1997[79] (cited in Wilson, 1998:148)
Motor dealerships	Wilson, 1998:148
Pharmaceutical/drug sellers	Norris, 2004
Retailing	Wilson, 1998:148
Public transportation	Wilson, 1998:148
Public utilities	Wilson, 1998:148; Calvert, 2005
Tourism & hospitality	Erstad, 1998:34; Wilson, 1998:148; Miller *et al.*, 2005:125; van der Wiele *et al.*, 2005:535

The key decision to use mystery visitors stems from its superiority as a research tool in this particular study. Assessing service quality and customer experience can easily be attained through in-depth interviews and customer satisfaction surveys; however, the advantages of these do not outweigh the benefits of mystery visitors. In fact, it is ideal, in this case, to use mystery visitors over other research methods. In terms of in-depth interviews, they are time consuming and, according to Friedrichs and Ludtke (1975)[80] (cited in Wilson, 1998:148), often retain discrepancies between real and reported behaviour. The authors also believe that the verbal capabilities of the interviewee may impede the quality and quantity of the information gathered; interviewer bias may also be a problem. Therefore, in-depth interviews were only used as a supplement to mystery visitors.

Regarding customer satisfaction surveys, they are useful in determining the perception and attitudes of customers. Despite being an advantage, it does have its limitations. For example, customers tend to recall the overall impression of the service rather than the actual service encounter, as suggested by Wilson

[79] Lehman, C. 1997. Covert Research – Where's the Mystery?, *Research*, August, p34.
[80] Friedrichs, J. & Ludtke, H. 1975. *Participant Observation*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

(1998:153). This leads Wilson to recommend *"collecting facts rather than perceptions"*, particularly if it is used in the evaluation of performances. Similarly, Miller *et al.* (2005:119) prefer the use of direct observation methods, as they believe customer satisfaction is unlikely to provide an accurate description of events given the fact that they are based upon perceptions.

Although customer perceptions and opinions prove to be essential feedback in any business, it does not detect the source of problems – only that a problem exists (Wilson, 1998:157). Hence, Wilson (1998:152) states that *"customer satisfaction on its own doesn't provide sufficiently detailed information to allow management to identify and correct weaknesses in the service delivery process"*. Moreover, Swarc (2005:10) believes that customer satisfaction may be misleading, since it does not necessarily mean that customers feel positive about the organisation, but rather that they do not feel negative about them. Hence, a customers' indifference may be erroneously classified as satisfaction. Therefore, in order to be effective, customer satisfaction surveys should be used in conjunction with other research methods that can identify the origin of problems. Although Calvert (2005:27) points out that mystery visitors can be equally as accurate as other methods, it appears, considering the reasoning in preceding paragraphs, that it may be even more accurate – if conducted correctly.

Another key advantage of mystery visitors includes the ability to measure aspects that cannot be brought to light through questioning. Only in its natural setting can certain types of information be gathered (Wilson, 1998:148; Calvert, 2005:26); these are often facts, for example, whether or not the wine staff acknowledge the presence of visitors and whether the correct wines that visitors asked to taste, were presented to them. This type of information cannot be gathered unless one personally experiences the service delivery (Anon, 2003:2). Moreover, this method bypasses problems with respondents being unwilling or unable to answer questions as, is the case with surveys and in-depth interviews. More importantly, mystery visitors provide verbatim comments that enrich the quality of the data; this too, cannot be achieved with customer satisfaction surveys.

Understanding how a customer truly feels about an organisation is critical, as seen in Chapter Three – dissatisfied customers do not complain, but turn to competitors. Hence, mystery visitors were the most appropriate vehicle for the purpose of this study compared to other methods, as it has an ability to gather qualitative and quantitative data that are both objective and subjective (Hesselink and van der Wiele, 2003:5); these are both necessary to illuminate areas of interest in a service

setting.

Despite its clear advantages over other methods, mystery visitors may pose limitations to some degree. As previously mentioned, visitor motivations, intentions, feelings and attitudes cannot be observed – only the events that unfold can. This did not negatively impact the study as the key objective was to measure the service process. Another problem stems from the fact that current behaviour is not predictive of future behaviour. Staff behaviour and processes may change over time; hence, ideally, mystery visitors should be conducted on a regular basis to monitor the changes. This solution is also highly appropriate to counteract the sample size limitation. Since an observation provides a snapshot of a particular day and service, which by nature can be volatile on a day-to-day basis, the number of observations should be increased to cover different days and times. This ultimately provides a more accurate picture of the situation.

Calvert (2005:28) points out another weakness, which lies in the reliance on cognitive processes and capacity of mystery shopper, and this invariably differs from person to person. However, it is inevitable for some bias and error to occur, since these research methods are conducted by and on individuals, and hence, incorporate the human element. This limitation can also be applied to in-depth interviews and customer surveys. In order to minimise this problem, mystery shoppers were individually briefed before their visit to wine estates and the instructions were reiterated on the questionnaires. Pilot studies were also conducted to ensure that mystery visitors understood what was asked of them.

Another problem, and often the key concern, stems from ethical issues often associated with observational methods. Although Jorgensen (1989)[81] (cited in Miller *et al.*, 2005:123) does not believe that this method of research is unethical as one does not *"engage in activities that we would not be happy for the general public to witness"*, it cannot be automatically inferred that mystery visitors is an ethical approach since it is the right of the research participant to avoid deception and exploitation that may be violated.

Hence, mystery shopping cannot be conducted without some degree of deception. In order to accurately depict the events, and thus for the research to be effective and accurate, research participants such as front-line staff are not permitted to know when a mystery visit takes place, as this may trigger a temporary adjustment

[81] Jorgensen, D.L. 1989. *Participant Observation: Methodology for Human Studies*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

to their performance to gain favourable scores. Therefore, this deception is not malicious by nature, but only to ensure that events are accurately recorded without intentional manipulation. Affirming Jorgensen's belief, front-line staff would not, in public, conduct themselves in a manner that is not in accordance with typical behaviours of their duties. Although individual wine estates were not notified, Stellenbosch Tourism – a representative of the SWR was informed of, and consented to, the research. Moreover, to preserve the confidentiality of wine estates, their names were omitted and can only be identified by the alphabetical label given to the estates (i.e. Estate SR, Estate BR etc.).

Furthermore, the issue of possible exploitation is irrelevant in this case. This research does not seek to exploit any individuals or wine estates, but merely to understand and highlight the difference in experience between various wine estates. Participants were not harmed in any way and their names were not documented; and, therefore, they cannot be identified.

Summarily, this study did not contravene any rights or exploit any participants and wine estates. It was conducted in accordance with the advice of Murphy and Dingwall (2001)[82] (cited in Oliver and Eales, 2008:346) who stated that two issues should be considered when using mystery visitors. Firstly, the rights of the participant should not be infringed and, secondly, the research results should not result in adverse outcomes for the participant. Without deceiving front-line staff regarding the true purpose of the mystery visitor, one cannot effectively conduct the research. It is considered normal practice in the case of mystery shopping and, therefore, does not have any ethical repercussions on individuals that are involved in the study.

4.4 Research instruments

This section discusses instruments that were used to conduct the in-depth interviews and mystery visitor surveys. It makes reference to the design of the questionnaires.

4.4.1 Instrument for in-depth Interviews

As seen in section 4.3.2.1, the purpose of the in-depth interviews is to enhance the effectiveness of the quantitative research, which inadvertently improves the quality of the overall study. Some of the insight obtained from the in-depth interviews were used to dictate the formulation of the quantitative survey. This implies that the results from both the qualitative and quantitative study can be compared, which provide

[82] Murphy, E. & Dingwall, R. 2001. Ethics in Ethnography. In Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S., Lofland, J. & Lofland, L. (eds). *Handbook of Ethnography*. London: Sage.

valuable insight into any discrepancies that may be encountered. These results allow management and decision makers to implement practical improvements to their operations.

A qualitative questionnaire was compiled for the in-depth interviews. Two separate but similar questionnaires were used due to the different capacities of the respondents. One respondent answered in the capacity of the supply-side (wine industry), while the other represented the demand-side (the consumer). Hence, some questions required rewording and adjustments to suit the relevant respondent (see section 4.5: sample plan).

Both questionnaires consisted of seven open-ended questions. In this case, use of open-ended questions allowed the researcher to measure the salience of an issue to the respondent. Furthermore, by answering in their own words, verbatim comments were secured; this allows one to sense the *"flavor of people's answers"* (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:306). Another reason that calls for the use of open-ended questions stems from the nature of the topic – visitor experience and service quality are broad, and hence, may illicit too many different responses of which some may be unforeseen (Aaker *et al.*, 2000:306). Therefore, open-ended questions are appropriate for the qualitative study.

The seven questions were distributed between two categories: experience and expectations. Considering the low number of questions, they were sequenced in order from broad to narrow questions. Pertaining to the supply-side interview, the first question explored the wine region of Stellenbosch and their offerings. It moved onto uncovering visitor expectations and how favourable memories are created. Lastly, expectations are narrowed down in terms of service quality. The respondent was also asked to identify a popular and less well-known wine estate per sub-route; this was used to serve as judgmental sampling for the mystery visits. This interview lasted 20 minutes and was recorded on audiotape to maintain reliability.

In terms of the demand-side interview, the opening question aimed to understand how the respondent planned their wine route experience. The questionnaire then moved onto expectations of their visit and service delivery, in addition to factors that contribute to a memorable experience. The questionnaire concludes with criteria that the respondent deems important in the evaluation of a wine estate. This interview lasted 15 minutes; it was recorded in writing as the interviewee felt uncomfortable being recorded on audio.

In general, the respondents had no difficulty answering the questions. However, it was difficult for the supply-side interviewee to explicitly express what visitors expect in terms of their entire experience at Stellenbosch. This is largely due to the plethora of activities that can be encountered at the region. Moreover, each visitor has his/her own set of expectations that cannot be predicted. Hence, the response to this question was centred upon exceptional service quality, which was deemed as a baseline of any experience of this wine region.

Nevertheless, the insight obtained from both questionnaires was sufficiently comprehensive and was successfully used to direct the quantitative survey. However, it should be reminded that although the responses were broad (referring to all the available activities), the study only focused on the physical aspect and service quality at the cellar door due to budgetary and time constraints.

4.4.2 Instrument for mystery visits

The mystery visits were conducted using a questionnaire that was formulated with results from the in-depth interviews. The foundation of the questionnaire was structured using the template created by Iziko Museums. Using this template, statements and rating scales were then tailored to meet the needs of the wine tourism study. Two sections were created and employed the use of open- and closed-response formats. Subjective and objective items were also accounted for; initially, they were separated into their own sub-sections according to the suggestion of Morrison *et al.* (1997)[83] (cited in Hesselink and van der Wiele, 2003:4), but due to the low number of items, they were combined. Table 4.3 summarises the questionnaire design.

The open-response format allowed mystery visitors to openly express their experience through their own interpretation by discussing their views and opinions of their visit. The first open-response question focused on how the mystery visitors initiated the information search on wine estates that were allocated to them; the second question explored their emotions and thoughts that occurred during their visit to the wine estates. These open-ended questions provided rich insight that enhanced the quality of the quantitative data.

Closed-ended questions comprised the majority of the questionnaire and were divided into *physical* and *service components*. The items/statements that were listed were specific in order to ensure that observation is efficient, as recommended by

[83] Morrison, L.J., Colman, A.M. & Preston, C.C. 1997. Mystery customer research: processes affecting accuracy, *Journal of the Market Research Society*, 39(2):349-361.

Thomas (2003:60). A single choice type Likert rating scale based on their level of agreement was used. Initially, a five-point Likert scale was proposed; however, due to the low number of in-depth interviews, the rating scale was adjusted to ten points in order to achieve a higher differentiation.

Table 4.3: Mystery visitor questionnaire design

SECTION A: PRE-VISIT SEARCH PHASE	
1. Information search	Open-response
SECTION B: WINE ESTATE VISIT	
Section B1: Physical Component	Closed-response
2. Driveway and parking (5 items)	
3. Outside environment (3 items)	
4. Cellar door interior & décor (3 items)	
5. Restrooms (3 items)	
Section B2: Service Component	Closed-response
6. Presentation of staff (3 items)	
7. Welcoming of visitors (3 items)	
8. Wine tasting and staff knowledge (13 items)	
9. Staff interaction (4 items)	
10. Wine purchase (11 items)	
11. Visitor departure (2 items)	
12. Overall statements (6 items)	
Section B3: Overall Experience	
13. Discussion on overall experience	Open-response

In order to successfully complete the questionnaire, mystery visitors were instructed to familiarise themselves with the questions prior to the visit, as they were not permitted to take the questionnaire to the wine estate. In addition, they were instructed to observe the cellar door environment to note the interaction between staff and customers; wine tasting and purchase was also required to assess the overall service quality experience.

4.5 Sampling methodology

The sampling methodology is divided into three sections: sampling for in-depth interviews, sampling for mystery visits, and the wine estate sample plan.

4.5.1 Sampling for in-depth interviews

Judgmental sampling was used to select four stakeholders in the wine tourism industry. The method ensures that the right representation of respondents is achieved. Individuals that were chosen to represent include Stellenbosch Tourism, Stellenbosch Wine Route, a wine estate, and a local wine tourist. The local wine tourist was specifically chosen since this group accounts for 45% of domestic visits

made to Stellenbosch wine region (Cape Town Routes Unlimited, 2005). As for Stellenbosch Wine Route, the in-depth interview was declined, as they had other priorities to attend to. Similarly, various wine estates identified in the supply-side interview were approached, but neither could guarantee an interview. This difficulty arose from the period of study (December) where most of the managers and prospective interviewees were either away or busy preparing for the festive season. As a result, only two in-depth interviews were secured, as seen in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Sample for qualitative study

Organisation	Person	Interviewed
Stellenbosch Tourism	Seranti Viljoen[84], CEO	Yes
Stellenbosch Wine Routes	Marketing Manager	No
Wine estates	Ambassador/Manager	No
Local wine tourist	Clark Lin[85]	Yes

4.5.2 Sampling for mystery visits

This section is divided into a sample plan for wine estates and mystery visitors. The former explains how the wine estates were chosen, while the latter discusses the procedure for choosing mystery visitors. Both employed the use of judgmental sampling.

4.5.2.1 Wine estate sample plan

The Stellenbosch wine region is comprised of more than 140 wine estates, which are divided into five sub-routes based solely on their physical locations. To ensure that all sub-routes were represented, it was initially proposed that one wine estate from each sub-route should be chosen. However, this presented an odd number of wine estates that would have made the observations more complex in terms of the combination of cross-visits that had to be made by the number of mystery visitors required.

As a result, four wine estates were chosen from two sub-routes based on the judgment of Stellenbosch Tourism CEO, Seranti Viljoen. Judgmental sampling was used to choose wine estates based on their recognition. The motive behind this was to assess the difference in experience between popular and less recognised wine estates. In terms of the sub-routes, Stellenbosch Hills was chosen as it is a busy sub-route; also, the commercial wine estate identified by Viljoen is situated on this route. Bottelary was chosen as it is a much quieter sub-route compared to Stellenbosch Hills. The combination of wine estates at opposite ends of the popularity spectrum aims to determine whether their reputation can be attributed to the service and

[84] Permission to disclose name has been authorised.
[85] *Ibid.*

experience that they offer. The sample plan for wine estates can be seen below in Table 4.5. The popular estate in Stellenbosch Hills is denoted as Estate SR (Stellenbosch Recognised), while the least recognised estate in Stellenbosch is represented by estate SU (Stellenbosch Unrecognised). The same can be applied to Bottelary Hills.

Table 4.5: Wine estate sample plan

STELLENBOSCH HILLS		BOTTELARY HILLS	
Estate SR[86]	**Estate SU[87]**	**Estate BR[88]**	**Estate BU[89]**
Commercial & amongst most recognised estate in Stellenbosch Hills	Private & amongst least recognised wine estate in Stellenbosch Hills	Private & amongst most recognised wine estate in Bottelary Hills	Private & amongst least recognised wine estate in Bottelary Hills

4.5.2.2 Mystery visitors sample plan

The mystery visits were conducted by four individuals who were specifically recruited to fulfil the function of a typical wine tourist. This, too, employed the use of judgmental sampling as it was necessary to deliberately choose individuals that are appropriate for the study.

Criteria of the mystery visitors were initially based on literature gathered in Chapter Two. This involved selecting individuals who fell into the category of *wine interested* and *wine lovers/connoisseurs*. However, these profiles are, to a large extent, based on their interests and habits. Particularly, the focus of *wine lovers/connoisseurs* is on the quality of wine rather than the entire wine tourism experience. Therefore, rather than using these categories, it was decided that mystery visitors should be chosen based on their frequency of visits to wine estates, as their interest in wine can be gauged by how often they engage in wine tourism. The visit frequency was categorised into *occasional* and *frequent visitors*, as seen in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Criteria for mystery visitors

Occasional visitors	Visited wine farms twice or less in past 12 months
Frequent visitors	Visited wine farms four times or more in past 12 months

The former are individuals that have visited wine estates twice or less, while frequent visitors are those that have visited four times or more in the past twelve months. The frequency of three visits was omitted to eliminate any grey areas – the noteworthy disparity in their visit frequencies highlights the difference in their experience, which

[86] SR represents *Stellenbosch Recognised.*
[87] SU represents *Stellenbosch Unrecognised.*
[88] BR represents *Bottelary Recognised.*
[89] BU represents *Bottelary Urecognised.*

was reflected in their verbatim responses. Frequent visitors have more experience than occasional visitors; hence, they know what to look for in a good wine estate. Naturally, the mystery visitors had to be at least eighteen years of age, given the nature of the study.

The four mystery visitors were individually briefed on how their role should be fulfilled. Visits were conducted between 18 January and 6 February 2010; each mystery visitor was scheduled for a different day, commencing with the pilot study, which was allocated to the first occasional visitor based on convenience. It would have been ideal for a frequent visitor to conduct the pilot study, but due to time constraints, it had to be passed onto an occasional visitor. The mystery visitors were also instructed to purchase a bottle of wine at the third estate they visited. The third visit was chosen because prior visits served as opportunities for them to familiarise themselves with the procedure of the observations. This procedure was used to ensure that one purchase was made on all four wine estates, which is important when comparing the performance between the estates. However, in spite of being given clear instructions, two mystery visitors did not purchase wine at the estates allocated to them; occasional visitor 2 should have bought wine at estate SU, but bought at Estate SR, and frequent visitor 2 bought at estate BR, instead of BU. At least, one mystery visitor made purchases on all the estates; therefore, comparisons could be made. The mystery visit design can be seen in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Mystery visit design

		Stellenbosch Hills		Bottelary Hills	
Day of visit	**Profile category**	**Estate SR[90]**	**Estate SU[91]**	**Estate BR[92]**	**Estate BU[93]**
Thursday	Occasional visitor 1*	1	2	3^x	4
Thursday	Occasional visitor 2	2x	3^	4	1
Saturday	Frequent visitor 1	3^x	4x	1x	2x
Saturday	Frequent visitor 2	4	1	2x	3^

* Pilot study
^ Wine purchase allocated for this estate
x Actual wine purchase made at this estate

4.6 Limitations

This study was subject to sampling, time, budget and geographic constraints. First of all, the sample for the in-depth interviews was less than preferred. Both the demand- and supply-side each rendered one interview. For future studies, this sample should be significantly increased in order to formulate a more precise mystery visitor

[90] SR represents *Stellenbosch Recognised.*
[91] SU represents *Stellenbosch Unrecognised.*
[92] BR represents *Bottelary Recognised.*
[93] BU represents *Bottelary Urecognised.*

questionnaire. It was also due to time constraints that additional in-depth interviews could not be secured. December is a busy month where most supply-side stakeholders prepare for the festive season and, thus, were less receptive to participate in the interview.

The study was also impacted by budgetary constraints. Mystery visitors cost significantly more than customer surveys; therefore, the number of observations and wine estates were carefully chosen so that the budget was not exceeded. However, it is important to note that the number of observations per wine estate (4) was sufficient to make a trend, and did not suffer due to the decision. For future research with a flexible budget, additional wine estates from all sub-routes can be assessed in order to provide greater representation of the entire Stellenbosch region. In addition, other service areas should also be measured such as the restaurants and cellar tours.

Another limitation was encountered in terms of geographics. The results of this study are only applicable to specific wine estates that were observed and comparisons cannot be made between different wine regions.

4.7 Summary

This chapter covered the research strategy, design and instruments, including sampling methodology.

Summarily, this study adopted an exploratory approach by using two in-depth interviews and sixteen mystery visits. The first approach, in-depth interviews, comprised of respondents from both the supply- and demand-side (Stellenbosch Tourism and a local wine tourist). The second approach involved observing four wine estates along the Stellenbosch Hills and Bottelary Hills sub-routes. Selection of the wine estates was judgmental and was based on popularity – two are well known within the sub-route, while the other two are much less recognised.

The instrument used for the in-depth interviews was a questionnaire, which covered visitor experience and service quality issues and in each case was adjusted to suit the respondents' capacity. Responses from these interviews were used to formulate the mystery visitor questionnaire, which was conducted without any major problems.

In terms of limitations, the constraints were mostly budgetary and sample based.

CHAPTER FIVE
RESEARCH RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reveals findings that were obtained from the methodology set out in Chapter Four. To recapitulate, two in-depth interviews were conducted, in addition to sixteen observations were carried out by four mystery shoppers. The qualitative findings from the in-depth interviews are discussed first, followed by the quantitative findings.

5.2 Qualitative findings

The qualitative findings are derived from the two in-depth interviews, which were conducted during the month of December 2009. The individuals interviewed, and their capacity, can be seen in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Overview of interviewees

Supply-side interview	
CEO, Stellenbosch Tourism	Seranti Viljoen
Demand-side interview	
Local wine tourist	Clark Lin

Because the interviews were derived from both the supply- and demand-side, two separate but similar questionnaires were used (as mentioned in section 4.3.2.1). Their responses were categorised into appropriate sub-headings: the Stellenbosch experience, visitor expectations, service quality, and problems affecting visitor experience, which is how they are discussed.

5.2.1 The Stellenbosch experience

Although Stellenbosch is a well-known wine destination, its experience is not limited to wine alone. This region caters for a large variety of experiences that can be customised based on a visitor's needs and preferences. Furthermore, a majority of these experiences are family-oriented as Stellenbosch *"focuses big on the family side of things"* (Viljoen, 2009); thus, there are activities and certain wine farms that cater for family with kids, in addition to activities that appeal to the mature market.

These key experiences fall under categories of nature, culinary, arts and craft, and entertainment. If visitors want to experience nature in Stellenbosch, they have options of hiking and biking between the wine estates. Donkey walks through the vineyards is

another scenic experience. The culinary experience is, of course, an experience that cannot be excluded in Stellenbosch. Well-known for its quality wines, visitors can enjoy the pairing of wine with foods such as cheese, biltong, nuts, nougat, and even sorbet. It was also mentioned that art compliments the culinary experience quite well – these art galleries, studios, and boutique-style souvenir shops *"add an artistic flavour"* (Viljoen, 2009) to Stellenbosch. As for entertainment, there are six theatres and three amphitheatres that bring the rest of the holistic Stellenbosch experience together.

Viljoen also pointed out that business tourism, agricultural tourism, and academic tourism is a key focus. Stellenbosch receives a large number of international students; therefore, together, these offerings form a well-rounded combination of experiences at this wine region that can meet the needs of any tourist that visits.

5.2.2 Visitor expectations

When asked what itinerary or ideal experience Stellenbosch Tourism would recommend to a visitor, Viljoen advised that it is necessary to first understand the person's background, their interests and knowledge about wines before a specific recommendation is offered. While visitors may be uncertain of what they would like to experience due to their unfamiliarity with the region, they may still hold some subconscious expectations, which undoubtedly impact their entire experience. Hence, the response from the itinerary recommendation was combined with responses to visitor expectations.

As established in section 3.2.1.1, customer expectations are highly subjective and dependent on various factors. According to Viljoen, each visitor's expectations are different as they hold difference preferences and *"there is something specific for each and every person"*. Lin (2009) was motivated by preference to *"have a nice experience"*, and his expectations included the need for a scenic view, accessible wine farms and friendly staff. Apart from wine tasting and having different varietals, wine estates should have dining facilities – not necessarily restaurants, but activities that prolong the stay on the wine estate such as picnics. Lin also mentioned that *"the wines don't have to be nice"*, as long as the entire experience is pleasant – particularly the attitude of the staff involved. The reputation and publicity of the wine estate influences the visitor's experience, since it provides a *"feeling of having gone to a popular wine estate"*, which others have also visited.

Specifically, in terms of expectations of service delivery process upon arriving at the wine estate, Lin expected that there should be sufficient parking, but not too much so

that it becomes commercial. One should be able to walk around the wine estate and enjoy the scenery without a feeling of being watched, or *"bump into others easily"*. At the cellar door, staff should greet and offer help to visitors, but Lin's own preference is to approach the staff himself when he is ready to make enquiries. He should be given time to walk around and enjoy the cellar door décor. Ideally, during the wine tasting, staff should ask about his preferences and what foods he normally consumes in order to suggest an appropriate wine.

Apart from physical activities offered at Stellenbosch, service quality is a key expectation that visitors should develop (Viljoen, 2009). When visitors arrive at Stellenbosch, they should expect nothing but quality, as concisely summarised by their slogan: *"Think quality, drink Stellenbosch"*. To justify this, Viljoen explained that a majority of establishments in this region, whether restaurants, accommodation, or wine estates, are family-owned and managed, which means that visitors receive a personal and intimate experience. This is something that all wine farms strive to achieve, bringing about healthy competition. As a result, the standard is high and one can be recommended to any wine estate, and experience absolute quality and the feeling of being pampered. Thus, service quality combined with activities offered will result in the ideal wine tourism experience at Stellenbosch.

5.2.3 Service quality

According to Coye's (2004) normative expectations (as discussed in section 3.2.1.1), Lin believes that in order to offer world-class service and quality, a wine estate should employ staff members that are knowledgeable, friendly, approachable, passionate, multi-lingual, and are proud of South African wines. Moreover, the quality of wines should be *"world-class"*, although it may not necessarily be what the visitor expects for himself.

It is natural that the supply-side would demand a higher quality than the demand-side would expect. Viljoen expects more from front-line staff, stating that they should go the extra mile in order to achieve absolute service quality. Conversely, Lin was comfortable with settling for friendly service. Despite Viljoen's belief, there appears to be no minimum standard nor instructions that wine estates adhere to at Stellenbosch; hence, there is currently no way to measure service quality or performance.

Viljoen adds that in order to make a memorable impression, service quality is key but so are other aspects such as activities that are available. What makes Stellenbosch ideal is its close proximity to other areas of interest, which are all within a 50km radius. However, for Lin, it is more about the wines; he states that what makes a trip

memorable depends on personal preferences and motivations for the visit, and how the experience fairs with what was expected. Hence, to be a world-class region, one should account for all possibilities.

5.2.4 Service quality as a key problem that affects visitor experience

A common problem that arose stems from the service quality offered at various wine estates, particularly over different seasons. Being a student town, Viljoen revealed that Stellenbosch has its advantages and disadvantages. While providing an opportunity for students to gain experience, the students' intention is different from that of the wine estate. They apply for part-time posts as a summer job or to earn extra income; therefore, wine estates experience *"a huge staff turnover"* (Viljoen, 2009). This explains their limited knowledge of wines and surrounding areas, especially if they are not properly trained. This means that information may be easily misconstrued and visitors' experience may be less than ideal.

This problem was encountered by Lin who stated that trainees and part-time employees are less knowledgeable; more importantly, they lack passion to make the visitors' experience a memorable one. During peak season this problem is more apparent, particularly at well-known wine estates. In Lin's opinion, *"sometimes they're too busy for you and the service is bad because they are commercial"*. However, upon further discussion, it was uncovered that this lack of service stems from two different but overlapping problems. The former pertains to the insufficient number of, in addition to, inadequately trained staff during peak season. Naturally, being short-staffed leads to visitors being ignored and, even though unintentional, this easily translates into visitor dissatisfaction. Secondly, more established or commercial wine estates conduct their operations in a more *"business-like"* (Lin, 2009) manner, in contrast to the friendly and intimate approach, which is associated with smaller and family-owned wine estates (Viljoen, 2009). Therefore, more commercial wine estates may easily give an impression of being unfriendly and less approachable, while still maintaining their professionalism.

Although it is believed, and generally accurate, that smaller wine estates provide better service, it is not true in every case. Some wine farms are secluded and their lack of service is due to the unavailability and lack of staff, which Lin compares to *"ghost house"*, but for personnel that are present, friendliness is not a problem.

The intention of providing such service is to dictate the emotions of the visitor in a way that guarantees favourable experiences, which, in turn, influence the type of word of mouth that is communicated. Over time this influences the number of returns

and recommendations, which ultimately builds the reputation of the estate. Therefore, service should be consistent because expectations are based on previous experiences in addition to what others have heard about it. Another by-product of exceptional service is the creation of long-term relationships between the estate and visitor. However, due to the lack of intimacy and interaction on commercial estates, this could mean that bigger wine farms are targeting once-off transactions rather than a relationship. Nevertheless, they are still popular choices based on their reputation. This is consistent with Lin's belief that visitors go to commercial estates *"because everyone has gone before"*.

5.3 Quantitative findings

Results of the quantitative findings are presented in three tiers. Tier 1 is a qualitative section, which discusses results of the open-ended questions, namely the pre-visit search and the overall wine estate experience. Tier 2 exhibits the individual estate values obtained from the 10 point Likert Scale, namely the closed-ended portion of the questionnaire. Tier 3 presents the breakdown of averages by wine estate and their overall totals.

Table 5.2 recapitulates the category of wine estates, as discussed in section 4.5.2.1.

Table 5.2: Category of wine estates

STELLENBOSCH HILLS		BOTTELARY HILLS	
Estate SR	**Estate SU**	**Estate BR**	**Estate BU**
Commercial & amongst most popular wine estate in Stellenbosch Hills	Private & amongst least recognised wine estate in Stellenbosch Hills	Private & amongst most popular wine estate in Bottelary Hills	Private & amongst least recognised wine estate in Bottelary Hills

5.3.1 Tier 1

Tier 1 is further sub-divided into three sections: i) pre-visit; ii) overall experience; and iii) estate report. Findings from each observation are presented under the relevant sections. Verbatim comments per wine estate can be found in Appendices C1 – C4.

5.3.1.1 Estate SR

This is a popular wine estate, which is situated along the Stellenbosch Hills sub-route and is commercially operated.

Tables 5.3 and 5.4 depict the pre-visit and overall experience results of the mystery visitors for Estate SR.

Table 5.3: Pre-visit results – Estate SR

Occasional visitor	Frequent visitor
Observation 1	***Observation 2***
This mystery visitor employed the use of the wine estate's website to search for information. She felt that it was *"easy to navigate" "very informative"*, as it covered a wide range of aspects in terms of what a visitor would want to know. However, a road map was required to find the address easily. With respect to the name of the wine estate, it invokes the following words: foreign, Dutch, old fashioned, and rich in history. This led the mystery visitor to expect to see *"a lot of the wine history at the farm"*, but also some contemporary aspects as they're modernising the estate. Considering the estate's class, it was anticipated that a *"very good quality"* wines was expected.	Based on previous visits, this mystery visitor was familiar with the wine estate. Vivid memories of the estate entail the multi-national flagpoles placed at the entrance and the long driveway decorated on each side with tall pine trees *"leaning to the effect of the constant wind"*. These made the estate easily distinguishable. Another memorable aspect was the large white fountain. In terms of the estate's name, it *"gives an impression of culture and heritage"* – possibly the estate of a political figure or a Lord's home. Hence, one would expect tours to be available and a display of antique house hold items.
Observation 3	***Observation 4***
This mystery visitor enquired for directions at the petrol station near the Spier wine estate. Nothing more was documented about her pre-visit expectations. Considering she knew the approximate area of the estate, she possibly a used a map or passed the estate on previous occasions.	This mystery visitor did not require any assistance getting to the wine farm as she had been there before. Words that come to mind upon hearing the name of the estate include: *"sophisticated"*, *"commercialised"*, *"peaceful"*, and *"good quality wine"*. Based on previous visits, she expected *"top quality service"* from this estate.

Table 5.4: Overall experience results – Estate SR

Occasional visitor	Frequent visitor
Observation 1	***Observation 2***
For this mystery visitor, the estate was a pleasant one to visit. Everything from physical aspects to service was highly rated. This estate has a boom gate where visitors are required to sign in – this made the visitor feel safe. The driveway to the estate was described as *"beautiful"*, lined with trees and flowers. Two large parking lots were available and because *"there were a lot of cars in the parking lots"*, the mystery visitor believed it to be *"a very popular farm"*. The tasting room – past the restaurant and gardens – was easy to locate, and the walk to it was visually appealing. Service experienced at this wine estate appeared to be professional, which is in accordance with what was expected at a commercial estate. The tasting room staff were *"very polite"* and wore green aprons, which made them easily identifiable. The mystery visitor was directed to an individual tasting table, which was set with clean glasses, water, spittoons and crackers. The staff that served her enquired about her preferences	As a frequent visitor, this observation was more critical, with reason, of the wine experience. Finding the wine estate was not a problem, as this visitor had previously been to the farm. Nevertheless, signage indicating the estate was clear. It is situated on one of the main roads and with a relatively large volume of traffic, the travel felt secure. The roads and parking spaces were also well demarcated. The wine farm – with particular reference to the parking area, garden, through to the tasting room – exuded a *"distinct resort feel"*. The several visitors in the area also enforced the commercial atmosphere. Pertaining to the cellar door, it was not quite what one would expect of a wine estate. According to the mystery visitor, *"the interior was a big surprise"*, as it was modernised and looked completely different from his last visit. The modern bar setting was too obscure, the *'almost neon-ish green"* lighting, the synthetic furniture and glass doors were *"nothing one expects from a wine farm"*. The setting and furniture was

before suggesting wines; wines that were out of stock were also brought to her attention before the wine tasting began. The tasting session was very enjoyable as the mystery visitor stated that *"the lady serving us knew her wines very well and towards the end she got to know my tastes and made some good recommendations for what wines I should try for the last few tastings"*. The wines were well described, included a nice variety, and were of excellent quality – in particular the red wines, which were *"very nice and easy drinking"*. The mystery visitor also appreciated the fact that they were given time on their own to discuss each tasting. The mystery visitor will definitely return and asserts that it is a *"farm for everyone to visit especially for tourists who want to experience wine tasting of a very high standard with excellent service"*.	*"extremely Gauteng"* and *"one could argue Camp's Bay if it was more packed"*. The toilet, in comparison to other wine estates, was below average. It was described as having *"similar cleanliness and amenities as the toilets of your average mall"*. In terms of service, it was in line with a commercial estate and can be described as professional albeit *"extremely impersonal"*. The staff were identified by their uniforms – green aprons, and their demeanour was comparable to restaurant waitrons. The wine tasting started at the bar as all the individual tables were occupied, and some were reserved. It eventually moved to a table, which became available. The staff at the bar made an effort to mention the wines that were not available (out of stock) before the tasting began. The tasting experience was described as *"mechanical"* where wines were brought on request. The staff at the bar made no effort to enquire about his visit, personal preferences, or food choice. Initially, the wines were not described – only after being relocated to a table and given a different server were they introduced and explained. Therefore, it appears that the service varies between different staff. From the descriptions, it was determined that the staff had *"sound knowledge of the vintage"*. The purchase transaction was conducted swiftly with no problems; however, the packaging was inadequate – a two-bottle case was not fitting for the large Magnum bottle purchased. The physical component was average, *"having a picturesque surrounding and not-for-everyone interior"*. The service component was *"below average"*, since the staff member seemed more interested in *"getting through her day"* than in the visitor's experience. The mystery visitor will return if he felt like taking photos of the surrounding scenery and buildings.
Observation 3 The most memorable aspect of this visit was the big trees that lined the route to the estate; they were *"impressive"* and *"very beautiful"*. Service-wise, the staff were *"very professional"* and it was evident that the estate is *"used to handling big groups of tourists"*. Overall, the experience was *"very good"* with *"tasty wines"*; however, it is too commercial for her preference. Also, the signage along the main road was deficient as it was *"not clearly sign posted"*.	***Observation 4*** Similar to other observations, this mystery visitor found the wine estate to be *"very beautiful and well maintained"*. In terms of service, *"it took long"* before they were assisted with the wine tasting. Furthermore, the mystery visitor had difficulty understanding the server as *"English is not his mother tongue"*; which was evident in his pronunciation of words, which were incorrect. Nevertheless, he was *"very friendly and pleasant"*. The experience was a good one and the mystery visitor confirmed that she will return to this estate.

In terms of the pre-visit phase, two of four mystery visitors (frequent visitor 1 and 2) had previously been to this wine estate, therefore, they arrived there without any assistance. One visitor (occasional visitor 1) resorted to the estate's website as a source of information, while the other (occasional visitor 3) asked for directions at a petrol station.

Words associated with this estate include: Dutch, old-fashioned, culture and heritage, sophisticated, commercialised, and good quality wine. These formed pre-visit expectations of the estate.

The overall experience was consistent with what can be expected from a commercialised estate. The main contributing factor stems from the service side. All observations detected professionalism – in terms of knowledge and demeanour – during their wine tasting session; however, due to the large number of staff and the volatility of their daily emotions, all visitors' experiences were different in terms of friendliness, helpfulness, and degree of interaction. As frequent visitor 1 and occasional visitor 2 noted, they are professional but impersonal; consequently, 3 of the 4 visitors did not receive the potential and ideal service quality that was witnessed by the first observation (occasional visitor 1).

Summarily, this Estate SR is aesthetically pleasing – the trees and the garden make it memorable for visitors. The cellar door has been overhauled into a contemporary setting and, thus, does not resemble a typical cellar door. Service-wise, staff are evidently well trained, but lack the intimacy of smaller wine estates. This is understandable as they received large number of visitors and the time allocated to each visitor would be shortened or fragmented. It can be suggested that their priority is to push sales rather than to address the wines and their history. Even with this impersonal service, the majority (3 out of 4) of the mystery visitors stated that they would return.

5.3.1.2 Estate SU

Wine estate SU is privately owned and amongst the least recognised in Stellenbosch Hills. Although the answers are at times provided in much detail or cryptic, they should be viewed in their overall context and not as a stand-alone.

Tables 5.5 and 5.6 depict the pre-visit and overall experience results of the mystery visitors for Estate SU.

Table 5.5: Pre-visit results – Estate SU

Occasional visitor	Frequent visitor
Observation 1	***Observation 2***
The wine estate's website was used as the information source. Although it was quite comprehensive in terms of wines offered and details of the wine maker, there was no information about added attractions such as restaurants and tours. Although there was a map available on the website, a road map was used to locate the wine estate. Mountains, family name, and tradition are words that come to mind when hearing the estate's name. It is, in fact, one of the oldest family-run estates in the area; therefore, *"very good"* quality wine was expected, in addition to rich history and tradition.	This mystery visitor resorted to the wine estate's website for directions. The site appeared to be *"relatively simple"*; and included a map that was of *"no good"*, nevertheless, the instructions were sufficient. The GPS co-ordinates would be useful if one were travelling by car with a GPS receiver. Nothing in particular comes to mind upon hearing the name of the estate, but it does *"sound very much like a common place or family name"*. Judging from the feel of the website, the mystery visitor expects the estate to also be relatively simple, but also like a *"typical South African (Western Cape) estate establishment"*.
Observation 3	***Observation 4***
The source of information for this estate was obtained from Estate SR (previous visit). When visiting Estate SR, she enquired about directions to get to Estate SU. Since it was not well known, she did not form any preconceptions or expectations of this estate.	This mystery visitor resorted to the estate's website as a source of information. However, it was *"not user-friendly"*, there was also insufficient information – possibly regarding their location as she had to phone them for directions. *"Small"*, *"family-owned"*, *"rustic"*, and *"peaceful"* are words that describe the name of the wine estate.

Table 5.6: Overall experience results – Estate SU

Occasional visitor	*Frequent visitor*
Observation 1	***Observation 2***
The entrance of this estate was described as *"very boring, with just a short gravel driveway"*. There was limited parking with relevant areas not clearly demarcated. As a small and privately owned wine estate, it was a *"very different experience in comparison to [Estate SR]"*. There is only one building where sales and tastings are conducted. The atmosphere was *"very relaxed"* with dogs lying on the carpets. The staff that served the mystery visitor was the daughter of the owner, thus, she was knowledgeable and explained the history of the wine and the farm. The tasting was conducted in an informal manner – *"we just stood at the counter and she served us the wines that we had chosen to taste"*. Each of the wines was discussed by the staff, who *"knew them very well"*. The service encountered at the tasting was good; the only shortcoming was a lack of private time. The mystery visitor stated: *"it would have been nice to have some time on our own to discuss the wines without her watching over us"*. Unlike other wine estates, the spittoon was communal.	This estate received an average rating by this mystery visitor; the only aspect that stood out was the intimacy of the wine tasting. In terms of finding the estate, it was *"easy to locate"* and the main gate was *"easy enough to spot"*. However, the surrounding area, and short gravel road leading to the building *"didn't seem too safe"*. The establishment was not visually appealing as he described it as *"tuck shop"* looking. The house behind the small parking lot was, in fact, the tasting room. The host, whom they *"certainly didn't see"*, acknowledged their presence and opened the door without them having to ring the bell. The house's lounge was redecorated to become the tasting room, and according to the mystery visitor, resembled a *"typical tasting room with a bit of farm stall feel"*, since there were farm products on display amongst the wines. The casually dressed host was the only staff member on shift. Due to his *"enthusiastic introduction of the tasting line up"*, it was initially thought that he was the wine maker or owner of the estate; however, he merely just

What is particularly special about this estate is its strong focus on family history, which carried through in their wines. Specifically, one of the ranges of wine is *"named after a cottage on the farm that every couple in this family has lived in over the years"*. This focus on family *"made it a special experience"* for this mystery visitor. Another memorable aspect was a unique wine that this estate produces – it is a white wine that *"no other farm in South Africa produces"*. Overall, the wines were of excellent quality and the tasting was personal. The mystery visitor felt that her patronage was appreciated and would *"definitely go back there and recommend family and friends"* as she felt *"very at home and comfortable"* at the wine estate. It is a *"must for tourists who want to experience a tasting that is very different to the more commercial farms"*.	an employee that works there on Saturdays. Despite demonstrating sound knowledge of the estate and the wines, he *"did not seem to care too much about looking professional when carrying out the tasting"*. This did not appear to be a problem for the mystery visitor; in fact, it *"adds well to the homey vibe of the estate"* and they felt like *"guests to the house instead of clients to the estate"*. The intention of the host was to *"share the wine experience"* with his guests and not to push sales; he *"clearly did not care whether we bought or not"*, he even *"almost did not seem too keen to carry out the purchase and looked rather uneasy"*. The mystery visitor speculated that it might have been because the till was down that day as no receipt was offered. Factors that attributed to a relatively low score was the *"unexpected shabby house setting"*, limited activities on site, lack of visual appeal, and the fact that is was *"not particularly spacious"*. On the positive side, they had interesting wines for tasting although on the *"pricey side"*. The *"very friendly service"* – despite being *"slightly unprofessional"* – was a bonus. Hence, the estate was *"a bit homey but not enough to make a real impression"*. The mystery visitor would visit again if in search for *"cosiness"* – something that he believes does not occur often on an average Saturday.
Observation 3 Unlike others, this estate was *"easy to find"* for this mystery visitor. What stood out were the *"red hearts on the fence and trees"*. In terms of service, the staff was *"friendly and helpful"*. The mystery visitor would *"maybe come back"*.	***Observation 4*** This estate was negatively disconfirmed for this mystery visitor. It was *"not as nice"* as she expected a wine estate to be. She felt that it is not *"geared for many visitors and tourists"*. There was ample parking but they were not demarcated. The wine tasting was not as pleasant as it could have been, since there was a group of tourists (approximately 15), making it *"very crowded"* in a small tasting area. Moreover, there was only one staff member on shift to attend to all the visitors; therefore, his full attention could not be given to each person. It appears that the mystery visitor overheard the server discussing wine with others, and from his explanation he, *"seemed knowledgeable"*. Due to the lack of physical appeal and overcrowding, the mystery visitor *"would not especially go back there for a tasting in the future"*.

When searching for this estate's information, 3 of the 4 mystery visitors used its website. These visitors felt that the site lacked some information and was not too user-friendly. Half of the visitors associated this estate with *"family name"*. A relatively simple estate was expected.

All observations indicated that this estate is not visually appealing and 3 out of 4 visitors said that it is not well demarcated. However, for half the visitors, the service received was intimate and casual. In both cases (occasional visitor 1 and frequent visitor 1), with different hosts, there was a high degree of interaction and detailed discussion about the family tradition and their wines. These cases proved that this estate is passionate about what they do. Between the remaining two visitors, one was disappointed with her experience as her visit coincided with a tour group, and there was only one staff to assist everyone. The other visitor briefly pointed out the friendly and helpful staff.

One visitor was certain that she will return to this estate, two may return, and the other will not. Despite the intimacy of this estate, it is evident that scenery also plays an important role.

5.3.1.3 Estate BR

This estate is privately owned and well recognised along the Bottelary sub-route.

Tables 5.7 and 5.8 depict the pre-visit and overall experience results of the mystery visitors for Estate BR.

Table 5.7: Pre-visit results – Estate BR

Occasional visitor	*Frequent visitor*
Observation 1	***Observation 2***
The estate's website was used as a source of information. Their many awards build favourably towards perceptions of the wine estate; in the mystery visitor's opinion, the website *"was very exciting and appealed to me a lot"*. The information was comprehensive and even included other interesting aspects such as *"recipes for meals that go well with their wines"*. *"Full of heart"*, *"deep in the mountains"*, and *"family heritage"* are words that come to mind upon hearing the name of the wine estate. Judging by the *"exciting web page"*, the mystery visitor expected it to be slightly different and more modern than traditional Cape-Dutch styled buildings. Their many awards leads one to expect high standards from this estate.	The internet was employed to search for this estate's website. The details provided were sufficient to organise a visit. It was suggested that the name of the estate could represent the surname of the founder, or perhaps describe *"the shape of the mountain slope it might sit on*. The name has a *"down-to-earth, traditional feel"*. Expectations of this wine estate were mostly built on their awards; hence, the mystery visitor expected quality wines, but also anticipated that many of them would not be available for tasting.
Observation 3	***Observation 4***
She had not visited the estate before but knew where it was located. She was under the impression that it has well known wines and is a well-respected estate; hence, expected her experience to be *"nice"* and *"pleasant"*.	The wine estate's website was used as the source of information for this visit. However, their full address was absent from the site, which meant she could not use her GPS. A telephone call to the estate was necessary in order to acquire the exact location.

Table 5.8: Overall experience results – Estate BR

Occasional visitor	*Frequent visitor*
Observation 1	***Observation 2***
For this mystery visitor, the experience at this wine estate was one of negative disconfirmation, which resulted from the poor service, despite having been rated highly on other aspects. The unfavourable experience commenced with difficulty in locating the estate. The Cape Town map book did not reveal the location of this wine estate; signage leading to it was unclear, and if other wine estates did not offer directions, the mystery visitor would not have found the farm. They were not greeted upon entry at the cellar door and when no staff attended to them, they had to search for assistance. Contrary to customary procedures, they were seated and *"poured half a glass of wine without being asked what we wanted to try or told what it was"*. Subsequently, they were again ignored for a long period of time until a different staff member assisted them. Although this individual was more informative and asked their wine preferences, he *"did not really describe each wine"*, and appeared to rush the tasting session as *"he seemed to be in a hurry to get us to taste all of the wines"*. The staff member also appeared to be *"a bit condescending"* as the mystery visitor had limited knowledge of wine. Although the tasting setting was pleasant, the spittoons were full and they were also not given fresh water between tastings. The mystery visitor felt they should have clean spittoons for a tasting session. She also felt the estate *"should have someone to greet you at the door to the tasting room and show you to a table"*. The mystery visitor was disappointed as the estate's many accolades were undermined by the service quality received. Despite the physical appeal, cellar door setting and excellent quality of wines, the service *"detracted from the whole experience"*. The mystery visitor stated: *"I expected a lot from this farm as their website was amazing and they have won so many awards, so I was disappointed"*. In sum, the experience as a whole fell – to a large extent – short of her expectations; hence, she would not recommend this estate to friends and family.	This frequent visitor's experience was at polar ends in comparison with observation 1. This mystery visitor thoroughly enjoyed this wine estate. There was no major difficulty in locating this estate since its location and directions were available on the website. However, it was noted that the Bottelary sub-route *"did surprise with its lack of general signage of the wine farms in the area and one had to be slightly more cautious to not miss the turn"*. There was nothing special about the drive into the estate; in fact, the tarred road and plant bushes resembled *"a drive into a scrap yard"*, but the wine-tasting-day trip mood was re-established once the neat grape vines became visible. There was no signage directing one to the various parts of the estate, which *"gave a feeling that one was trespassing private property"*. As the mystery visitor and his friends approached the cellar door, a staff member who turned out to be one of the wine makers, greeted them and showed them to a table inside. Here, they were also *"warmly greeted by someone who appears to be the owner"*. Neither of the staff members wore uniforms; therefore, had they not approached the group, no one would have known that they were staff members. The mood was very casual and relaxed and the interior was described as being *"tastefully decorated"*. During the wine tasting, the wine maker *"didn't seem too enthusiastic"*; this may possibly be attributed to his age (mid to late twenties) and his underdeveloped knowledge of the wines, as he only recently obtained his wine making certificate. Conversely, the owner was *"very interested in our visit and passionate about their wines"*. In particular, she enquired about where the visitors were from and even offered a tasting of a special wine that was not on the tasting menu (Weisser Reisling 2007). Although this recommendation was not based on personal preference or food choices, the owner made an attempt to sell the wine by discussing its points of differentiation from other wines in that particular variety. In the opinion of the mystery visitor, the tasting was *"carried out professionally and the wines were of great quality"*, and the owner's company *"made all the difference"*. In fact, it was questioned whether having the wine maker present to serve guests is a good idea, since he seemed *"uninterested to fraternise with amateurs"*. Nevertheless, this experience imparted new wine knowledge to the mystery visitor.

	The only setback, albeit minor, was the actual wine purchase, which took some time as the owner was *"not very adept at working the till and credit card machine"*. The cellar door interior was *"tastefully decorated"* and the restroom was of *"guest house"* standard; these aspects *"balanced out the dull drive"*, thereby making the physical component *"average"*. In contrast, the service was *"superb"*, since they were greeted by and had both the owner and wine maker's complete attention, as there were no other visitors present that morning. This estate does warrant a return visit, particularly when one's cellar is emptying as they offer a *"good variety of high quality wine at bargain price"*. It is also a great estate to bring *"wine loving guests"*.
Observation 3 The experience at this estate was positively disconfirmed. For this mystery visitor, it provided the best experience of all the other estates visited as the service was exceptional. This estate was *"easy to find"* since it is on a main road. Little was discussed about the physical attributes of the estate, except that the road leading to the estate was *"nice"*. The remainder of the discussion concerned the wine tasting session and service quality. The staff were *"extremely friendly"* and introduced themselves to the mystery visitor. They also made her feel *"most at ease about being alone"*, since she did not bring company. What she found *"very appealing and refreshing"* was the cold glass of water with ice and mint that was offered to her. The staff also explained the wines in detail and suggested which foods would suit a particular wine. The wine tasting fee was waivered since she made a purchase at the estate. The mystery visitor mentioned that she *"would definitely come back and recommend the estate to others"*.	***Observation 4*** It is uncertain whether the mystery visitor's experience was positively disconfirmed, as she did not state her pre-visit expectations. However, based on her responses, her experience was a pleasant one. Finding this estate was a little difficult considering the signage was inadequate. She suggests that more signposts should be introduced en route, as well as at the actual entrance. However, once at the buildings, the area is well demarcated. The estate was described as being *"very rustic and beautiful"* with an environment that is *"very pleasing for the eye"*. The restaurant, which was en route to the cellar door exuded a *"peaceful"* feeling. The staff were *"very friendly and helpful"*, demonstrating *"good"* product knowledge and service. Overall, it was a *"good experience"*. She would refer others to this estate *"for something other than the commercial wine experience"*. It can also be inferred that she would return to visit this estate in future.

The majority of visitors (3 out of 4) used the estate's website as the source of information. For half of the visitors, the impressive number of awards assisted in the building of their pre-visit expectations, which was very good quality wines.

Words associated with this estate include *"full of heart"*, *"deep in the mountains"*, and *"family heritage"*. High standards and good quality wines were expected from this estate.

Half of the visitors had problems locating the estate while the other half found it relatively easy. Nothing amongst the verbatim text was mentioned about the winescape, but according to the rated statements, all but one mystery visitor found the estate visually appealing. Key comments concerning the service component were positive, since all but one of the visitors thoroughly enjoyed the experience at this estate. Service quality was very high as Estate BR provided an intimate and professional tasting experience compared to the other estates – only one visitor had a negative sentiment regarding the service. Hence, the majority of visitors stated that they would return.

5.3.1.4 Estate BU

This estate is privately owned and amongst the least recognised along the Bottelary sub-route.

Tables 5.9 and 5.10 depict the pre-visit and overall experience results of the mystery visitors for Estate BU.

Table 5.9: Pre-visit results – Estate BU

Occasional visitor	*Frequent visitor*
Observation 1	**Observation 2**
The estate's website was used as the source of information. Although it was comprehensive, it was not that easy to navigate due to its technical framework of animations. The name of the wine estate conjures the following: *"castle"*, *"old fashioned"*, *"old buildings with a lot of history"*, and *"protection and safety"*. These descriptions formed pre-visit expectations of the wine estate. As for quality of wine, this was speculative, since no awards are mentioned on their website.	The information gathered from the estate's website was sufficient to organise a visit. Akin to observation 1, this mystery visitor also feels that the website is *"high tech"*. Judging from its awards and achievements, the wines were expected to *"be above average, but not exceptional"*; hence, it *"implies the price tags should be generous"*. Part of the name of the estate is coined according to its physical structure, which is uncommon for a wine farm. Consequently, for this mystery visitor, *"pretentious"* was the word used to describe the name of the estate, as he cannot conceive *"wine being made in a castle larder and wine makers sleeping inside a barrack"*.
Observation 3	***Observation 4***
Despite having never been to this estate before, this mystery visitor knew where it was. Words that come to mind upon hearing the name of the estate are *"old"* and *"charming"*. It also recalls the memory of the castle in Cape Town.	This mystery visitor also used the Internet to find information on the wine estate, but the exact address was not provided, therefore, she had to call the estate for directions.

Table 5.10: Overall experience results – Estate BU

Occasional visitor	Frequent visitor
Observation 1	***Observation 2***
The physical and service components attributed to this estate were rated highly by this mystery visitor. Two of the major concerns regarding this estate are its lack of signage and condition of the driveway, which were also noticed by the other mystery visitors. Without signs leading the direction and a *"long drive on a gravel road"*, this mystery visitor stated: *"we were not even sure we were going the right way"*. There is only a small sign at the entrance of the estate; however, this is ineffective if there are not signs earlier along the main route. Confirming her pre-visit expectations, the estate was in fact a castle, which is *"not what you would usually expect from a wine farm"*. Unlike the Cape-Dutch style wine farms, the two buildings of this estate is constructed of face-brick, making it highly memorable – *"this theme really stood out for me, it was something different to the usual wine farm experience and, therefore, makes it a must to visit"*. The mystery visitor would love to have gone on a cellar door tour if it was offered. In terms of service, it was *"good"* and *"also very personal"* as there were no other visitors present. The server clearly explained two of their wine ranges; she was also *"very friendly"* and interacted with the mystery visitor and her guest – *"we chatted to her about where we had been and she recommended other farms we should visit"*. Despite receiving a relatively high rating, it scored lower than the other good wine estates that were rated by this mystery visitor. This is possibly due to the major discrepancy between the physical and service components. Had the condition of the driveway been acceptable, and the service exceptional and not merely *"good"*, it would have matched the physical aspect of the buildings, thereby increasing its average score. Nevertheless, this estate does warrant a return visit and recommendation to others, mainly due to its physical setting.	This wine farm experience was positively disconfirmed, mainly due to the setting of the buildings. Lack of signage was a problem; even with prepared directions prior to the visit, *"one still managed to miss turns"*. This lack of signage seemed to be a common problem along the Bottelary sub-route. The long gravel road leading to the estate was also unpleasant for the travelling experience. Upon entry, the estate building *"was the last thing one could imagine it to be: a real fort"*. Although it consisted of face-brick, the building exterior still looked quite modern. It exuded a *"theme-park"* feel since it had a *"moat and battery with a canon"*, which added value to the experience. The cellar door was also *"not a typical wine tasting setting, being rather dark with a musky feel"*. Regarding service, there was only one uniformed server on shift. Her knowledge and professionalism lead the mystery visitor to assume that she is well trained by the owner, or could be the owner's daughter. The casual but professional demeanour *"was what I had in my experience at Western Cape wine farms"*, which *"added to the relaxing and South African mood"*. It was, however, suggested that the service *"wouldn't be so great if more guests were there"*, considering there was only one staff member available. An aspect that also contributed to the *"South African homey feel"*, and also common at several smaller wine farms, was the waiver of the tasting fee if a purchase is made. In the opinion of the mystery visitor, this is considered as a *"plus"*. The physical component rated *"above average"*, while the service was *"average"*. The mystery visitor would return, and bring visitors to see the fort.
Observation 3	***Observation 4***
This estate received the lowest rating by this mystery visitor. It is also uncertain whether her expectations were negatively or positively disconfirmed, but they possibly lean towards the former. Consistent with all the other observations, the gravel road leading to the estate is *"very bad"*, but the estate	For this mystery visitor, the physical setting contributed to the pleasant experience encountered at this estate. Again, the lack of signage and poor road condition was highlighted – both of these *"need attention"*. She *"would like to have a private evening function there"*, but the *"bad gravel road at night"* prevents her from doing so.

itself is *"very impressive – especially the buildings which look like a fort.* *"* In terms of service, it can be classified as below average. The presence of staff could not be seen although they could be heard *"talking in the back office"*. The mystery visitor *"tried calling to them, but no one appeared"* – she had to wait 5-10 minutes before anyone arrived to assist her. The staff made no attempt to interact with her as she *"did most of the talking and asked lots of questions"*. The scenery was great but it did not make up for the *"just average"* service.	She also noted the different style of the building, which were a *"pleasant surprise"*. The service encountered was considered as below average. The reason for this was the poor attitude of the staff; although there were other visitors present, the body language exhibited by the staff member was *"I want to go home now"* – probably because the mystery visitor entered as they were about to close. Nevertheless, the staff member allowed them to taste wine and *"after a few minutes she relaxed and the service improved"*. The interior décor was *"very appealing and inviting"*. The wines were *"tasty"* and what was special was that one could buy smaller bottles of wine (375ml) instead of the traditional 750ml. There was no mention whether she would return and refer the estate to family and friends. However, based on her experience, it can be suggested that she may return occasionally. Visits may increase if the gravel road is improved.

Half of the mystery visitors used this estate's website as a source of information, and felt that it is not as user-friendly as it could be. Words associated with this estate include *"castle"*, *"old"*, *"charming"*, *"protection and safety"*. Expectations of the estate were mostly overlooked.

All visitors addressed the issue of poor signage on both the Bottelary sub-route in addition to the actual wine estate. Furthermore, the condition of the road was a major problem and is an impediment for future visits. Conversely, all visitors noted the visual aspects of the estate, which is pleasantly inconsistent with what is expected of a wine farm; in fact, all the visitors would have liked a cellar tour.

Service at this estate was quite varied since all visitors had vastly different experiences. The best service was encountered by occasional visitor 1, and the poorest by occasional visitor 2. Two visitors were guaranteed to return and will recommend the estate to others; it does appear, however, that it is the physical setting rather than the service that was the reason for their decision.

5.3.2 Tier 1 evaluation of the four wine estates

Estate SR was well demarcated and easy to find as it is on a main road. The trees along the driveway add a memorable aspect to the experience. The estate itself is large and visually appealing. The demeanour of staff and the interior décor of the

tasting room are all indicative of a commercialised estate. Summarily, it is highly professional but lacks intimacy, and it is their reputation that attracts visitors.

Estate SU is a small family-owned wine farm. It lacks signage on the main road and its physical setting is plain. However, its service compensates for its lack of physical appeal. Despite the limited number of staff (one per shift), they are friendly and passionate about their wines and history. The interior of the tasting room is relaxed and intimate. They appear to be more casual about their operations and are, thus, less professional.

Estate BR is a good balance between professionalism and intimacy. The staff are very friendly, passionate, and knowledgeable about their wines. The winescape is appealing, as is the tasting room. This estate would be a good alternative to commercial estates. The only deficient aspect is the lack of signage along the sub-route.

Estate BU's physical environment stands out from all the other estates – it is charming and different. The cellar door is small, which provides an intimate setting. The staff appears to be well trained, but not too interactive with the visitors. The main problems with this estate include inadequate signage and the poor condition of the long gravel road driveway to the estate, which was unpleasant for visitors, and ultimately reduces the wine estate's accessibility.

5.3.3 Tier 2

This section captures the values of the statements, which are presented per wine farm. The tables can be seen in Appendices C5 – C8. The column mean, shaded in grey, represents the average of the individual rows (mystery visitor statements). The overall total means represents the average of all individual values (average of physical, service, overall component).

5.3.3.1 Estate SR

Estate SR received a total average rating of 80.3%. See Appendix C5.

Starting with the physical component, the *outside environment* scored the highest with a mean rating of 94.2% across all four observations, followed by *en-route, driveway, parking*, which scored 89%. The *cellar door interior and décor* was rated at 75.8%, while the lowest score (75%) was given to *restrooms.*

Regarding the service component, the following sub-sections are listed in order of highest rating: *welcoming of visitors* (94.2%); *presentation of staff* (84.2%); *wine tasting and staff knowledge* (83.1%); *wine purchase* (80%); *visitor departure* (71.3%); and finally, *staff interaction* (28.8%). The unusually low score for *staff interaction* is detected throughout all the observations. Of the four statements under this sub-section, two averaged extremely low scores: 6.3% for *the personnel asked my food preferences before recommending wine*; and 0% for *the personnel recommended activities at their estate without me having to enquire about them*. Despite being deemed important by Viljoen, it appears that wine estates neglect to ask these questions; therefore, all estates performed dismally regarding *staff interaction*. This is discussed in further detail in section 6.3.

The *overall* statements received a mean rating of 83.8%. Thus, combining the three sub-sections, the total average score for Estate SR was 80.3%.

These figures are all consistent with the verbatim comments seen in tier 1 (section 5.3.1). Overall, this estate scored highly; however, frequent visitor 1 enjoyed the wine tasting much less than the others. His discontent with the service and interior décor, as seen in his verbatim comments, all mirror scores given to those statements, which reduced the total average score of Estate SR.

5.3.3.2 Estate SU

Estate SU received a total average rating of 66.8%. See Appendix C6.

Again, commencing with the highest score and ending with the lowest, the following averages were documented: *cellar door interior and décor* (65.8%), *restrooms* (63.3%), *outside environment* (61.7%), and *en-route, driveway, parking* (59%).

Pertaining to the service component, the highest score was given to the *welcoming of visitors* (96.7%); followed by *staff presentation* (77.5%), which was tied with *visitor departure* (77.5%); *wine tasting and staff knowledge* ranked fourth with 75%; *wine purchase* scored an average of 70.6% and *staff interaction* rated 35% on average.

The *overall* statements provided a mean rating of 65.8%. These three sub-sections combined to render a total mean of 66.8%.

This relatively low score for a wine estate is justified by its lack of physical appeal. As per the verbatim comments (section 5.3.1), the outside environment does not

resemble that of a typical wine farm. However, the intimate but casual service that was received at this estate raised its average to 66.8%.

5.3.3.3 Estate BR

Estate BR received a total average of 76.2%. See Appendix C7.

In terms of the physical component, the *outside environment* and *restrooms* both received a mean rating of 75.8%; followed by *cellar door interior and décor*, which averaged *71.7%. En-route, driveway, parking* had the lowest score of 69.5%.

This estate received the highest mean rating for *visitor departure* (92.5%); *wine purchase* averaged 85.2%, followed closely by the *welcoming of visitors* (85%). *Wine tasting and staff knowledge* ranked third with 81.7%; *presentation of staff averaged a score of* 79.3%; and *staff interaction* received 42.5%.

The *overall* statements received a score of 80.4%. The three sub-sections combined produced an overall total average of 76.2% for Estate BR.

All verbatim comments (section 5.3.1) are consistent with the ratings given in the statements. In fact, all were highly positive apart from the ones given by occasional visitor 1. Her experience, in terms of service quality, was at complete polar ends in comparison to the other visitors. Therefore, her ratings brought down the entire average for this estate. Nevertheless, it still scored highly with 76.2%.

5.3.3.4 Estate BU

Estate BU received a total average rating of 70.9%. See Appendix C8.

Of the physical component, *restrooms* scored the highest average rating of 82.5%; followed by *cellar door interior and décor* with 75.8%; *outside environment* with 74.2%; and *en-route, driveway, parking* with 47.9%.

Service-wise, *wine purchase* scored the highest (87.1%); followed by the *welcoming of visitors* (79.2%). *Wine tasting and staff knowledge* received a rating of 71%, which is one percentage higher than the *presentation of staff* (70.8%). *Visitor departure* scored low with 56.3%; similarly, *staff interaction* was on the lowest end with 19.4%.

The *overall* statements obtained an average of 78.8%. Therefore, in total, Estate BR scored 70.9% overall.

As with the previous three estates, the verbatim comments for Estate BU (section 5.3.1.4) also conform to the rating of the statements. The key problem with this estate is its inadequate signage, which scored 47.5% across all visitors; no statement considered the condition of the road, but it was mentioned, with strong sentiment, in all the verbatim comments.

5.3.4 Tier 3

Tier 3 presents a breakdown of the averages seen in tier 2. Three averages (physical, service, and overall) are presented per estate. These figures can be seen in Table 5.11.

Again, the total column mean, shaded in grey, represents the average of individual rows (mystery visitor statements), while the overall average, shaded in black, represents the average of all individual values per wine estate.

Table 5.11: Performance by wine estate (%)

		SR	SU	BR	BU	Mean
PHYSICAL COMPONENT	**Mean**	**83,5**	**62,5**	**73,2**	**70,1**	**72,3**
EN-ROUTE, DRIVEWAY, PARKING	**Mean**	**89,0**	**59,0**	**69,5**	**47,9**	**66,3**
1.	I had no problems locating where the wine estate was.	85,0	67,5	55,0	50,0	64,4
2.	The wine estate was well sign posted and easy to find.	80,0	65,0	57,5	47,5	62,5
3.	The driveway into the wine estate was aesthetically pleasing.	92,5	65,0	72,5	37,5	66,9
4.	The signs directing me to the different areas of the wine estate (restaurant, vineyard, cellar door, etc.) were well demarcated.	95,0	42,5	70,0	52,8	65,1
5.	There was sufficient parking space.	92,5	55,0	92,5	51,5	72,9
OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT	**Mean**	**94,2**	**61,7**	**75,8**	**74,2**	**76,5**
6.	The buildings were what I expected a wine estate to be.	92,5	57,5	75,0	62,5	71,9
7.	The physical environment of the wine estate is attractive.	95,0	60,0	75,0	80,0	77,5
8.	The environment & scenery make me feel relaxed.	95,0	67,5	77,5	80,0	80,0
CELLAR DOOR INTERIOR & DÉCOR	**Mean**	**75,8**	**65,8**	**71,7**	**75,8**	**72,3**
9.	The interior was what I expected from a wine farm.	72,5	75,0	77,5	82,5	76,9
10.	The interior and décor were aesthetically pleasing.	82,5	72,5	77,5	87,5	80,0
11.	Different sections within the cellar door were clearly demarcated (touring, tasting, payment areas, etc.).	72,5	50,0	60,0	57,5	60,0
RESTROOMS	**Mean**	**75,0**	**63,3**	**75,8**	**82,5**	**74,2**
12.	The restroom signage was clearly visible.	67,5	55,0	70,0	77,5	67,5
13.	The restroom was clean and hygienic.	77,5	67,5	75,0	85,0	76,3
14.	The restroom had all the amenities I expected it to have.	80,0	67,5	82,5	85,0	78,8
SERVICE COMPONENT	**Mean**	**73,6**	**72,0**	**74,9**	**64,0**	**71,1**
PRESENTATION OF STAFF	**Mean**	84,2	77,5	65,0	70,8	74,4
15.	The staff were easily identifiable.	92,5	70,0	50,0	72,5	71,3
16.	The staff were neat and tidy in appearance.	90,0	75,0	70,0	80,0	78,8
17.	Their demeanour was what I expected from a wine farm.	70,0	87,5	75,0	60,0	73,1
WELCOMING OF VISITORS	**Mean**	94,2	96,7	85,0	79,2	88,8
18.	My presence was acknowledged by staff.	100,0	100,0	75,0	75,0	87,5

19.	The staff were not chatting amongst themselves instead of attending to clients.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
20.	The personnel made me feel welcome.	82,5	90,0	80,0	62,5	78,8
WINE TASTING & STAFF KNOWLEDGE	**Mean**	83,1	75,0	79,3	71,0	77,1
21.	The wine maker was passionate about his wines.	N/A	N/A	90,0	N/A	90,0
22.	The wine maker was highly professional.	N/A	N/A	90,0	N/A	90,0
23.	Meeting the wine maker enhanced my experience at the wine farm.	N/A	N/A	100,0	N/A	100,0
24.	There was a large variety of wines to choose from.	70,0	70,0	75,0	75,0	72,5
25.	I was recommended appropriate wines based on my preferences.	75,0	62,5	50,0	50,0	59,4
26.	The wines were clearly described to me.	85,0	57,5	75,0	30,0	61,9
27.	The description by the wine staff matched my taste experience.	77,5	67,5	77,5	35,0	64,4
28.	I was given the correct wines I asked to taste.	100,0	90,0	75,0	100,0	91,3
29.	The glass(es) presented to me for tasting were free of stains and fingerprints.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
30.	I felt that the wines I tasted were of high quality.	82,5	72,5	90,0	72,5	79,4
31.	Wine staff had sound wine knowledge. For example, be able to differentiate between a Sauvignon Blanc vs. Chenin Blanc.	77,5	80,0	87,5	75,0	80,0
32.	Wine staff knew the product range of the wine estate (i.e. knew wine on offering very well).	82,5	77,5	82,5	80,0	80,6
33.	I would have liked to go on a cellar tour (if not offered).	80,0	70,0	70,0	100,0	80,0
STAFF INTERACTION	**Mean**	28,8	35,0	42,5	19,4	31,4
34.	The personnel asked my food and wine preferences before recommending wine.	0,0	0,0	25,0	0,0	6,3
35.	The personnel recommended activities at their estate without me having to enquire about them.	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
36.	I feel that the staff were genuinely interested in my visit to the wine farm.	62,5	72,5	72,5	40,0	61,9
37.	I felt that the staff went the extra mile to meet my needs.	52,5	67,5	72,5	37,5	57,5
WINE PURCHASE	**Mean**	80,0	70,6	85,2	87,1	80,7
38.	When I purchased wine I was charged the correct price.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
39.	When I purchased wine I was given the correct change (if paid by cash).	N/A	N/A	100,0	N/A	100,0
40.	When I purchased wine I was given a receipt upon payment.	100,0	0,0	100,0	100,0	75,0
41.	When I purchased wine I received the correct number of bottles I paid for.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
42.	The wine I purchased was adequately packaged before given to me.	0,0	0,0	100,0	100,0	50,0
43.	The staff thanked me for my purchase.	100,0	100,0	75,0	100,0	93,8
44.	When I purchased wine, the purchase transaction was performed in a swift and proficient manner.	100,0	50,0	80,0	100,0	82,5
45.	The personnel did not try to up-sell or cross-sell.	100,0	96,7	62,5	100,0	89,8
46.	I did not feel pressurised to make a purchase.	100,0	93,3	82,5	100,0	94,0
47.	The cellar door setting and ambience enticed me to purchase wine.	55,0	50,0	70,0	60,0	58,8
48.	The service I received enticed me to purchase wine.	55,0	66,7	75,0	50,0	61,7
VISITOR DEPARTURE	**Mean**	71,3	77,5	92,5	56,3	74,4
49.	I was given a pleasant parting remark.	67,5	77,5	100,0	50,0	73,8
50.	I felt the staff appreciated my patronage.	75,0	77,5	85,0	62,5	75,0
OVERALL	**Mean**	**83,8**	**65,8**	**80,4**	**78,8**	**77,2**
51.	I liked the ambience of the wine estate.	95,0	65,0	72,5	85,0	79,4
52.	I felt safe throughout my wine experience on the wine estate.	95,0	80,0	90,0	90,0	88,8
53.	The wine tasting experience was enjoyable.	72,5	62,5	77,5	72,5	71,3

54.	The overall experience exceeded my initial expectations.	67,5	62,5	77,5	70,0	69,4
55.	I will definitely visit the wine farm again in the near future / when in the wine area again.	87,5	60,0	82,5	77,5	76,9
56.	I will definitely refer this winery to family and friends.	85,0	65,0	82,5	77,5	77,5
	OVERALL RATING PER WINE ESTATE	80,3	66,8	76,2	70,9	73,5
	RANK	1	4	2	3	

For the physical component, the average means for the four estates were as follows: Estate SR with 83.5%; Estate SU with 62.5%; Estate BR with 73.2%; and Estate BU with 70.1%. Hence, Estate SR ranks first in terms of the physical component, followed by Estate BR, then Estate BU and finally, Estate SU.

For the service component, the average scores are listed in order of rank from highest to lowest – Estate BR (74.9%); Estate SR (73.6%); Estate SU (72%); and Estate BU 64%).

Similarly, for the overall component: Estate SR (83.8%); Estate BR (80.4%); Estate BU (78.8%); and Estate SU (65.8%).

Hence, the highest total score was given to Estate SR (80.3%); followed by Estate BR (76.2%). Estate BU ranked third with 70.9%; while Estate SU received the lowest score of 66.8%. These figures indicate that popular estates (SR and BR) performed better than less recognised estates (SU and BU) in all sections.

5.4 Summary

The findings of this research established expectations of Stellenbosch as a wine region in addition to how these estates faired in terms of their physical aspects and service quality. The qualitative research was successful in adding depth to the quantitative results. Moreover, the qualitative verbatim comments from the mystery visitors were consistent with the statement ratings that were given and contributed useful details that added value to the statements. Hence, mystery visitors is a successful research method that measures intentional and inadvertent aspects; this is discussed in Chapter Six.

Supply-side findings were comprehensive in terms of what Stellenbosch, as a wine region, offers. Service quality was deemed the most important aspect that should be tied to everything that affects the visitor's experience and overall perception. The demand-side findings were broader and highly subjective, but conformed to findings from extant literature regarding wine tourists, as seen in Chapter Two. This local wine

tourist expected an enjoyable wine experience in a beautiful setting, as well as friendly and knowledgeable wine staff. In fact, the quality of wine does not have to be exceptional as long as the entire experience is pleasant. Comparing the two in-depth interviews, the supply-side was evidently more stringent in terms of what and how activities and services are performed, since they need to account for all possible expectations that visitors may have and to ensure that the experience is a positively memorable one. That said, there are no guidelines and procedures that all wine estates follow to make them uniform in service delivery; each wine estate abides by their own training and standards, which they may have.

Findings from the mystery visitors were distinct and mostly comprehensive apart from responses given by occasional visitor 2 and frequent visitor 2 who both gave fragmented and brief verbatim comments. Overall, all estates performed well, particularly amongst the service component. Pertaining to total scores, Estate SR ranked first with 80.3%; followed by Estate BR with 76.2%; Estate BU with 70.9%; and finally, Estate SU with 66.8%. Evidently, it is not naïve to expect such scores since Estates SR and BR are amongst the most popular estate within their respective sub-routes; similarly, Estates SU and BU are amongst the least recognised.

Verbatim comments relating to each estate also confirm one's general expectations of wine estates in general. For example, commercial estates – such as Estate SR – are professional and beautiful, but lack intimacy; well established but private estates such as Estate BR, are well balanced between physical and service aspects. Small and privately owned estates tend to have low profiles, either fairing average or excelling in one area only. In the case of Estate SU, service was excellent and cosy, which is what a family-owned estate is expected to be, but the physical aspect performed poorly; Estate BU faired well regarding its physicality and scored average ratings for service.

Summarily, a balance of professionalism and intimacy, in addition to an appealing physical estate, are required for an enjoyable experience, which motivates why visitors tend to revisit estates that provide these offerings as a package. Estates that only dominate in one area such as service or physical appeal, guarantee less returns than those that have a more balanced performance in each area.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This thesis provides an overview of the visitor experience at selected wine estates along the SWR in the Western Cape. In particular, it concentrates on two important aspects that contribute to the entire experience – physical and service components. It was established that surrounding activities and areas also contribute to a holistic wine tourism experience; however, due to mainly budgetary limitations, only the cellar door was tested, since it is the first and most important contact point during a visit to a wine estate. It is important to note that this did not dampen the quality or validity of the research – contrarily, it was successful, since it attained the prescribed objectives.

Most findings from the primary research confirm previous studies regarding the service quality achieved at wine estates – such as the importance of friendliness and professionalism. More importantly, the findings were able to detect service procedures that were or were not followed based on requirements suggested by the results of the in-depth interviews. The following sections further discuss the importance of these findings.

6.2 Summation of findings

The qualitative and quantitative research complemented each other in the sense that the quantitative results conformed to the findings from the qualitative research; similarly, inadequate areas were identified by both the qualitative and quantitative side. A summation of the findings is presented in a funnel approach, whereby the overall service is discussed, followed by the differences between each estate, and lastly, problems are identified.

Primary research showed that the service quality at selected wine estates along the SWR was relatively high (71.1%), but not as high as desired by Viljoen. The estates all displayed basic service requirements; one in particular – Estate BR – went beyond the minimum requirement to ensure that visitors had a memorable time, which was reflected in their rating of 74.9% for service. The poorest service performance was assigned to Estate BU (64%) considering that the staff had no genuine interest in the visitors' experience. Although the service ratings were, in almost all cases, more than acceptable, each individual experience at every wine estate was completely different. It was concluded that Estate SR has an impressive physical presence and is highly commercial, hence its professionalism. However, the nature of such an established

estate tends to lack personal touch, which is usually observed in privately owned estates. On the complete polar end, Estate SU lacks professionalism and winescape appeal, but offers a casual, yet intimate wine tasting experience. They are proud of their wines and family heritage; formalities of wine tasting are overlooked here, while visitors are treated as guests at the house. Pertaining to Estate BR, it displayed a good balance of professionalism and intimacy. This estate shows genuine interest in visitors, and at the same time, knows how to push sales in a non-intrusive manner. Estate BU's service did not measure up to the high scores it received for its physical appeal. This estate interacted least with the visitors, and in all apart from one case, performed the most basic service that a wine estate can offer.

Hence, the findings do contradict the popular belief that smaller, privately owned estates perform better on the service front – especially in terms of the degree of personal interest and friendliness. The best service, in fact, came from two very different estates (SU and BR) in terms of physicality and status. This indicates that there is no specific region-wide standard that estates adhere to; each estate is completely different, and operates according to their organisational culture – above basic requirements, which are deemed necessary to operate a wine estate business (such as greeting visitors, and understanding their products and services),

Problems that were identified relate largely to staff training, as stated in section 6.2.4. The estates, some more than others, lack customer-oriented training. Possibly with the high staff turnover, as discussed by Viljoen, staff are only trained to meet basic service needs. However, this is only applicable to Estate SR, since it employs more part-time staff to cater for its large visitor groups. Other estates are small private farms, which are operated by family members with a few part-time staff, and hence they have less trouble being customer-oriented – apart from Estate BU.

Non-service related problems stem from a lack of signage along the Bottelary Hills sub-route, and a lack of signage on the actual estates. Solutions to these problems are presented in the following section.

6.3 Mystery visitor as a customer service measurement tool

The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the application of the mystery visitor exercise and to determine whether or not it was an appropriate vehicle to measure customer satisfaction in the context of a wine route. In assessing this key objective, this section specifically considers results that were obtained and comments on certain operational issues of the mystery visitor study.

6.3.1 Customer satisfaction results obtained

Table 6.1 summarises the key findings of Table 5.11, which are divided into sections and lists the results of five individual relationship type statements per wine estate, which was investigated (*italics* print).

Table 6.1: Overall service assessment (%)

Factors	SR	SU	BR	BU	*Mean*
Physical component	83,5	62,5	73,2	70,1	**72,3**
En-route, driveway, parking	89,0	59,0	69,5	47,9	**66,3**
Outside environment	94,2	61,7	75,8	74,2	**76,5**
Cellar door interior and décor	75,8	65,8	71,7	75,8	**72,3**
Restrooms	75,0	63,3	75,8	82,5	**74,2**
Service component	73,6	72,0	74,9	64,0	**71,1**
Presentation of staff	84,2	77,5	65,0	70,8	**74,4**
Welcoming of visitors	94,2	96,7	85,0	79,2	**88,8**
Wine tasting and staff knowledge	83,1	75,0	79,3	71,0	**77,1**
Staff interaction	28,8	35,0	42,5	19,4	**31,4**
Wine purchase	80,0	70,6	85,2	87,1	**80,7**
Visitor departure	71,3	77,5	92,5	56,3	**74,4**
I liked the ambience of the wine estate.	*95,0*	*65,0*	*72,5*	*85,0*	***79,4***
The wine tasting experience was enjoyable.	*72,5*	*62,5*	*77,5*	*72,5*	***71,3***
The overall experience exceeded my initial expectations.	*67,5*	*62,5*	*77,5*	*70,0*	***69,4***
I will definitely visit the wine farm again in the near future / when in the wine area again.	*87,5*	*60,0*	*82,5*	*77,5*	***76,9***
I will definitely refer this winery to family and friends.	*85,0*	*65,0*	*82,5*	*77,5*	***77,5***
Overall rating per wine estate	**80,3**	**66,8**	**76,2**	**70,9**	**73,5**
RANK	**1st**	**4th**	**2nd**	**3rd**	

Assuming that an 80% score on all factors signifies customer excellence, then only Estate SR passes this standard. Table 6.1 also highlights (by means of shaded blocks) all the aspects, which rated above this given standard of excellence. Not only did the results differentiate between the cellar doors overall (see ranking), but it also differentiated amongst all individual attributes that were given. For instance, although rated 4th overall, Estate SU scored the highest in *welcoming of visitors* than all other wine estates that were surveyed. Also, all cellar doors sorely lacked staff interaction, a key component of customer satisfaction, which was noted by Seranti Viljoen in the qualitative findings (section 5.2). Furthermore, the aim of any customer satisfaction measurement is not only to rate various aspects of the service encounter, but moreso to establish the differences of factors that were rated amongst wine farms, which the mystery visitor exercise clearly indicated.

Not only does the mystery visitor differentiate between the performance of cellar doors such as the main attributes, which are listed as in Table 6.1, but it also provides

much more detailed information from the complete battery of factors rated by mystery visitors, as depicted in Table 5.11. Added to this, mystery visitors also recorded their qualitative cellar door experiences, which not only enriched the quantitative data, but also acted as a control measure for the accuracy of evaluated Likert statements by mystery respondents. This would *not* have been possible in the case of a face-to-face intercept survey. In the case of any intercept survey, the questionnaire should be sufficiently concise to accommodate respondents who might be in a hurry, preoccupied and who do not want to be disturbed, whilst enjoying the experience, as in the case of wine estate visits (McDaniel and Gates, 1999:180).

Finally, the data accuracy of the mystery visitor proved to be far higher than a face-to-face survey, as concurred by Parasuraman (1991:213), which is influenced by the respondent's inability or unwillingness to provide accurate data. Their reason being that *each* cellar door was rated by *each* mystery visitor against the same benchmark of service standards, which provided a proper comparison between wine estates. This was furthermore ensured by carefully selecting the respondents to fit the profile of the wine route visitor and at the same time by briefing the mystery visitors about the extent of the study and its ratings.

6.3.2 Methodological issues

In the case of a face-to-face intercept survey, evaluation of both the unrecognised estates (SU and BU) would have been problematic given the low visitor count in each instance. Hence, contrary to belief that the intercept survey is cheap, as per McDaniel and Gates (1999:180) and Parasuraman (1991:211), it would have proved to be expensive if executed. The reason being that the interviewers would have to stand for an indefinite period of time to intercept respondents at the cellar doors in order to reach a reasonable quota. In this regard, compared to the intercept survey, the sample of the mystery visitor was far more controlled not only in terms of time, but also in terms of cost.

At the same time, however, a self-completion survey would have been limited to the information obtained without significantly interfering in the wine route experience of visitors at the cellar doors. Also, given the low rating of customer interaction of all four vineyards, as indicated by the results, one can expect a high non-response rate of an intended self-completion survey, which makes it an inappropriate survey to measure customer satisfaction.

6.4 Implications and recommendations

This section further examines key findings of the research and triangulates it with the theory established in Chapters Two and Three to arrive at the implications, which can be solved by using recommendations formulated. Again, this section is divided into physical, service, and overall components.

6.4.1 Physical component

As seen in section 6.4.1, problematic areas concerning the physical component stem from a lack of signage along the Bottelary Hills sub-route and the poor condition of the gravel road of Estate BU. Both the signage and accessibility of the wine estate play a major role in the wine tourism experience, as mentioned in section 2.2.3 (wine tourism product). Specifically, signage lends itself to the *supporting services* level of the wine tourism product, and wine estate accessibility to the *facilitating services* level. Without these supporting and facilitating services, the core benefit of wine tourism cannot be experienced. Findings from the primary study did, in fact, indicate the visitors' frustration regarding these two problem areas.

Considering the importance of both these issues, it is necessary to address them accordingly. Naturally, placing additional signage along the Bottelary Hills sub-route is a matter that should be decided by the appropriate authorities, possibly a decision between the Stellenbosch Tourism Board and the Stellenbosch Municipality, and is not one that can be made casually. Signage for other wine estates along this sub-route should also be investigated to see if they have similar problems before a final decision is made on whether or not additional signage should be added along the sub-route. Perhaps the lack of signage is only applicable to Estates BR and BU, and in this case, these individual estates can implement signs outside their estate at their own discretion.

In terms of Estate BU's poor gravel road condition, it should be renovated to improve the visitor's travel experience. That said, the road may not necessarily belong to Estate BU since the gravel road does branch off into other wine estates. Therefore, it may be a public road or may belong to one of the other estates. Therefore, it should be determined who the responsible party is before any road improvements can be proposed. If the condition of the road is not improved, the wine estates along this gravel road, especially Estate BU as it is the last one on the road, visitor numbers will not increase due to the low accessibility of the wine estate. This low accessibility may not be such a major problem if the service of Estate BU was excellent because visitors may sacrifice the unpleasant gravel road travel for the unusual building settings and superior customer service. However, this is not the case, therefore,

cannot be used as leverage. The gravel road should certainly be addressed. Estate BU should also erect its name at the entrance of the estate.

Similarly, regarding the demarcation of areas on the actual estates, estates that lack signage on the estate itself should erect signs to direct visitors; this will prevent them from wandering around and getting lost – all estates apart from Estate SR should take this into consideration, especially Estate SU.

Summarily, it is recommended that:

- Bottelary Hills sub-route should increase its signage of wine estates;
- Estate BU should improve the condition of the driveway; and
- Estate SU should improve its onsite demarcation.

6.4.2 Service component

A key problem, which stems from the service component relates to *staff interaction.* The items under this section were deemed important, according to Viljoen (see section 5.2.1) and Lin (see section 5.2.2); yet, all performed extremely poorly. Visitors were not asked about their wine preferences or the types of food they normally consume in order for the staff to recommend an appropriate wine. This is highly useful as it can lead to a discussion that may impart new wine knowledge to the visitor. They will also feel the staff are interested in their preferences and do not only recommend wines that are most popular or most expensive. Hence, staff should be trained to recommend wines based on the interests of visitors.

Visitors were also not informed of other activities that are available on the estate. Viljoen stated that the wine estates along the SWR are renown for a plethora of activities apart from wine tasting; however, none of this was mentioned during the mystery visits. Perhaps at the cellar door the focus is truly on wine, hence the neglect to mention other activities. Nevertheless, it is important to do so since engaging in other activities prolongs their stay on the estate, as preferred by Lin. It is, therefore, suggested that staff should briefly mention to visitors that they have other activities available – such as picnics, restaurant, hikes, cellar door tours etc, and so on.

Another deficient area is a lack of genuine interest in the visitor's experience. Only Estates SU and BR scored above 70%. If the staff is not genuinely concerned about a visitor, it is difficult for them to go the extra mile to meet their needs – another area that performed equally poorly; again, Estates SU and BR performed the best in this category. It is surprising that Stellenbosch, with this emphasis on quality, is not as

customer-oriented as it should be. It appears that they only perform what is required by standard (the basics); only Estate BR went beyond the minimum to make the visitor's experience a memorable one. This shows that it is important to employ staff that are friendly and customer-oriented. Most importantly, being passionate about what they do makes the most difference.

Minor areas that require adjustments include identification of staff, description of wines, and parting remarks. Regarding identification of staff, only Estate SR made use of uniforms, which makes them easily distinguishable. The only reason why other estates did not receive low scores is because the staff were mostly behind the counter, or approached to greet guests, making their role obvious. It would be beneficial for all estates to implement uniforms or name tags – this makes for easier identification and at the same time enhances professionalism.

Regarding the relatively poor description of wines amongst the less recognised estates, this is again dependent on staff training. If wines cannot be accurately described, it will negatively impact the estate's professionalism. Therefore, all staff should be adequately trained to have sound wine knowledge.

Lastly, a visitor's visit to the estate should always be acknowledged and appreciated by the staff. Estate SR performed less than ideally (67.5%) in this regard, and Estate BU performed poorly (50%). By making a visitor feel important, they will enhance the perception of the estate in the mind of the visitor, thereby imprinting a favourable image.

Summarily, most of the recommendations are directed at staff training, since this sector performed poorly or was absent during the observation. Hence, it is recommended that:

- all staff should be trained to recommend wines based on visitors' preference or interest (and not solely on the best or popular wines of the estate);
- all staff should briefly mention the other activities that are available;
- staff should be passionate about serving customers;
- Estates SU, BR, and BU should implement uniforms or name tags;
- all staff should be trained to accurately describe wines to visitors; and
- all staff should leave customers with a pleasant parting remark.

6.4.3 Overall component

The overall component scored the highest (77.2%) of the three components and there were no problem areas in this section. However, it was interesting to note that despite scoring the highest in terms of customer delight (77.5%), Estate BR still ranked second after Estate SR regarding both repeat visits (82.5%) and referrals (82.5%). This further confirms Cohen and Ben-Nun's (2009) belief that the wine tourism experience is much more than merely drinking wine or enjoying the experience of wine, but rather a culmination of various unique experiences, which are deemed important for the visitor. This also explains why Estate SR received a higher rating for return visits and referrals – because it is an established brand, which motivates people to visit, as Lin proposed.

The overall recommendation is to take into consideration suggestions for both the physical and service components, as seen in the preceding sections. This will increase ratings for future visits.

6.5 Conclusion

The service quality of wine estates in Stellenbosch has been described as exceptionally high, regardless of the size and status of the estates. However, contrary to popular belief, primary research found that the service quality, although generally good, does fluctuate significantly between different estates. It was found that the status, service quality, and winescape all affect the entire experience. This explained why, in spite of good service, the less recognised estates performed poorer on average when compared to the established estates. In order to realise the motives of a wine tourism experience, it is imperative that a balance between quality of service and the physical setting is achieved. Estates that only excel in one area will unlikely encourage sustainable return visits.

Overall, service quality at the SWR is high, but there is room for improvement. Moreover, it is advisable to make improvements on a continuous basis. Fortunately, there were not many problem areas that need to be remedied; problems identified relate to two areas: training needs and maintenance needs. It should be mentioned that training needs are not those related to basic training, but to attributes that enhance the quality of service delivery – more along the lines of competitive advantage.

The most important conclusion is the effectiveness of the mystery visitor method as a research tool at the selected wine estates. By successfully achieving the secondary objectives, which were set out in section 1.5.1, the main objective is also

accomplished. Its ability to integrate qualitative and quantitative elements made it especially effective in understanding the overall observation, thereby providing an accurate depiction of the events. As a result, not only did this method highlight the problem areas, it was also able to locate the source of the problems – for instance, the lack of procedures that were followed, and the poor service observed by frequent visitor 2 at Estate BU, which was attributed to a lack of attention by the only staff member due to the presence of a tour group because without the verbatim comment, the cause of the problem would be rather speculative. Therefore, this method traced the source of the problem, which allow for corrective action to be taken. Similarly, aspects that delighted visitors were also acknowledged, for example, frequent visitor 2's appreciation of the 375ml bottle wines from Estate BU, and occasional visitor 2's heart-felt welcome to Estate BR. It is certainly useful to know these appreciated aspects because the absence of problems is not necessarily an indicator that an estate is excelling.

Summarily, not only did the overall ratings for the four wine estates indicate how satisfied a customer is with the experience, it also exposed specific areas that require improvement (staff training and maintenance of the physical facilities). Furthermore, this method has significant implications since results can be localised to specific estates (as in the case of this study) or combined to obtain a cumulative score for the entire sub-route or region (this requires a significantly larger sample size). Hence, by being able to provide such in-depth information, the mystery visitor method has a strong basis on which to differentiate wine estates (on an individual and cumulative level).

Regarding another important aspect, the ability to detect problems provides an opportunity for estates to correct their actions. Through continuous improvement based on the visitors' suggestions, they become customer-oriented and hence, earn the trust and commitment of their patrons. This ultimately develops into relationship building.

Considering the above-mentioned achievements, the mystery visitor method is much more than pure customer satisfaction and is, in fact, an appropriate research method that can be applied in the context of wine tourism. It provides richer, and hence, more useful results than other traditional methods such as customer satisfaction surveys. The depth of the information that was obtained can be used to formulate practical solutions and improvements; therefore, this method can also be used to cultivate customer relationships. In conclusion, mystery visitors can, and should, be applied in other wine regions.

6.6 Directions for future research

This study has shown the potential of mystery visitors as a research tool in the wine tourism industry. Evidently, much more can be accomplished by using this vehicle, but firstly, limitations experienced in this study should be overcome in order to advance future replications. Improvements and adjustments to the methodology should be made; in particular, the sample size of both the in-depth interviews and number of wine estates can be increased. Regarding the in-depth interviews, it would be beneficial to increase them from both the supply- and demand-side (wine estates and local wine tourists) as this will help to formulate a precise and meticulous survey, which measures exact requirements that are expected by wine estates as well as visitors.

Outcomes of the study also demonstrated a need for assessments in other areas of interest, for example, the procedure and conduct of cellar tours, service and food quality of restaurants, and how these experiences tie in with the entire wine tourism experience. Furthermore, this method can be applied in different wine regions and even use international visitors (for interviews and/or mystery visits) or a combination of international and domestic visitors. As expected, application to the above-mentioned would require a more flexible budget.

Considering that this method proved to be effective, it may be proposed to wine estates or wine regions for implementation. Since a mystery visitor program is an ongoing activity, it is likely to ensure high standards on a consistent basis, which is necessary if South African wine regions want to compete on an international scale. Basically, it enforces periodic improvements, which can be easily met, since the source of problems can be identified using this research method. On a practical level, it is much more effective and efficient than other research methods; consequently, it expose a whole new research angle for the wine tourism industry.

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APPENDIX A: MEMBERS OF SWR AS AT MARCH 2010

Greater Simonsberg (n=29)	**Stellenbosch Berg** (n=17)	**Helderberg** (n=41)	**Stellenbosch Hills** (n=35)	**Bottelary Hills** (n=24)
Alluvia	Blaauklippen	Alto	Amani	Bellevue
Bartinney	Cape Hutton	Annandale	Asara	Beyerskloof
Camberley	De Trafford	Audacia	Beau Joubert	Bouwland
De Meye	Dornier	Avontuur	Bein Wine	Clovelly
Delaire Graff	Flagstone	Bilton	Bergkelder	Devon Hill
Delheim	Graceland	Bredell	Bonfoi	Devonair
Eaglevlei	Klein DasBosch	Croydon	Boschkloof	Devonvale
Ernst & Co	Kleine Zalze	Dombeya	Clos Malverne	Fort Simon
Hoopenburg	Kleinood	Eikendal	Dalla Cia	Goede Hoop
Kanonkop	Lanzerac	Ernie Else	De Morgenzon	Groenland
Knorhoek	Le Riche	Grangehurst	De Toren	Hartenberg
L'Avenir	Neil Ellis	Guardian Peak	DeWaal	Hazendal
Laibach	Stark-Conde	Haskell	J.C Le Roux	JJ Wines
La Bonheur	Stellenrust	Helderberg	Jacobsdal	Kaapzicht
La Pommier	Stellenzicht	Heron Ridge	Jordan	Koelenhof
Lievland	Vriesenhof	Hidden Valley	Louisvale	Koopmanskloof
Mont Destin	Waterford	Idiom	Lovane	Louiesenhof
Morgenhof		Journey's End	Meerlust	M'Hudi
Muratie Wine		Ken Forrester	Meinert	Monterosso
Quoin Rock		Kings Kloof	Middelvlei	Mooiplaas
Rainbows End		Longridge	Neethlingshof	Mostertsdrift
Remhoogte		Lourensford	Oude Libertas	Sterhuis
Rustenberg		Miravel	Overgaauw	Villiera
Simonsig		Morgenster	Saxenburg	Vrede
Thelma Mountain		Mount Rozier	Skilpadvlei	
Tokara		Onderkloof	Spier	
Uitkyk		Peter Falke	Stellekaya	
Warwick		Ridgemor	Stellenbosch Hills	
Zorgvliet		Romond	Sylvanvale	
		Rust en Vrede	The company of wine people	
		Somerbosch	The High Road	
		Stonewall	Vilafonte	
		The company of wine people	Vredenheim	
		Uva Mira	Welmoed	
		Vergelegen	Zevenwacht	
		Vergenoegd		
		Waterkloof		
		Waterstone		
		Webersburg		
		Yonder Hill		
		Zandberg		
Total n=146				

(source: http://www.wineroute.co.za)

APPENDIX B1: SUPPLY-SIDE QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1	What kind of experience does Stellenbosch as a wine destination offer to visitors? *(How is SWR positioned? What are the perceptions you want tourists to have?)*
Q2	What do visitors expect from a top class wine region like Stellenbosch? *(In terms of atmosphere, products/services, activities, experience, and quality, i.e. the whole package.)*
Q3	If a visitor arrives in Stellenbosch and wants to experience the wine route, can you describe the itinerary you would recommend? *(Describe fully.)*
Q4	Can you describe the necessary aspects required to create a memorable experience so that visitors will return and also recommend the wine region to others.
Q5	Conversely, how would you describe an experience that is easily forgotten by visitors? What goes wrong? An experience that doesn't stand out from the crowd
Q6	If a wine estate wants to pride itself on world class service and quality, what do u expect them to offer and how would they go about achieving this reputation? *(Service quality required from the personnel involved. Is there a minimum service standard? How is it measured?)*

Identify 2 popular and 2 less well-known wine estates from each sub-route.

ROUTE	POPULAR	LESS WELL-KNOWN
Greater Simonsberg	1. 2.	1. 2.
Stellenbosch Berg	1. 2.	1. 2.
Helderberg	1. 2.	1. 2.
Stellenbosch Hills	1. 2.	1. 2.
Bottelary Hills	1. 2.	1. 2.

APPENDIX B2: DEMAND-SIDE QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1	How do you plan your wine route experience? *(From deciding which estates to visit, finding their info, deciding the times to go, how many to visit etc.)*
Q2	What sources of information do you use?
Q3	What do you expect wine estates to offer to make your wine experience a memorable one? *(Discuss in terms of activities, offerings, and service quality.)*
Q4	Can you describe your most memorable wine route experience? What aspects made it so memorable? *(Describe fully.)*
Q5	Can you describe a wine farm experience that didn't stand out from the crowd? What went wrong? Didn't meet your expectations? *(Describe fully.)*
Q6	If a wine farm wants to pride itself to offer world-class service and quality, what do you expect such a wine farm to offer?
Q7	Keeping your ideal wine farm in mind, discuss the whole process of service delivery you expect from your arrival at the wine farm to departure.
Q8	In your opinion, what are the most important criteria that you would use to evaluate a wine estate? *(Quality wine; ambience; service – knowledge, friendliness, willingness to serve etc.)*

APPENDIX B3: MYSTERY VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE FIELDWORKER				
Surname:			**First Name:**	
Race*:	☐ White	☐ Black	☐ Coloured	☐ Asian
Wine estate visited:	**Stellenbosch Hills route:** **Bottelary Hills route:**	☐ Estate SR ☐ Estate BR	☐ Estate SU ☐ Estate BU	
Date of Visit:		**Time of Entry:**		
Time of Departure:		**Contact no./ Email^:**		

** Race is asked solely to determine if visitors are treated equally*
^ For validation purposes only

TO BE COMPLETED BY FIELD AGENCY				
Wine category:	☐ Occasional visitor ☐ Frequent visitor			
Group no.:	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

INSTRUCTIONS (READ CAREFULLY!)

1. Under no circumstances is this questionnaire to be taken onto the wine estates. Familiarise yourself with these questions prior to the visit so you know what to observe. Be honest in your responses.
2. You must visit, in specific order, the wine estates allocated to you at the briefing.
3. You are required to behave normally like a typical wine tourist – the staff at the wine estate must not be aware that you are a mystery visitor.
4. Read all questions carefully and ensure all questions are answered, as incomplete questionnaires will result in non-payment.
5. You will engage in wine tasting at all the wine farms you visit on the day so ensure you have a designated driver with you.
6. **You are required to purchase 1 bottle of wine from the 3rd wine estate allocated to you.**
7. **All receipts from wine tasting and purchase need to be attached to this questionnaire.**
8. Make sure your responses are neat and legible. If you require additional space use the back pages but label the question number clearly.

SECTION A: PRE-VISIT / SEARCH PHASE

Discuss how you attained the relevant information that enabled you to go to the wine estate. For example, if previous visit, what can you remember about the wine estate? If tourist information centres, what did they tell you about the wine estate? If Internet (search engine/website), what was said/listed? Any other means? In each case, was the information sufficient or did you have to further your search? If so, please state augmented information source and information sought. **Also:** What words or phrases come to mind when hearing [name of wine estate]? What do you expect from the wine farm (if any)?
Verbatim text:

SECTION B: WINE ESTATE VISIT

B1: PHYSICAL COMPONENT

EN-ROUTE, DRIVEWAY, PARKING	**RATING:**	**0 = Strongly Disagree**										**10 = Strongly Agree**
1.	I had no problems locating where the wine estate was.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2.	The wine estate was well sign posted and easy to find.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.	The driveway into the wine estate was aesthetically pleasing.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4.	The signs directing me to the different areas of the wine estate (restaurant, vineyard, cellar door, etc.) were well demarcated.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5.	There was sufficient parking space.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT	**RATING:**	**0 = Strongly Disagree**										**10 = Strongly Agree**
6.	The buildings were what I expected a wine estate to be.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7.	The physical environment of the wine estate is attractive.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8.	The environment & scenery make me feel relaxed.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CELLAR DOOR INTERIOR & DÉCOR												
9.	The interior was what I expected from a wine farm.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10.	The interior and décor were aesthetically pleasing.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11.	Different sections within the cellar door were clearly demarcated (touring, tasting, payment areas, etc.).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
RESTROOMS	**RATING:**	**0 = Strongly Disagree**										**10 = Strongly Agree**
12.	The restroom signage was clearly visible.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13.	The restroom was clean and hygienic.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14.	The restroom had all the amenities I expected it to have.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B2: SERVICE COMPONENT												
PRESENTATION OF STAFF		RATING:	0 = Strongly Disagree								10 = Strongly Agree	
15.	The staff were easily identifiable.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
16.	The staff were neat and tidy in appearance.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
17.	Their demeanour was what I expected from a wine farm.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SERVICE AT THE CELLAR DOOR												
WELCOMING OF VISITORS		RATING:	0 = Strongly Disagree								10 = Strongly Agree	
18.	My presence was acknowledged by staff.		0										10
19.	The staff were not chatting amongst themselves instead of attending to clients.		0										10
20.	The personnel made me feel welcome.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
WINE TASTING & STAFF KNOWLEDGE		RATING:	0 = Strongly Disagree								10 = Strongly Agree	
21.	The wine maker was passionate about his wines (if did not meet wine maker then tick 'N/A').	N/A	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
22.	The wine maker was highly professional (if did not meet wine maker then tick 'N/A').	N/A	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
23.	Meeting the wine maker enhanced my experience at the wine farm (if did not meet wine maker then tick 'N/A').	N/A	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
24.	There was a large variety of wines to choose from.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
25.	I was recommended appropriate wines based on my preferences.		0										10
26.	The wines were clearly described to me.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
27.	The description by the wine staff matched my taste experience.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
28.	I was given the correct wines I asked to taste.		0										10
29.	The glass(es) presented to me for tasting were free of stains and fingerprints.		0										10
30.	I felt that the wines I tasted were of high quality.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
31.	Wine staff had sound wine knowledge. For example, be able to differentiate between a Sauvignon Blanc vs. Chenin Blanc.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
32.	Wine staff knew the product range of the wine estate (i.e. knew wine on offering very well).		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
33.	I would have liked to go on a cellar tour (if not offered).		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

STAFF INTERACTION			RATING: 0 = Strongly Disagree 10 = Strongly Agree										
34.	The personnel asked my food and wine preferences before recommending wine.		0										10
35.	The personnel recommended activities at their estate without me having to enquire about them.		0										10
36.	I feel that the staff were genuinely interested in my visit to the wine farm.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
37.	I felt that the staff went the extra mile to meet my needs.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
WINE PURCHASE (only complete Q41-48 for the 3rd wine estate you visit)			**RATING: 0 = Strongly Disagree 10 = Strongly Agree**										
38.	When I purchased wine I was charged the correct price.	N/A	0										10
39.	When I purchased wine I was given the correct change (if paid by cash).	N/A	0										10
40.	When I purchased wine I was given a receipt upon payment (if not, **ask** for it and attach it to this questionnaire).	N/A	0										10
41.	When I purchased wine I received the correct number of bottles I paid for.	N/A	0										10
42.	The wine I purchased was adequately packaged before given to me.	N/A	0										10
43.	The staff thanked me for my purchase.	N/A	0										10
44.	When I purchased wine, the purchase transaction was performed in a swift and proficient manner.	N/A	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
45.	The personnel did not try to up-sell or cross-sell.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
46.	I did not feel pressurised to make a purchase.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
47.	The cellar door setting and ambience enticed me to purchase wine.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
48.	The service I received enticed me to purchase wine.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
VISITOR DEPARTURE			**RATING: 0 = Strongly Disagree 10 = Strongly Agree**										
49.	I was given a pleasant parting remark.		0										10
50.	I felt the staff appreciated my patronage.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL STATEMENTS			**RATING: 0 = Strongly Disagree 10 = Strongly Agree**										
51.	I liked the ambience of the wine estate.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
52.	I felt safe throughout my wine experience on the wine estate.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
53.	The wine tasting experience was enjoyable.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
54.	The overall experience exceeded my initial expectations.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
55.	I will definitely visit the wine farm again in the near future / when in the wine area again.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
56.	I will definitely refer this winery to family and friends.		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B3: OVERALL EXPERIENCE
Please comment on your overall experience at the wine estate by elaborating on the above questions that are pertinent to your experience (e.g. noteworthy issues that impressed or disappointed you and why). You must also cover the following (focus on how you felt at that time): 1. *Any en-route comments you would like to make? For example, was it easy to find? Was the route taking scenic? Safety of roads and passing areas, cleanliness, etc.)* 2. *What of the wine farm stands out for you personally (physicality)?* 3. *Comment on the actual service – focus on the actual facts, then your emotions, and what must be done differently to enhance your experience (what stood out/didn't stand out).* 4. *Provide an overall rating of the wine estate and explain why you would or would not come back.* ***PLEASE ENSURE YOUR COMMENTS TIE IN WITH YOUR RATINGS IN THE QUESTIONS.***
Verbatim text:

APPENDIX C1: ESTATE SR MYSTERY VISITOR VERBATIM COMMENTS (TIER 1)

PRE-VISIT PHASE

Observation 1 (occasional visitor 1)

The [Estate SR] website was very informative with separate links for all the different aspects of the wine farm such as: the history of the farm, setting, the wines, tasting facilities, restaurant and function facilities, contact information, a gallery of photos of the farm and its wines.

The website was comprehensive and easy to navigate and gave sufficient information to attract me to visit the farm. Although the contact information was sufficient I had to refer to a map of the winelands to find the address easily.

Foreign, Dutch, old-fashioned, rich in history.

This farm has been producing wine since 1705 and so I expect to see a lot of the wines history at the farm. But I also expect to see some more modern aspects to the farm as they have been trying to redesign the farm to become more modern and fashionable. I also expect the wine to be of very good quality.

Observation 2 (frequent visitor 1)

Previous visits to the estate had left memories of a long entrance driveway with tall pine trees on either side of the road leaning to the effect of the constant wind. Large white fountain and multi-national flagpoles also made the site easily distinguishable.

For interest sake, Google had showed the estate website as top search result.

The name gives impression of culture and heritage. Being a "hof" it would have been some political figure or landlord's home. One would expect dining and manor house tours at the site and perhaps antique household items on display. Another site that bears this feeling is Groot Constantia or even Vergelegen.

Observation 3 (occasional visitor 2)

Asked at petrol station near Spier. Explained how to get there. Very impressive old estate.

Observation 4 (frequent visitor 2)

I knew exactly where [Estate SR] is as I have been there before and the wine estate is well known. I did not need any assistance to get there.

Phrases: sophisticated, commercialised, peaceful, good quality wine. I expect top quality service from them.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Observation 1 (occasional visitor 1)

I really enjoyed this wine farm. The drive up to the farm was beautiful, with trees and flowers lining the side of the driveway. There was a lot of parking with two large separate parking lots. You had to sign in at the security gate with a boom at the entrance so I felt very safe. There were a lot of cars in the parking lots so it appears to be a very popular farm.

The tasting room was easy to locate, you had to walk past the restaurant and the gardens to get there, which were really pretty. The staff in the tasting room were very polite and we were greeted by a number of servers all in easily identifiable green aprons.

The wine tasting was very enjoyable with each wine described very well. We were seated at a table and given time on our own to discuss each wine between each tasting. The table setting was nice with clean glasses, water, spittoons and crackers to eat between each tasting. The wine was excellent. There was a very nice variety of wine and we were asked our preferences before we started. I felt like the lady serving us knew her wines very well and towards the end she got to know my tastes and made some good recommendations for what wines I should try for the last few tastings. We got to try six of their wines. I would definitely go back as I would love to try more of them. Their red wines were very nice and easy drinking. The lady serving us was able to answer any questions that we had and informed us what wine was out of stock before we began.

I would give this farm a very high rating (8/10); it is definitely a farm for everyone to visit especially for tourists who want to experience wine tasting of a very high standard with excellent service.

Observation 2 (frequent visitor 1)

The estate was located on the side of a large regional scale road and the signage was clear. Large amount of traffic (relatively) made the travel feel secure albeit somewhat commercial. Roads and parking are all well designated and tarred.

The estate, from the parking through the garden to the tasting room, had a distinct "resort" feel. Like a one stop chilling place for a Saturday. The many visitors at the site enforces the commercial feel.

The interior was a big surprise. The modern "bar" feeling was in one's face. From the lighting (almost neon-ish green) to the furniture (synthetics) and glass doors, nothing was as one expects from a wine farm. In fact, no hint we were still in the Cape. The setting was extremely Gauteng; one could even argue Camps Bay if it was more packed (furniture).

We were greeted by the one of many uniformed "waitrons". They talk and walk like your average restaurant waitrons, ushering to seats, cleaning up tables, bringing crackers and telling you a particular section is reserved. Well-trained, professional but extremely impersonal.

The server stood at our table and brought the wine we requested to taste on command/request swiftly, mechanically. No personal questions were asked of our visit, our preference, or our food choice. Although this is often not done at other estates, it was clear that they were on a mission to serve us the six choice of tasting. It gave me the feeling that

they wouldn't mind if I had wanted to taste the Shiraz before Sauvignon Blanc. The server had sound knowledge of the vintage and stock situation. Purchase was carried out swiftly and precisely; although they lacked the packaging for the Magnum we bought, they did makeshift a box using a two-bottle case.

Toilet is worth noting, having similar cleanliness and amenities as your average mall, which is below average relative to the wine estates. The service level can definitely improve if the servers were more interested in our visit than getting through her day. Not to say that they were not friendly, just that there seemed to be a "wall" there.

Would visit again if feel like taking some nice photos of surrounding sceneries and antiqued buildings. Wine tasting would serve as a bonus. Physical component: average, having picturesque surrounding and not for everyone interior. Service: below average. Overall 60/100.

Observation 3 (occasional visitor 2)

Not clearly sign posted from main road. Very nice route to farm, big trees – impressive. The trees on the way in impressed me the most – very beautiful. Very professional and can see the estate is used to handling big groups of tourists.

7/10 – very good and wines are tasty, but think it's too commercialised for my taste.

Observation 4 (frequent visitor 2)

The wine estate is very beautiful and well maintained.

It took long before someone assisted us with the actual wine tasting and then although the gentleman was very friendly and pleasant, I had difficulty understanding him as English is not his mother tongue and as a result he did not pronounce words correctly.

Overall a good experience – I would return.

APPENDIX C2: ESTATE SU MYSTERY VISITOR VERBATIM COMMENTS (TIER 1)

PRE-VISIT PHASE

Observation 1 (occasional visitor 1)

The [Estate SU] website was quite comprehensive containing three main aspects: the vineyards, practices, the winemaker. The website focused mainly on the information about the wines and the winemaker with no information about added attractions, e.g. restaurants, tours. The contact information was good, although a map of the winelands was consulted to find the farm.

[Estate SU]: mountains, family name, tradition.

[Estate SU] is one of the oldest family run estates in the area and has been producing exceptional wine for four generations. So I expect the wine to be very good and the farm to be a place rich in history and tradition.

Observation 2 (frequent visitor 1)

Google the name of the estate and their website comes as top result. The "contact us" section has a link to an out-of-scale map and instructions on getting there. Map is of no good, but instructions should suffice. GPS location is also on the page which is a bit of an overkill but I imagine it would help me if I was in a rental car with GPS receiver.

Nothing in particular comes to mind since the name sounded very much like a commonplace or family name.

Website appears relatively simple and one would expect the actual site to be similar. Should be like a typical South African (Western Cape) estate establishment.

Observation 3 (occasional visitor 2)

Easy to find. Asked at [Estate SR] how to get there. Not well known, so couldn't form any picture in my mind about estate. Family run estate, small and intimate.

Observation 4 (frequent visitor 2)

I have not been to the wine estate before. I searched on the internet to find directions. I could not find sufficient info and had to phone them for directions. The website was also not user friendly.

Phrases: small, family owned, rustic, peaceful. However, tasting area too small and crowded.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Observation 1 (occasional visitor 1)

[Estate SU] was a very different experience in comparison to [Estate SR]. It is a very small family owned estate full of history. There was only one small building where the tasting and sales are conducted.

The lady who served us was the daughter of the owner of the farm and she told us all about the history of the wine and the farm. The tasting was conducted in a very informal way, we just stood at the counter and she served us the wine that we had chosen to taste. She then discussed each wine with us. The service was very good and she knew the wines well but it would also have been nice to have some time on our own to discuss the wines without her watching over us. The wine was very good, they produce a type of white wine (Sylvana), that no other farm in South Africa produces.

The drive up to the farm was very boring, with just a short gravel driveway. The parking area was not clearly marked with very little parking.

I really enjoyed the farm, it had a much less commercial atmosphere to it than [Estate SR] and I felt like our patronage was appreciated. I would definitely go back there and recommend family and friends to go there. It had a very relaxed atmosphere with dogs lying on the carpets in the tasting room and a communal spittoon. The focus on the family history really stood out to me and made it a special experience. One of their ranges of wine: Shepards Cottage, is named after a cottage on the farm that every couple in the family has lived in over the years. The current winemaker is living there now with this new wife.

I would give this wine farm a high rating (7/10). The wine was excellent and the tasting was a very personal experience. I would definitely come back as I felt very at home and comfortable here and the wine was very good. It is a must for tourists who want to experience a tasting that is very different to the usual more commercial farms.

Observation 2 (frequent visitor 1)

The main gate was easy enough to spot, and since it had a sign on the main road it was easy to locate the site. Turning off from the main road one notices a "tuck shop" establishment at the corner with a big Coke and Diesel signs. Didn't seem too safe. Didn't see any sort of township establishments that such shops usually serve around here; that is good.

Past the gate and short gravel road, one arrives at a rather petite parking lot. In front of the house which, if one has not already seen it on the website, will probably not recognise as the tasting room. The tiny metal door opened magically when we approached and it seemed our presence was somehow recognised by an unknown host. Perhaps there was an angle the server at the far side of the room could see us, but we certainly didn't see him.

Inside was a typical tasting room with a bit of a farm stall feel, having some farm product on display amongst some wines. The tasting room was clearly the house's lounge redecorated. A bit homey, but not enough to make a real impression.

The server was wearing casual clothes that look more like a visitor, but since he was the only one standing behind the counter, it was easily recognisable. Our first guess was that he is either the winemaker or owner (due to his enthusiastic introduction of the tasting line up) but it turns out he just works there on Saturdays. The server showed knowledge of the estate and their wine but did not seem to care too much about looking professional when carrying out the tasting. This adds well to the homey vibe of the estate and we feel we are guests to the house instead of clients to the estate.

The overall service was so-so but overall feel is good. The server clearly did not care whether we bought or not, he was there to share the wine experience with the guest. This is obvious in the way that he almost did not seem too keen on carrying our the purchase and looked rather uneasy. This can also be due to the fact that the till was down that day, thus no receipt was

offered.

Overall: unexpected "shabby" house setting, interesting wines for tasting but on pricey side, not much to do besides the tasting, not particularly spacious or scenic, very friendly service, albeit slightly unprofessional. Will visit again is looking for cosiness; on your average Saturday that doesn't happen a lot. Rating: 65%.

Observation 3 (occasional visitor 2)

Easy to find. Very small estate. Staff friendly and helpful. Short route – like the red hearts on the fence and trees. 7/10 – maybe come back.

Observation 4 (frequent visitor 2)

[Estate SU] was not as "nice" as I expected a wine estate to be. It was a bit like "just arriving at any farm" not "geared" for many visitors and tourists. There is ample parking space although not "marked" parking. There was a group of +/- 15 tourists and this made the wine tasting very crowded. There was only one person available to assist us and as a result he could not give his full attention to a person. I listened to him and he seemed knowledgeable but could not get to everyone. I would not especially go back there for tasting in future.

APPENDIX C3: ESTATE BR MYSTERY VISITOR VERBATIM COMMENTS (TIER 1)

PRE-VISIT PHASE

Observation 1 (occasional visitor 1)

The [Estate BR] website was very busy with a lot of information on the one page. It included links to all the usual aspects of the farm, e.g. history, the wines, contact information. But it also included other interesting aspects such as: awards that their wines have received, recipes for meals that go well with their wines, latest news, a link to their newsletter.

The website was very exciting and appealed to me a lot. The number of awards that the estate has received makes it a good farm for people to take the time to visit.

[Estate BR]: full of heart, deep in the mountains, family heritage.

I would expect the wine from this farm to be very good as they have received many awards. The farm is not a very old farm and so I expect quite a modern setting with nice facilities. The exciting web page makes me expect an estate that will be slightly different and more modern than the usual old-fashioned Cape-Dutch styled estates.

Observation 2 (frequent visitor 1)

"Googling" the term [Estate BR] brings up the company website as well as a Google Map showing exactly where it is. It was sufficient for the purpose of information attainment in terms of knowing where it is. A custom map can be found in the "contact us" section of the company website as well as instructions for getting to the estate.

Nothing particular comes to mind upon hearing the estate's name. One would imagine [Estate BR] being a surname of the founder or is simply the name of the mountain slope it might sit on. It does, however, give a down-to-earth, traditional feel.

From the information on the website showing their history of accolades and the rather snobbish naming conventions of the wine, one would expect the estate to have some good wines for tasting, though of course not all of the good ones will be.

Observation 3 (occasional visitor 2)

Again have not visited before, but knew where estate was. Well-known wines; respected. Nice experience tasting wine; should be pleasant.

Observation 4 (frequent visitor 2)

I went onto internet to get directions to wine estate, however, the full address was not there, so I could not use Google Maps for my route planner. I had to call them to get exact address.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Observation 1 (occasional visitor 1)

The [Estate BR] estate was not that easy to find, it is not on the map (Cape Town map book) and we had to get directions from one of the other farms. The signage to the farm was also

not clear and we almost drove right past it. The drive up to the farm was quite scenic.

We were not greeted when we entered the tasting room and we had to go and find help in the shop. We were then seated and poured half a glass of wine without being asked what we wanted to try or told what it was. We were then ignored for a long time until another server came and helped me. He was much more informative and stayed with us to talk about the wines and discuss our preferences. I did feel like the staff were a bit condescending because I did not know a lot of about wine. The tasting setting was nice, but they do not clean out the spittoons or give fresh water after people leave as our spittoon was full.

I felt they should have someone greet you at the door to the tasting room and show you to a table. The wine was very good but the server did not really describe each wine to us. He seemed to be in a hurry to get us to taste all of the wines.

I would not give this farm a very high rating, it was average (5/10). The setting and wines were excellent but the service I received was very poor and detracted from the whole experience. I expected a lot from this farm as their website was amazing and they have won so many awards. So I was disappointed. I don't think I would recommend it to friends or family.

Observation 2 (frequent visitor 1)

Getting to the place was easy enough given that the location and direction was available. The Bottelary route, however, did surprise with its lack of general signage of the wine farms in the area and one had to be slightly more cautious to not miss the turn. This does affect the general mood somewhat, but not severely. The drive into the estate was not particularly spectacular. The road, although tarred, does meander pass bushes that could resemble a drive into a scrap yard, but as soon as the neat lines of vines was in the picture, the wine tasting-day-trip mood was re-established.

One arrived at an empty parking lot but struggled somewhat to locate the tasting centre due to the lack of signs. It gave a feeling that one was trespassing private property. One was greeted by the winemaker who stood outside the tasting centre. The setting of the tasting centre was tastefully decorated with garden tables in a circle. We were the only ones there and were ushered to a table inside where we were also greeted warmly by someone who appeared to be the owner. Both the staff looked to be in a casual mood and showed such in both their clothing and demeanour. The winemaker did not seem to enthusiastic about telling us about his wines but the owner (dressed in very relaxed home wear) was very interested in our visit and passionate about their wine.

The tasting was carried out professionally and the wines were of great quality. The owner's company made all the difference. She was, however, not very adept at working the till and credit card machine.

Overall, I think having the winemaker there to serve guests probably isn't the best call, he seemed uninterested to fraternise with amateurs. The owner was a good host and good sales person, which makes one wonder whether good sales always make good hosts. We did walk away with some new wine knowledge and buy-in-bulk deals of high quality wine.

Physical component: average, tastefully decorated tasting area balanced out the dull drive. Guesthouse level restroom is a plus.

Service component: superb, we were lucky to be the only one there and were greeted by the winemaker and owner.

Extra: good variety of high quality wine at bargain price.

One would return if cellar is emptying (to make good use of buy-in bulk deals) or when bringing wine loving guests to taste the few interestingly made wines. Overall, 83/100.

Observation 3 (occasional visitor 2)

The wines were all explained in detail as well as which food would suit wine.

Nice road to estate.

I purchased wine at this estate and didn't have to pay for the wine tasting because of the wine purchased.

This was the best experience out of all the estates visited. The staff were extremely friendly and introduced themselves to me. As I did all tasting on my own, the staff here made me feel most at ease about being alone. I was offered water (without asking) and received a gold glass of water with ice and mint – very appealing and refreshing!

Easy to find estate as it is on a main road. 9/10 – would definitely come back and recommend estate to others.

Observation 4 (frequent visitor 2)

Need clearer/more signage on route and also at actual entrance to estate. It was not that easy to find. The farm is very rustic and beautiful. It is well marked once you are at the buildings. The environment is pleasing for the eye.

The restaurant as you walk towards the tasting room was so peaceful. Service was good; product knowledge was good; good experience. Staff very friendly and helpful. I would send people here for something other than the commercial wine experience.

APPENDIX C4: ESTATE BU MYSTERY VISITOR VERBATIM COMMENTS (TIER 1)

PRE-VISIT PHASE

Observation 1 (occasional visitor 1)

The [Estate BU] website was very comprehensive with a number of different links to different aspects of the farm, e.g. history, practices, the wines, the winemaker, contact information. The contact information did include a useful map. The website was quite technical with a lot of animation and so it was not possible to navigate it that easily. I expect a very old-fashioned farm with old style buildings. I am not sure of the quality of the wine as they do not mention any awards.

Observation 2 (frequent visitor 1)

Google showed the company website in the top find. A Google Map entry was also found for [Estate BU] Pty Ltd, which was indeed the estate. Information was thus sufficient.

The word "pretentious" (or grossly "exaggerated") has to come to mind upon hearing the name unless one would imagine wine being made in a castle larder and winemakers sleeping inside a barrack. Ale, maybe, but not wine.

A brief paging through the high tech website implies the owner is serious about business, perhaps even more business than actual visit to the estate. The list of achievements implies the wines should be above average, but not exceptional (many 3.5 stars and accolades from non-mainstream events, not to mention some Best Value Awards, which seldom awards highest quality). It also implies the price tags should be quite generous.

Observation 3 (occasional visitor 2)

I've never visited the wine estate before, but knew where it was. Old charming, makes me think of the castle in CT.

Observation 4 (frequent visitor 2)

Have not been to this wine estate before. I used the internet to find information but it was insufficient, so I had to call them to find directions.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Observation 1 (occasional visitor 1)

The signage to [Estate BU] was not very clear, with no sign at the actual turn off. There is then a long drive on a gravel road and so we were not even sure we were going the right way. Eventually there is a small sign that indicates the entrance of [Estate BU]. The driveway was not very scenic but it was nice to drive next to the vines.

The estate was not what you would normally expect from a wine farm; instead of the usual Cape-Dutch style farmhouses, the cellar is a large castle built of face brick. The tasting room was a smaller castle next to the cellar. This theme really stood out for me, it was something different to the usual wine farm experience and therefore makes it a must to visit.

The service was good, it was also very personal and one-on-one as we were the only people there. We got to taste five of their wines and the server clearly described their two ranges of wine. The server was very friendly and we chatted to her about where we had been and she recommended other farms we should visit. We asked her about the castle cellar and it would have been nice if she had offered us a tour or told us more about it.

I would give this farm a high rating (7/10). The wine was good, there was friendly service and the setting stood out and was something unique and different. I would come back and recommend it to friends.

Observation 2 (frequent visitor 1)

Even with previously prepared direction aid one still managed to miss turns, thanks to the lack of signage, which seemed to be a Bottelary thing. The gravel road (long one) that led to the farm did not bid well for the travelling experience.

The estate building is the last thing one could imagine it to be: a real fort. Although close examination shows that the building exterior still looked quite modern (the face brick on the main building), the theme-park value did add well to the experience. I mean, it had its own moat and battery (with a cannon).

Upon entering the tasting room which resembled a barrack building, we were greeted by a uniformed host. She appears to be fast asleep but did not fail to welcome us with the standard "are you here for a tasting", which implies she is not the owner and was trained properly.

The inside was not a typical wine tasting setting being rather dark with a musky feel. Perhaps done purposefully to enhance the theme, The tasting was carried out professionally but one imagines that it wouldn't be so great if more guests were there, seeing that there is only one server. The server showed knowledge of the wine vintage and style as well as history of the farm, enforcing the assumption that she is well trained by the owner (or is the owner's daughter). The casual demeanour and professional service displayed was what I had in my experience at Western Cape wine farms. This added to the relaxing and South African mood.

The server was not a good sales person and did not pitch their product, but did waiver our tasting fee when I expressed my desire to purchase. This is also quite common at many smaller wine farms and again added to the South African homey feel.

One feels that the entire experience was quite uniformed and that to enhance the experience, the owners would need to make changes for almost every single thing from the road condition to the wine label sticker. There is really no need for that since the unique setting and above average wine is good enough to bring returning visitors.

Physical component: above average; the theme park value is a big plus. Service component: average; everything a standard South African tasting room has. Overall: 80/100. One would return when one doesn't feel like adventure and want standard service, or when bringing guests (to see the fort).

Observation 3 (occasional visitor 2)

When I arrived at cellar, no one on duty. I heard staff talking in the back office. Tried calling to them but no one appeared. Waited about 5-10 minutes before anyone arrived to assist me.

The estate is very impressive – especially the buildings which look like a fort. Scenic route to estate, but the dirt road leading to the estate is very bad.

The staff didn't make any conversation or explained much about the wine. I did most of the talking and asked lots of questions.

Scenery great, but staff just average. 5/10.

Observation 4 (frequent visitor 2)

Not that easy to find. Signage to [Estate BU] is very poor, especially because it is a gravel road, they need an extra signpost right at the gravel road. The gravel road is very bad – needs attention.

Because we drove past the entrance twice, we only got to the farm at 14h00. The girl was very upset even though there were still other people tasting. The non-verbal message was "I want to go home now". I requested that we were allowed to come in for quick taste which she then allowed. After a few minutes she relaxed and service improved. I liked it, I would have loved to stay longer.

The estate buildings are a pleasant surprise and the environment suited the style. The inside of the wine tasting is also very appealing and inviting. The wines were tasty and loved the 375ml bottles you could purchase there.

I would like to have private evening function there, but what would prevent me from doing that is the bad gravel road at night.

APPENDIX C5: ESTATE SR QUANTITATIVE RESULTS (TIER 2)

PHYSICAL COMPONENT					
EN-ROUTE, DRIVEWAY, PARKING	**OBS 1 (n=5)**	**OBS 2 (n=5)**	**OBS 3 (n=5)**	**OBS 4 (n=5)**	***MEAN***
1. I had no problems locating where the wine estate was.	90,0	90,0	70,0	20,0	*67,5*
2. The wine estate was well sign posted and easy to find.	90,0	70,0	80,0	20,0	*65,0*
3. The driveway into the wine estate was aesthetically pleasing.	50,0	70,0	80,0	60,0	*65,0*
4. The signs directing me to the different areas of the wine estate (restaurant, vineyard, cellar door, etc.) were well demarcated.	0,0	60,0	60,0	50,0	*42,5*
5. There was sufficient parking space.	40,0	50,0	70,0	60,0	*55,0*
MEAN	*54,0*	*68,0*	*72,0*	*42,0*	*59,0*
OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
6. The buildings were what I expected a wine estate to be.	70,0	60,0	60,0	40,0	*57,5*
7. The physical environment of the wine estate is very attractive.	60,0	60,0	70,0	50,0	*60,0*
8. The environment & scenery make me feel very relaxed.	80,0	50,0	70,0	70,0	*67,5*
MEAN	*70,0*	*56,7*	*66,7*	*53,3*	*61,7*
CELLAR DOOR INTERIOR & DÉCOR	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
9. The interior was what I expected from a wine farm.	90,0	80,0	70,0	60,0	*75,0*
10. The interior and décor were aesthetically pleasing.	90,0	70,0	70,0	60,0	*72,5*
11. Different sections within the cellar door were clearly demarcated (touring, tasting, payment areas, etc.).	30,0	50,0	70,0	50,0	*50,0*
MEAN	*70,0*	*66,7*	*70,0*	*56,7*	*65,8*
RESTROOMS	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
12. The restroom signage was clearly visible.	60,0	50,0	60,0	50,0	*55,0*
13. The restroom was clean and hygienic.	90,0	60,0	70,0	50,0	*67,5*
14. The restroom had all the amenities I expected it to have.	90,0	50,0	70,0	60,0	*67,5*
MEAN	*80,0*	*53,3*	*66,7*	*53,3*	*63,3*
PHYSICAL COMPONENT TOTAL MEAN	***68,5***	***61,2***	***68,8***	***51,3***	***62,5***

SERVICE COMPONENT					
PRESENTATION OF STAFF	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
15. The staff were easily identifiable.	70,0	90,0	70,0	50,0	*70,0*
16. The staff were neat and tidy in appearance.	90,0	70,0	70,0	70,0	*75,0*
17. Their demeanour was what I expected from a wine farm.	100,0	90,0	70,0	90,0	*87,5*
MEAN	*86,7*	*83,3*	*70,0*	*70,0*	*77,5*
WELCOMING OF VISITORS	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
18. My presence was acknowledged by staff.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
19. The staff were not chatting amongst themselves instead of attending to clients.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
20. The personnel made me feel welcome.	100,0	90,0	80,0	90,0	*90,0*
MEAN	*100,0*	*96,7*	*93,3*	*96,7*	*96,7*
WINE TASTING & STAFF KNOWLEDGE	**OBS 1 (n=10)**	**OBS 2 (n=10)**	**OBS 3 (n=9)**	**OBS 4 (n=9)**	***MEAN***
21. The wine maker was passionate about his wines.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
22. The wine maker was highly professional.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
23. Meeting the wine maker enhanced my experience at the wine farm.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
24. There was a large variety of wines to choose from.	100,0	80,0	60,0	40,0	*70,0*

25.	I was recommended appropriate wines based on my preferences.	0,0	100,0	100,0	50,0	*62,5*
26.	The wines were clearly described to me.	80,0	80,0	70,0	0,0	*57,5*
27.	The description by the wine staff matched my taste experience.	70,0	80,0	70,0	50,0	*67,5*
28.	I was given the correct wines I asked to taste.	100,0	100,0	100,0	60,0	*90,0*
29.	The glass(es) presented to me for tasting were free of stains and fingerprints.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
30.	I felt that the wines I tasted were of high quality.	90,0	70,0	70,0	60,0	*72,5*
31.	Wine staff had sound wine knowledge. For example, be able to differentiate between a Sauvignon Blanc vs. Chenin Blanc.	100,0	100,0	70,0	50,0	*80,0*
32.	Wine staff knew the product range of the wine estate (i.e. knew wine on offering very well).	100,0	80,0	70,0	60,0	*77,5*
33.	I would have liked to go on a cellar tour (if not offered).	100,0	40,0	N/A	N/A	*70,0*
	MEAN	*84,0*	*83,0*	*78,9*	*52,2*	*75,0*
STAFF INTERACTION		**OBS 1** (n=4)	**OBS 2** (n=4)	**OBS 3** (n=4)	**OBS 4** (n=4)	***MEAN***
34.	The personnel asked my food and wine preferences before recommending wine.	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	*0,0*
35.	The personnel recommended activities at their estate without me having to enquire about them.	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	*0,0*
36.	I feel that the staff were genuinely interested in my visit to the wine farm.	100,0	80,0	70,0	40,0	*72,5*
37.	I felt that the staff went the extra mile to meet my needs.	90,0	70,0	60,0	50,0	*67,5*
	MEAN	47,5	37,5	32,5	22,5	*35,0*
WINE PURCHASE		**OBS 1** (n=4)	**OBS 2** (n=10)	**OBS 3** (n=0)	**OBS 4** (n=4)	***MEAN***
38.	When I purchased wine I was charged the correct price.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	*100,0*
39.	When I purchased wine I was given the correct change (if paid by cash).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
40.	When I purchased wine I was given a receipt upon payment.	N/A	0,0	N/A	N/A	*0,0*
41.	When I purchased wine I received the correct number of bottles I paid for.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	*100,0*
42.	The wine I purchased was adequately packaged before given to me.	N/A	0,0	N/A	N/A	*0,0*
43.	The staff thanked me for my purchase.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	*100,0*
44.	When I purchased wine, the purchase transaction was performed in a swift and proficient manner.	N/A	50,0	N/A	N/A	*50,0*
45.	The personnel did not try to up-sell or cross-sell.	100,0	100,0	N/A	90,0	*96,7*
46.	I did not feel pressurised to make a purchase.	90,0	100,0	N/A	90,0	*93,3*
47.	The cellar door setting and ambience enticed me to purchase wine.	80,0	50,0	N/A	20,0	*50,0*
48.	The service I received enticed me to purchase wine.	80,0	80,0	N/A	40,0	*66,7*
	MEAN	*87,5*	*68,0*	*N/A*	*60,0*	*70,6*
VISITOR DEPARTURE		**OBS 1** (n=2)	**OBS 2** (n=2)	**OBS 3** (n=2)	**OBS 4** (n=2)	***MEAN***
49.	I was given a pleasant parting remark.	100,0	10,0	100,0	100,0	*77,5*
50.	I felt the staff appreciated my patronage.	90,0	70,0	80,0	70,0	*77,5*
	MEAN	*95,0*	*40,0*	*90,0*	*85,0*	*77,5*
	SERVICE COMPONENT TOTAL MEAN	*83,4*	*68,1*	*72,9*	*64,4*	*72,0*

OVERALL

OVERALL STATEMENTS		**OBS 1** (n=6)	**OBS 2** (n=6)	**OBS 3** (n=6)	**OBS 4** (n=6)	***MEAN***
51.	I liked the ambience of the wine estate.	80,0	50,0	80,0	50,0	*65,0*
52.	I felt safe throughout my wine experience on the wine estate.	90,0	60,0	80,0	90,0	*80,0*
53.	The wine tasting experience was enjoyable.	60,0	70,0	80,0	40,0	*62,5*
54.	The overall experience exceeded my initial expectations.	70,0	70,0	70,0	40,0	*62,5*
55.	I will definitely visit the wine farm again in the near future / when in the wine area again.	80,0	70,0	60,0	30,0	*60,0*
56.	I will definitely refer this winery to family and friends.	80,0	70,0	60,0	50,0	*65,0*
	MEAN	*76,7*	*65,0*	*71,7*	*50,0*	*65,8*
	OVER ALL TOTAL MEAN	*76,7*	*65,0*	*71,7*	*50,0*	*65,8*

APPENDIX C6: ESTATE SU QUANTITATIVE RESULTS (TIER 2)

PHYSICAL COMPONENT					
EN-ROUTE, DRIVEWAY, PARKING	**OBS 1 (n=5)**	**OBS 2 (n=5)**	**OBS 3 (n=5)**	**OBS 4 (n=5)**	***MEAN***
1. I had no problems locating where the wine estate was.	90,0	90,0	70,0	20,0	*67,5*
2. The wine estate was well sign posted and easy to find.	90,0	70,0	80,0	20,0	*65,0*
3. The driveway into the wine estate was aesthetically pleasing.	50,0	70,0	80,0	60,0	*65,0*
4. The signs directing me to the different areas of the wine estate (restaurant, vineyard, cellar door, etc.) were well demarcated.	0,0	60,0	60,0	50,0	*42,5*
5. There was sufficient parking space.	40,0	50,0	70,0	60,0	*55,0*
MEAN	*54,0*	*68,0*	*72,0*	*42,0*	*59,0*
OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
6. The buildings were what I expected a wine estate to be.	70,0	60,0	60,0	40,0	*57,5*
7. The physical environment of the wine estate is attractive.	60,0	60,0	70,0	50,0	*60,0*
8. The environment & scenery make me feel relaxed.	80,0	50,0	70,0	70,0	*67,5*
MEAN	*70,0*	*56,7*	*66,7*	*53,3*	*61,7*
CELLAR DOOR INTERIOR & DÉCOR	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
9. The interior was what I expected from a wine farm.	90,0	80,0	70,0	60,0	*75,0*
10. The interior and décor were aesthetically pleasing.	90,0	70,0	70,0	60,0	*72,5*
11. Different sections within the cellar door were clearly demarcated (touring, tasting, payment areas, etc.).	30,0	50,0	70,0	50,0	*50,0*
MEAN	*70,0*	*66,7*	*70,0*	*56,7*	*65,8*
RESTROOMS	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
12. The restroom signage was clearly visible.	60,0	50,0	60,0	50,0	*55,0*
13. The restroom was clean and hygienic.	90,0	60,0	70,0	50,0	*67,5*
14. The restroom had all the amenities I expected it to have.	90,0	50,0	70,0	60,0	*67,5*
MEAN	*80,0*	*53,3*	*66,7*	*53,3*	*63,3*
PHYSICAL COMPONENT TOTAL MEAN	***68,5***	***61,2***	***68,8***	***51,3***	***62,5***

SERVICE COMPONENT					
PRESENTATION OF STAFF	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
15. The staff were easily identifiable.	70,0	90,0	70,0	50,0	*70,0*
16. The staff were neat and tidy in appearance.	90,0	70,0	70,0	70,0	*75,0*
17. Their demeanour was what I expected from a wine farm.	100,0	90,0	70,0	90,0	*87,5*
MEAN	*86,7*	*83,3*	*70,0*	*70,0*	*77,5*
WELCOMING OF VISITORS	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
18. My presence was acknowledged by staff.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
19. The staff were not chatting amongst themselves instead of attending to clients.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
20. The personnel made me feel welcome.	100,0	90,0	80,0	90,0	*90,0*
MEAN	*100,0*	*96,7*	*93,3*	*96,7*	*96,7*
WINE TASTING & STAFF KNOWLEDGE	**OBS 1 (n=10)**	**OBS 2 (n=10)**	**OBS 3 (n=9)**	**OBS 4 (n=9)**	***MEAN***
21. The wine maker was passionate about his wines.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
22. The wine maker was highly professional.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
23. Meeting the wine maker enhanced my experience at the wine farm.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
24. There was a large variety of wines to choose from.	100,0	80,0	60,0	40,0	*70,0*

25.	I was recommended appropriate wines based on my preferences.	0,0	100,0	100,0	50,0	62,5
26.	The wines were clearly described to me.	80,0	80,0	70,0	0,0	57,5
27.	The description by the wine staff matched my taste experience.	70,0	80,0	70,0	50,0	67,5
28.	I was given the correct wines I asked to taste.	100,0	100,0	100,0	60,0	90,0
29.	The glass(es) presented to me for tasting were free of stains and fingerprints.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
30.	I felt that the wines I tasted were of high quality.	90,0	70,0	70,0	60,0	72,5
31.	Wine staff had sound wine knowledge. For example, be able to differentiate between a Sauvignon Blanc vs. Chenin Blanc.	100,0	100,0	70,0	50,0	80,0
32.	Wine staff knew the product range of the wine estate (i.e. knew wine on offering very well).	100,0	80,0	70,0	60,0	77,5
33.	I would have liked to go on a cellar tour (if not offered).	100,0	40,0	N/A	N/A	70,0
	MEAN	*84,0*	*83,0*	*78,9*	*52,2*	*75,0*
STAFF INTERACTION		**OBS 1** (n=4)	**OBS 2** (n=4)	**OBS 3** (n=4)	**OBS 4** (n=4)	***MEAN***
34.	The personnel asked my food and wine preferences before recommending wine.	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
35.	The personnel recommended activities at their estate without me having to enquire about them.	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
36.	I feel that the staff were genuinely interested in my visit to the wine farm.	100,0	80,0	70,0	40,0	72,5
37.	I felt that the staff went the extra mile to meet my needs.	90,0	70,0	60,0	50,0	67,5
	MEAN	47,5	37,5	32,5	22,5	35,0
WINE PURCHASE		**OBS 1** (n=4)	**OBS 2** (n=10)	**OBS 3** (n=0)	**OBS 4** (n=4)	***MEAN***
38.	When I purchased wine I was charged the correct price.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
39.	When I purchased wine I was given the correct change (if paid by cash).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
40.	When I purchased wine I was given a receipt upon payment.	N/A	0,0	N/A	N/A	0,0
41.	When I purchased wine I received the correct number of bottles I paid for.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
42.	The wine I purchased was adequately packaged before given to me.	N/A	0,0	N/A	N/A	0,0
43.	The staff thanked me for my purchase.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
44.	When I purchased wine, the purchase transaction was performed in a swift and proficient manner.	N/A	50,0	N/A	N/A	50,0
45.	The personnel did not try to up-sell or cross-sell.	100,0	100,0	N/A	90,0	96,7
46.	I did not feel pressurised to make a purchase.	90,0	100,0	N/A	90,0	93,3
47.	The cellar door setting and ambience enticed me to purchase wine.	80,0	50,0	N/A	20,0	50,0
48.	The service I received enticed me to purchase wine.	80,0	80,0	N/A	40,0	66,7
	MEAN	*87,5*	*68,0*	*N/A*	*60,0*	*70,6*
VISITOR DEPARTURE		**OBS 1** (n=2)	**OBS 2** (n=2)	**OBS 3** (n=2)	**OBS 4** (n=2)	***MEAN***
49.	I was given a pleasant parting remark.	100,0	10,0	100,0	100,0	77,5
50.	I felt the staff appreciated my patronage.	90,0	70,0	80,0	70,0	77,5
	MEAN	*95,0*	*40,0*	*90,0*	*85,0*	*77,5*
	SERVICE COMPONENT TOTAL MEAN	***83,4***	***68,1***	***72,9***	***64,4***	***72,0***

OVERALL

OVERALL STATEMENTS		**OBS 1** (n=6)	**OBS 2** (n=6)	**OBS 3** (n=6)	**OBS 4** (n=6)	***MEAN***
51.	I liked the ambience of the wine estate.	80,0	50,0	80,0	50,0	65,0
52.	I felt safe throughout my wine experience on the wine estate.	90,0	60,0	80,0	90,0	80,0
53.	The wine tasting experience was enjoyable.	60,0	70,0	80,0	40,0	62,5
54.	The overall experience exceeded my initial expectations.	70,0	70,0	70,0	40,0	62,5
55.	I will definitely visit the wine farm again in the near future / when in the wine area again.	80,0	70,0	60,0	30,0	60,0
56.	I will definitely refer this winery to family and friends.	80,0	70,0	60,0	50,0	65,0
	MEAN	*76,7*	*65,0*	*71,7*	*50,0*	*65,8*
	OVER ALL TOTAL MEAN	***76,7***	***65,0***	***71,7***	***50,0***	***65,8***

APPENDIX C7: ESTATE BR QUANTITATIVE RESULTS (TIER 2)

PHYSICAL COMPONENT					
EN-ROUTE, DRIVEWAY, PARKING	**OBS 1 (n=5)**	**OBS 2 (n=5)**	**OBS 3 (n=5)**	**OBS 4 (n=5)**	***MEAN***
1. I had no problems locating where the wine estate was.	60,0	70,0	70,0	20,0	*55,0*
2. The wine estate was well sign posted and easy to find.	50,0	70,0	90,0	20,0	*57,5*
3. The driveway into the wine estate was aesthetically pleasing.	70,0	50,0	90,0	80,0	*72,5*
4. The signs directing me to the different areas of the wine estate (restaurant, vineyard, cellar door, etc.) were well demarcated.	60,0	50,0	90,0	80,0	*70,0*
5. There was sufficient parking space.	80,0	100,0	90,0	100,0	*92,5*
MEAN	*64,0*	*68,0*	*86,0*	*60,0*	*69,5*
OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
6. The buildings were what I expected a wine estate to be.	80,0	60,0	80,0	80,0	*75,0*
7. The physical environment of the wine estate is attractive.	80,0	40,0	80,0	100,0	*75,0*
8. The environment & scenery make me feel relaxed.	70,0	60,0	80,0	100,0	*77,5*
MEAN	*76,7*	*53,3*	*80,0*	*93,3*	*75,8*
CELLAR DOOR INTERIOR & DÉCOR	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
9. The interior was what I expected from a wine farm.	80,0	80,0	70,0	80,0	*77,5*
10. The interior and décor were aesthetically pleasing.	70,0	80,0	80,0	80,0	*77,5*
11. Different sections within the cellar door were clearly demarcated (touring, tasting, payment areas, etc.).	50,0	30,0	80,0	80,0	*60,0*
MEAN	*66,7*	*63,3*	*76,7*	*80,0*	*71,7*
RESTROOMS	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
12. The restroom signage was clearly visible.	40,0	90,0	70,0	80,0	*70,0*
13. The restroom was clean and hygienic.	80,0	90,0	70,0	60,0	*75,0*
14. The restroom had all the amenities I expected it to have.	90,0	100,0	70,0	70,0	*82,5*
MEAN	*70,0*	*93,3*	*70,0*	*70,0*	*75,8*
PHYSICAL COMPONENT TOTAL MEAN	***69,3***	***69,5***	***78,2***	***75,8***	***73,2***

SERVICE COMPONENT					
PRESENTATION OF STAFF	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
15. The staff were easily identifiable.	30,0	30,0	80,0	60,0	*50,0*
16. The staff were neat and tidy in appearance.	80,0	30,0	80,0	90,0	*70,0*
17. Their demeanour was what I expected from a wine farm.	60,0	70,0	80,0	90,0	*75,0*
MEAN	*56,7*	*43,3*	*80,0*	*80,0*	*65,0*
WELCOMING OF VISITORS	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
18. My presence was acknowledged by staff.	0,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*75,0*
19. The staff were not chatting amongst themselves instead of attending to clients.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
20. The personnel made me feel welcome.	50,0	90,0	80,0	100,0	*80,0*
MEAN	*50,0*	*96,7*	*93,3*	*100,0*	*85,0*
WINE TASTING & STAFF KNOWLEDGE	**OBS 1 (n=10)**	**OBS 2 (n=13)**	**OBS 3 (n=10)**	**OBS 4 (n=10)**	***MEAN***
21. The wine maker was passionate about his wines.	N/A	90,0	N/A	N/A	*90,0*
22. The wine maker was highly professional.	N/A	90,0	N/A	N/A	*90,0*
23. Meeting the wine maker enhanced my experience at the wine farm.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	*100,0*
24. There was a large variety of wines to choose from.	70,0	80,0	80,0	70,0	*75,0*
25. I was recommended appropriate wines based on my preferences.	0,0	0,0	100,0	100,0	*50,0*

26.	The wines were clearly described to me.	50,0	80,0	90,0	80,0	*75,0*
27.	The description by the wine staff matched my taste experience.	40,0	80,0	90,0	100,0	*77,5*
28.	I was given the correct wines I asked to taste.	0,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*75,0*
29.	The glass(es) presented to me for tasting were free of stains and fingerprints.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
30.	I felt that the wines I tasted were of high quality.	90,0	100,0	90,0	80,0	*90,0*
31.	Wine staff had sound wine knowledge. For example, be able to differentiate between a Sauvignon Blanc vs. Chenin Blanc.	90,0	100,0	90,0	70,0	*87,5*
32.	Wine staff knew the product range of the wine estate (i.e. knew wine on offering very well).	70,0	100,0	90,0	70,0	*82,5*
33.	I would have liked to go on a cellar tour (if not offered).	100,0	20,0	80,0	80,0	*70,0*
	MEAN	*61,0*	*80,0*	*91,0*	*85,0*	*79,3*
STAFF INTERACTION		**OBS 1** (n=4)	**OBS 2** (n=4)	**OBS 3** (n=4)	**OBS 4** (n=4)	***MEAN***
34.	The personnel asked my food and wine preferences before recommending wine.	0,0	100,0	0,0	0,0	*25,0*
35.	The personnel recommended activities at their estate without me having to enquire about them.	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	*0,0*
36.	I feel that the staff were genuinely interested in my visit to the wine farm.	40,0	90,0	80,0	80,0	*72,5*
37.	I felt that the staff went the extra mile to meet my needs.	30,0	90,0	90,0	80,0	*72,5*
	MEAN	*17,5*	*70,0*	*42,5*	*40,0*	*42,5*
WINE PURCHASE:		**OBS 1** (n=11)	**OBS 2** (n=10)	**OBS 3** (n=10)	**OBS 4** (n=11)	***MEAN***
38.	When I purchased wine I was charged the correct price.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
39.	When I purchased wine I was given the correct change (if paid by cash).	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0	*100,0*
40.	When I purchased wine I was given a receipt upon payment.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
41.	When I purchased wine I received the correct number of bottles I paid for.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
42.	The wine I purchased was adequately packaged before given to me.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
43.	The staff thanked me for my purchase.	0,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*75,0*
44.	When I purchased wine, the purchase transaction was performed in a swift and proficient manner.	100,0	30,0	90,0	100,0	*80,0*
45.	The personnel did not try to up-sell or cross-sell.	100,0	40,0	90,0	20,0	*62,5*
46.	I did not feel pressurised to make a purchase.	100,0	70,0	90,0	70,0	*82,5*
47.	The cellar door setting and ambience enticed me to purchase wine.	60,0	60,0	90,0	70,0	*70,0*
48.	The service I received enticed me to purchase wine.	30,0	100,0	90,0	80,0	*75,0*
	MEAN	*80,9*	*80,0*	*95,0*	*85,5*	*85,2*
VISITOR DEPARTURE		**OBS 1** (n=2)	**OBS 2** (n=2)	**OBS 3** (n=2)	**OBS 4** (n=2)	***MEAN***
49.	I was given a pleasant parting remark.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
50.	I felt the staff appreciated my patronage.	50,0	100,0	90,0	100,0	*85,0*
	MEAN	*75,0*	*100,0*	*95,0*	*100,0*	*92,5*
	SERVICE COMPONENT TOTAL MEAN	*56,8*	*78,3*	*82,8*	*81,7*	*74,9*

OVERALL

OVERALL STATEMENTS		**OBS 1** (n=6)	**OBS 2** (n=6)	**OBS 3** (n=6)	**OBS 4** (n=6)	***MEAN***
51.	I liked the ambience of the wine estate.	60,0	40,0	90,0	100,0	*72,5*
52.	I felt safe throughout my wine experience on the wine estate.	100,0	70,0	90,0	100,0	*90,0*
53.	The wine tasting experience was enjoyable.	40,0	80,0	90,0	100,0	*77,5*
54.	The overall experience exceeded my initial expectations.	30,0	90,0	90,0	100,0	*77,5*
55.	I will definitely visit the wine farm again in the near future / when in the wine area again.	40,0	100,0	90,0	100,0	*82,5*
56.	I will definitely refer this winery to family and friends.	40,0	100,0	90,0	100,0	*82,5*
	MEAN	*51,7*	*80,0*	*90,0*	*100,0*	*80,4*
	OVERALL TOTAL MEAN	*51,7*	*80,0*	*90,0*	*100,0*	*80,4*

APPENDIX C8: ESTATE BU QUANTITATIVE RESULTS (TIER 2)

PHYSICAL COMPONENT					
EN-ROUTE, DRIVEWAY, PARKING	**OBS 1 (n=5)**	**OBS 2 (n=5)**	**OBS 3 (n=5)**	**OBS 4 (n=5)**	***MEAN***
1. I had no problems locating where the wine estate was.	80,0	30,0	90,0	0,0	*50,0*
2. The wine estate was well sign posted and easy to find.	70,0	30,0	90,0	0,0	*47,5*
3. The driveway into the wine estate was aesthetically pleasing.	60,0	30,0	60,0	0,0	*37,5*
4. The signs directing me to the different areas of the wine estate (restaurant, vineyard, cellar door, etc.) were well demarcated.	80,0	40,0	90,0	1,0	*52,8*
5. There was sufficient parking space.	60,0	50,0	90,0	6,0	*51,5*
MEAN	*70,0*	*36,0*	*84,0*	*1,4*	*47,9*
OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
6. The buildings were what I expected a wine estate to be.	90,0	30,0	50,0	80,0	*62,5*
7. The physical environment of the wine estate is attractive.	70,0	80,0	90,0	80,0	*80,0*
8. The environment & scenery make me feel relaxed.	90,0	60,0	90,0	80,0	*80,0*
MEAN	*83,3*	*56,7*	*76,7*	*80,0*	*74,2*
CELLAR DOOR INTERIOR & DÉCOR	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
9. The interior was what I expected from a wine farm.	90,0	60,0	80,0	100,0	*82,5*
10. The interior and décor were aesthetically pleasing.	100,0	60,0	90,0	100,0	*87,5*
11. Different sections within the cellar door were clearly demarcated (touring, tasting, payment areas, etc.).	80,0	50,0	40,0	60,0	*57,5*
MEAN	*90,0*	*56,7*	*70,0*	*86,7*	*75,8*
RESTROOMS	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
12. The restroom signage was clearly visible.	90,0	60,0	70,0	90,0	*77,5*
13. The restroom was clean and hygienic.	90,0	70,0	90,0	90,0	*85,0*
14. The restroom had all the amenities I expected it to have.	90,0	70,0	90,0	90,0	*85,0*
MEAN	*90,0*	*66,7*	*83,3*	*90,0*	*82,5*
PHYSICAL COMPONENT TOTAL MEAN	*83,3*	*54,0*	*78,5*	*64,5*	*70,1*

SERVICE COMPONENT					
PRESENTATION OF STAFF	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
15. The staff were easily identifiable.	80,0	100,0	30,0	80,0	*72,5*
16. The staff were neat and tidy in appearance.	80,0	90,0	70,0	80,0	*80,0*
17. Their demeanour was what I expected from a wine farm.	80,0	80,0	50,0	30,0	*60,0*
MEAN	*80,0*	*90,0*	*50,0*	*63,3*	*70,8*
WELCOMING OF VISITORS	**OBS 1 (n=3)**	**OBS 2 (n=3)**	**OBS 3 (n=3)**	**OBS 4 (n=3)**	***MEAN***
18. My presence was acknowledged by staff.	100,0	100,0	0,0	100,0	*75,0*
19. The staff were not chatting amongst themselves instead of attending to clients.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	*100,0*
20. The personnel made me feel welcome.	70,0	90,0	60,0	30,0	*62,5*
MEAN	*90,0*	*96,7*	*53,3*	*76,7*	*79,2*
WINE TASTING & STAFF KNOWLEDGE	**OBS 1 (n=10)**	**OBS 2 (n=10)**	**OBS 3 (n=9)**	**OBS 4 (n=10)**	***MEAN***
21. The wine maker was passionate about his wines.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
22. The wine maker was highly professional.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
23. Meeting the wine maker enhanced my experience at the wine farm.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*
24. There was a large variety of wines to choose from.	80,0	50,0	80,0	90,0	*75,0*
25. I was recommended appropriate wines based on my preferences.	100,0	0,0	0,0	100,0	*50,0*

26.	The wines were clearly described to me.	0,0	50,0	40,0	30,0	30,0
27.	The description by the wine staff matched my taste experience.	20,0	50,0	40,0	30,0	35,0
28.	I was given the correct wines I asked to taste.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
29.	The glass(es) presented to me for tasting were free of stains and fingerprints.	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
30.	I felt that the wines I tasted were of high quality.	60,0	80,0	70,0	80,0	72,5
31.	Wine staff had sound wine knowledge. For example, be able to differentiate between a Sauvignon Blanc vs. Chenin Blanc.	80,0	100,0	70,0	50,0	75,0
32.	Wine staff knew the product range of the wine estate (i.e. knew wine on offering very well).	80,0	100,0	70,0	70,0	80,0
33.	I would have liked to go on a cellar tour (if not offered).	100,0	100,0	N/A	100,0	100,0
	MEAN	*72,0*	*73,0*	*63,3*	*75,0*	*71,0*
STAFF INTERACTION		**OBS 1** (n=4)	**OBS 2** (n=4)	**OBS 3** (n=4)	**OBS 4** (n=4)	***MEAN***
34.	The personnel asked my food and wine preferences before recommending wine.	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
35.	The personnel recommended activities at their estate without me having to enquire about them.	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
36.	I feel that the staff were genuinely interested in my visit to the wine farm.	40,0	40,0	30,0	50,0	40,0
37.	I felt that the staff went the extra mile to meet my needs.	50,0	40,0	30,0	30,0	37,5
	MEAN	*22,5*	*20,0*	*15,0*	*20,0*	*19,4*
WINE PURCHASE		**OBS 1** (n=4)	**OBS 2** (n=10)	**OBS 3** (n=0)	**OBS 4** (n=0)	***MEAN***
38.	When I purchased wine I was charged the correct price.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
39.	When I purchased wine I was given the correct change (if paid by cash).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
40.	When I purchased wine I was given a receipt upon payment.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
41.	When I purchased wine I received the correct number of bottles I paid for.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
42.	The wine I purchased was adequately packaged before given to me.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
43.	The staff thanked me for my purchase.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
44.	When I purchased wine, the purchase transaction was performed in a swift and proficient manner.	N/A	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
45.	The personnel did not try to up-sell or cross-sell.	100,0	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
46.	I did not feel pressurised to make a purchase.	100,0	100,0	N/A	N/A	100,0
47.	The cellar door setting and ambience enticed me to purchase wine.	60,0	60,0	N/A	N/A	60,0
48.	The service I received enticed me to purchase wine.	50,0	50,0	N/A	N/A	50,0
	MEAN	*77,5*	*91,0*	N/A	N/A	*87,1*
VISITOR DEPARTURE		**OBS 1** (n=2)	**OBS 2** (n=2)	**OBS 3** (n=2)	**OBS 4** (n=2)	***MEAN***
49.	I was given a pleasant parting remark.	100,0	100,0	0,0	0,0	50,0
50.	I felt the staff appreciated my patronage.	70,0	90,0	40,0	50,0	62,5
	MEAN	*85,0*	*95,0*	*20,0*	*25,0*	*56,3*
	SERVICE COMPONENT TOTAL MEAN	***71,2***	***77,6***	***40,3***	***52,0***	***64,0***

OVERALL

OVERALL STATEMENTS		**OBS 1** (n=6)	**OBS 2** (n=6)	**OBS 3** (n=6)	**OBS 4** (n=6)	***MEAN***
51.	I liked the ambience of the wine estate.	80,0	90,0	70,0	100,0	85,0
52.	I felt safe throughout my wine experience on the wine estate.	100,0	90,0	70,0	100,0	90,0
53.	The wine tasting experience was enjoyable.	70,0	80,0	60,0	80,0	72,5
54.	The overall experience exceeded my initial expectations.	80,0	80,0	40,0	80,0	70,0
55.	I will definitely visit the wine farm again in the near future / when in the wine area again.	80,0	100,0	50,0	80,0	77,5
56.	I will definitely refer this winery to family and friends.	80,0	100,0	50,0	80,0	77,5
	MEAN	*81,7*	*90,0*	*56,7*	*86,7*	*78,8*
	OVERALL TOTAL MEAN	***81,7***	***90,0***	***56,7***	***86,7***	***78,8***