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CDAE Major

Exploring Marketing Strategies and Their Effectiveness for Vermont Wine and Cheese Farmers

The following dissertation examines marketing strategies and their effectiveness for Vermont Wine and Cheese Farmers. By examining the usage of social media and marketing strategies I will be able to inform farmers about the opportunities different marketing promotions create. The goal of this study is to provide the farmers with information about the effectiveness of different marketing promotions. I have collected social media data and strategic marketing plans of each wine and cheese farm within Vermont from October 1st 2011 until February 15th 2012. I have identified all promotional methods used by Vermont Wine and Cheese farms. I have collected this data and transferred the information into Excel spreadsheets. In the spreadsheets, I have developed indicators to categorize the different promotional methods. The indicators chose were: 1) Frequency of contact with customers, 2) Intensity of the information presented, 3) How well the site is designed and 4) The usefulness of the sites design and offerings by the farm. Through the information I have gathered based on personal ratings of the farms website, I have built contingency tables through Excel providing information that demonstrates the importance of having a simple, efficient and customer friendly website. I have completed an entire section providing pictures of actual websites as examples to explain the process of grading the website and what I personally was looking for. Typically the results generated that the wine and cheese farm businesses that were most active in social media and in using innovative marketing strategies were the farms that are already enormously successful and known across the country. The smaller more specialized farms seemed to be working on improving their social media connection to help build better relationships with their loyal customer base. By providing the information I have collected to farmers throughout the state, I believe it can give them the awareness needed to help create change to effectively improve business.