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Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science

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THE LONDON SCHOOL
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Summative Assignment

**#NotWasted: Improving the societal and environmental impact of the
world's most favored wine brand**

Course code: PB417 Consumer Psychology

Candidate number: 43141

Word counts:

Part I: 450

Part II: 993

Part III: 1.986

I. Background and Problem Description

For millennia, alcohol has been enjoyed around the world – with some cultures raising their glasses on more occasions than others. A report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) revealed that UK’s alcohol consumption tops the list among developed countries, with 9.7 liters of alcohol consumed per year, close to a liter above the OECD average (Donnelly, 2019). With 81% of consumers disclosing to have drunk wine in the past month, it became the nation’s most consumed alcoholic drink in 2019 (Hawkins, 2019).

Barefoot Cellars is the world’s most popular wine brand (Bhasin, 2018), ranking second in the UK (Lawrence, 2019). Invented by California winemaker David Bynum in 1965, Barefoot Bynum Burgundy was renamed “Barefoot Cellars” by entrepreneurs Michael and Bonnie Houlihan in 1986. Barefoot Cellars was later acquired by family-owned E&J Gallo, a leader in the U.S. wine industry (E&J Gallo buys Barefoot Cellars, 2005). Today, the brand is known for being “fun, flavorful and approachable” (Barefoot, 2020). Prices are highly affordable, ranging from £4-19 (Barefoot Cellars, 2020) compared to competitors like Hardy’s wine, which ranges from £2–383 (McGuigan Wines, 2020). Aside from enjoying competitive advantage based on price, Barefoot boasts a loyal social following of “Barefooters” (Barefoot, 2020) – who make up some 41.5k followers on Instagram¹, 1,397,744 on Facebook² and 78.4k on Twitter³.

Not wasted: Introducing a two-for-one strategy

With alcohol consumption a major contributor to health-related issues, including obesity, addiction and anti-social behaviors like violence, Barefoot’s current business model and marketing strategy fails to promote responsible drinking and empower better consumer

¹ <https://www.instagram.com/barefootwine/>

² https://www.facebook.com/barefootwineuk/?brand_redir=72285665168

³ https://twitter.com/BarefootWine?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

decisions. In the UK alone, there were 7,551 alcohol-related deaths in 2018 (Alcohol statistics, 2020) and a recorded 586,780 dependent drinkers between 2017-2018, 82% of whom were not receiving treatment at the time (Alcohol statistics, 2020). These statistics only scratch the surface of a prevailing societal issue, costing an estimated £3.5bn a year (Boseley, 2019).

On top of staggering healthcare costs, alcohol production threatens the environment. Wine production includes packaging, air miles, energy use, pesticide use, waste production and soil depletion (Moulton, 2019). Little of the sustainability efforts already pursued by E&J Gallo are reflected in Barefoot's current business model. With a Stanford University study revealing that a 2-degree increase in temperature could reduce 30-50% of California's premium wine growing land – where Barefoot's production is based – this poses a real threat to the brand and wine industry as a whole (Sommer, 2011). With Millennials, a segment Barefoot is actively pursuing, showing increased interest and demand for sustainable and healthier products (Harrison, 2018; Sogari, Pucci, Aquilani & Zanni, 2017), this provides an excellent opportunity for Barefoot to meet demands and trends, while improving its profits, reputation and contributing to a better world.

Figure 1. Barefoot Wine



Source: https://www.facebook.com/pg/Barefoot-Wine-PH-245529775819717/community/?mt_nav=0&msite_tab_async=0

II. Memorandum

To: E&J Gallo Winery, Modesto, CA, United States

From: A fan and social psychology consultant, London, United Kingdom

Date: May 5th, 2020

Dear Gallo family,

Praising your rich wines alone would undermine your equally rich family history. What you have achieved is truly inspiring and, for that, I raise my glass.

I first encountered your wine as an undergraduate. It was Barefoot Wine Cellars' crisp, fruity flavors that first sold me into the world of wine. Looking back, this is not surprising, considering that your colleague Jennifer Wall, the world's most awarded wine maker, lays behind the tasty success.

As much as I am writing as a fan, I also write as a social psychology consultant concerned for the planet and its people. I believe Barefoot, as the world's most recognized wine brand, is in a unique position to drive positive change both locally and globally.

With alcohol-related health issues costing £3.5bn per year in the UK alone (Boseley, 2019), curbing such trends will not only save lives, but win over health-conscious millennials, a segment you are currently pursuing (Tharel, 2019). Furthermore, as Stanford University recently revealed, a two-degree temperature increase could reduce 30-50% of California's premium wine growing land, posing a serious threat to your brand (Sommer, 2011). Already involved in sustainability issues, but absent in Barefoot's current marketing, I believe the next step is to get customers involved – because when it comes to saving the world, the more, the merrier, just like with wine. As a company that prides itself on “Bringing people together. With wine” (Barefoot,

2020) like this, there is no indication of responsible drinking. To close these gaps, I recommend a two-in-one strategy, which will help Barefoot leapfrog competitors and set a positive example in the industry.

1. #NotWasted: One small step (for) Barefoot, one giant leap for mankind

To begin, Barefoot should strategically leverage the power of their online brand community – inspiring and raising awareness among “Barefooters” on social media. This will be done through #NotWasted, an umbrella term which creatively captures the issues of not wasting the earth’s resources and of not “being wasted” from excessive drinking.

A #NotWasted landing page will be set up on the company website, covering themes like the circular economy, recycling Barefoot bottles, wine on tap and mindful drinking. In addition to education, lacking infrastructure remains a major barrier to recycling (Dickinson, 2019).

Therefore, Barefoot should support charities aimed at building recycling facilities in cities and communities. Content will also include tips on *mindful* wine consumption, shown to promote responsible drinking (Brett, Leffingwell & Leavens, 2017). Competitions based on improving recycling or responsible drinking in communities will also be initiated.

Followers will be encouraged to create #NotWasted-themed content with the most creative ideas shared on Barefoot’s social media and website.

2. Sustainability and responsibility part of the package? Introducing wine on keg.

You may be Barefoot, but this does not mean you have to leave a footprint. Wine on tap is a novel concept in restaurants and among consumers (Figure 2). Approximately 26.6 bottles, amounting to 120 glasses of wine, fill a single keg (Wine on tap, 2014). LYFE Kitchen calculates that this is equivalent to 39 pounds of packaging waste from bottles, boxes, foil, corks and labels (Wine on tap, 2014). Wine on tap is estimated to reduce carbon footprint by 96%, with “one steel keg sav[ing] CO₂ emissions equivalent to 28 trees” (Wine on tap, 2014). These benefits seep into the entire value chain, also lowering costs through reduced packaging materials, fuel consumption, energy- and water use.

Figure 2. Wine served on tap



Source: <https://blog.opentable.com/2017/viva-el-vino-5-restaurants-serving-wine-on-tap/>

Barefoot wine on tap should become the default in bars and restaurants. Prices should be kept unchanged, with 50-75% of the cost savings going to charities focused on educating youth on responsible, mindful alcohol consumption and sustainability-related ones. This will thus increase profits while upholding #NotWasted’s two-in-one strategy. Wine sampling and different size servings also become easier for restaurants. As a brand already known for its innovative packaging, this helps avoid potential alienation among consumers. What’s more, millennials love a sense of discovery, wanting to try the latest (Tharel, 2019). However, to convince skeptics unwilling to buy wine on tap, Barefoot should let them try it – for free. I cover this next.

3. Want to taste the difference to make a difference? Show (social) ID first.

Good wine depends on quality and freshness. Although many consumers suspect wine on tap is cheap and of poor quality – this could not be further from the truth. Wine stored on keg is protected from overoxidation and overheating (Wine on tap, 2014). Barefoot should employ pop-up bars, sampling free wine at events like Pride, festivals and beach parties. Recyclable cups with QR-codes will be used, bringing consumers to the #NotWasted website.

Upon receiving a sample, bartenders will let consumers know that by recycling their cup, a small donation on behalf of the company's packaging savings is made – either to a sustainability- or alcohol education-related charity. Individuals can choose where their donation goes, “voting with their cups” by throwing them in one of two bins labelled after these charities.

To strengthen community-feel and increase donations, a large “dark-room” tent will be set up by the bar. Individuals who donate an additional pound or more will be invited into the tent and asked to dip their bare foot into glow-in-the-dark paint. They will then “mark” their footprint on a large paper canvas reading: “Barefoot but no footprint” and write their Instagram username.

For each pound, people get one more footprint. Barefoot will later photograph the canvas both in sunlight and in the dark, showing how the “empty” page magically turns into a colorful display of footprints – nicely playing on the “Barefoot but no footprint” idea. The donation amount will be included in the post. Lastly, short mindfulness sessions will be held every 30 minutes, educating participants on mindful drinking.

I am confident these changes will give your brand edge, please stakeholders and lead to lasting change.

Sincerely,

XXX

III. Theoretical Justification

Creating change that is lasting – Like wine stains

A company's impact is felt beyond its walls. This includes monetary, environmental, social, cultural and psychological effects. Change agents seeking to create enduring change should therefore consider key stakeholders, their motives and prerequisites for change. By taking profits, people and the planet into account, the stakeholder analysis lays the foundation for the social psychological theories underlying the memorandum recommendations. Lastly, limitations and concluding remarks are outlined.

Figure 3. Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder	Motivation & Goals	Prerequisites for change
E&J Gallo Winery	- Profits - Stakeholders - Reputation	- Economically viable - Increased brand value
Millennial consumer	- Pleasurable consumption experience - Healthier & sustainable product	- Affordable - Positive brand association (sustainability & health) - Transparency
Other consumers	- Pleasurable consumption experience	- Affordable - Positive brand association
Restaurants & Bars (+ bartenders)	- Profit - Efficiency	- Return on investment - Easy implementation of change
Barefoot employees	- Good income - Alignment with brand image - Purposeful work	- Management support - Positive towards change
Government, healthcare providers & local authorities	- Keeping population & environment healthy & safe - Reduction in waste	- Measurable positive effect - Savings in healthcare costs and waste
Schools & universities	- Education on responsible alcohol consumption & risks - Healthy, educated youth	- Monetary sponsorship from partners - Expert advice
Competition	- Competition based on price or product - Differentiation	- Positive consumer response to new product - Positive change in industry marketing or production

1. #NotWasted: One small step (for) Barefoot, one giant leap for mankind.

Key stakeholders in mind, for the efforts of #NotWasted not to be wasted, Barefoot should put its strong foot forward – utilizing its large brand community. I will demonstrate how the brand's owned, paid and earned media increase brand affinity and sales conversions (Hanna, Rohm & Crittenden, 2011) by changing *attitudes* through persuasive tactics, Social Identity Theory and signaling. Installation Theory is used throughout.

Consumers engage with online communities to satisfy evolutionary and psychological needs such as relationship building, self-expression, helping others, enjoyment, gaining status and belonging (Porter, Donthu, Macelroy & Wydra, 2011; Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). #NotWasted taps into these motivations, whilst incorporating the core stones of the wine industry: socializing and information sharing (Tomazic, 2017). Individuals are first attracted to a brand based on how it reflects their self-image (Cătălin & Andreea, 2014). However, when joining a brand community this “me” transforms into an “affiliative identity” or “we” (Shau & Gilly, 2003: 387). By tailoring brand content to sustainability and mindful drinking, Barefoot will automatically attract individuals aligned with these values, thus fostering shared identity. However, the *longevity* of #NotWasted depends on how group norms *shape* and *regulate* behaviors.

Social Identity Theory suggests that group membership motivates the construction of positively distinct social identity compared to out-groups (Gleibs, 2016) through shared norms, beliefs, values and goals (Reicher, Haslam & Platow, 2018). Belonginess, mediated through brand admiration, feeds positive affect (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and develops a sense of helpfulness among members (Porter, et al., 2011). Furthermore, individuals become inclined to conform to rules and norms set by the in-group (Muniz & O'guinn, 2001). Through brand community, Barefoot can thus construct self-sustaining positive norms around responsible drinking and

sustainability. However, to strengthen such norms, particular persuasive tactics should be used, now highlighted.

#NotWasted taps into two fundamental types of persuasion: emotion and logic (Petty & Briñol, 2008). Logical persuasion is attained through information on owned and paid media channels like the webpage and posts, whereas user generated content (UGC), earned media, taps into emotions. To increase messaging effectiveness and the successful creation of normative beliefs and behaviors, specific tactics should be employed. Research shows that moderate message repetition is most effective in enhancing attitudes among populations that are already aware of an issue (Cacioppo & Petty, 1989). Generally known, Barefoot should assign a couple weekdays for sharing information about sustainability and responsible drinking. By leaving the rest to users, this avoids messaging persuasiveness wearing off due to excessive repetition (Cacioppo & Petty, 1989). Furthermore, it upholds needs of self-expression and creates affiliation through the adherence to group norms (Porter, et al., 2011). The strategy follows Porter, et al.'s (2011: 86) suggestions for promoting participation through “encouraging content creation; cultivating connections...and creating enjoyable experiences.” Delving deeper, repetition of themed content creates normative expectations which are internalized and embodied by members (Lahlou, 2018). The process by which Barefoot's community “enters” individuals' thinking can be understood in terms of the “generalized other” and the “vigilance effect” (Lahlou, 2019). This occurs when members both constrain and are constrained by others' behaviors (Lahlou, 2018), which are seen as “social proof” on how to act within the community (Shearman & Yoo, 2007: 273).

Beyond affiliation, having Barefoot repost and celebrate users #NotWasted content helps activate the status motive. This causes individuals to compete for positive attention, gained though adherence to group rules (Lahlou, 2018: 249) or by signaling one's selfless indulgence (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). Digital “impression management” (Goffman, 1959 cited Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010: 62) is thus engaged with to earn prestige through the accumulation of

“symbolic capital” (Bird & Smith, 2005: 223). Additionally, it can lead to forms of “competitive altruism” (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013: 378) within the Barefoot community, as people strive to reach their “ideal selves” (Ogilvie, 1987: 379).

Group signaling could also be a driving force behind prosocial behaviors, as Barefooters seek to distinguish themselves from competitors (Bird & Smith, 2005) through the community’s “shared consciousness, rituals and traditions and...sense of moral responsibility” (Muniz & O’guinn, 2001: 412). Once engaged, these behaviors are likely to persist, as behavioral consistency helps enhance self-concept (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). Thus, these psychological mechanisms explain why consumers’ beliefs and *attitudes* about recycling and wine on tap are likely to change through prosocial behaviors and pressures within Barefoot’s brand community.

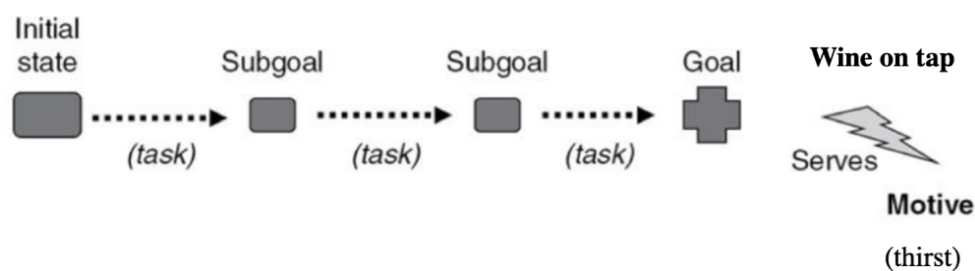
2. Sustainability and responsibility part of the package? Introducing wine on keg.

#NotWasted establishes meaningful associations with the brand, imbuing Barefoot wine with additional value (Cătălin & Andreea, 2014). Consumers, particularly millennials, use branded consumption to express personal identity (Cătălin & Andreea, 2014). Carter, & Gilovich (2012: 1313, *emphasis added*) found that individuals “define themselves more in terms of their *experiential* purchases than their possessions,” making positive brand associations imperative to getting consumers to try wine on tap. This alone, however, cannot change behavior. By making wine on tap the default in bars and restaurants, this becomes an installation that “channels” behavior (Lahlou, 2018). *How* and *why* individuals become induced to drink wine on tap, will now be explained through Action- and Installation Theory.

Entering a bar, usually in a group, individuals are driven by motives like thirst or a need for belonging. To fulfil their goal, they order Barefoot wine, served on tap (Figure 4). Thus, behavior is simultaneously empowered and constrained. If they are aware of #NotWasted, they know that they are engaging in prosocial behavior, as cost savings from reduced packaging are donated.

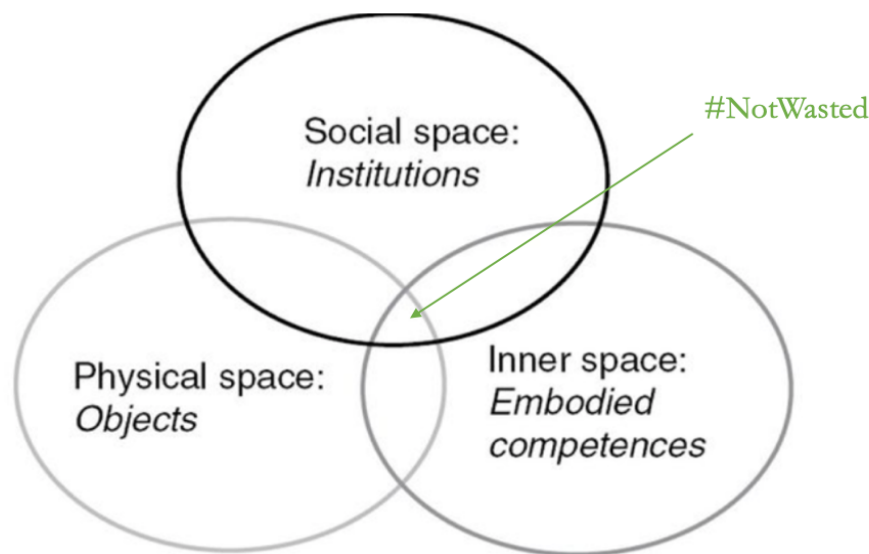
This alone can inform behavior. However, many may comply because rejecting such an effortless, prosocial act threatens people's self-presentations as socially responsible (Shearman & Yoo, 2007). Getting bartenders to inform skeptical buyers is thus likely to be effective. Lastly, the "default effect," whereby people choose the default option as it requires minimum energy, may also lead to consumption (Dinner, Johnson, Goldstein & Liu, 2011: 432).

Figure 4. Action Theory - Adjusted (Lahlou, 2018: 104)



Importantly, all levels of installation theory produce intended behavior (Figure 5). Whereas the physical space determines *how* wine is consumed (on tap), the subject's embodied interpretive systems like drives, knowledge and representations, informs the act itself (drinking). Through positive feedback, ordering wine on tap can turn into habitual behavior, triggered by the context (Lahlou, 2018). The last layer, institutions, ensures that *appropriate* behavior is engaged with. On top of bar etiquette, #NotWasted fosters social regulation within the community through peer influence, sanctions, feedback and feedforward (Lahlou, 2018). This coordinates behaviors online and offline with deviant behaviors threatening to strip individuals from the benefits of group membership (Lahlou, 2018). If enough people are mobilized to drink wine on tap, this could lead to "minority influence," whereby the Barefoot community propels larger change, influencing the majority's attitudes and representations of wine consumption (Moscovici, Lage & Naffrechoux, 1969 cited in Lahlou, 2018).

Figure 5. Three layers of Installation Theory
(Lahlou, 2018: 49)



Including “downstream” and “upstream” interventions aimed at changing consumption habits (Verplanken & Wood, 2006: 91), #NotWasted is likely to be successful. Downstream interventions aim at changing habits through informational campaigns (Verplanken & Wood, 2006), something #NotWasted does. Paired with upstream environmental interventions, designed to “prevent undesired outcomes and maintain optimal lifestyles” by changing contextual characteristics and targeting norms, interventional effectiveness is increased (Verplanken & Wood, 2006: 91). Thus, by only selling wine on keg to bars and restaurants, contexts are changed, making prosocial benefits and behaviors inevitable through forms of libertarian paternalism (Sunstein & Thaler, 2003). Furthermore, increased awareness about mindful drinking and charitable contributions can reduce excessive alcohol intake. Research demonstrates how, for example, raising awareness among guests about sustainability-related donations made by a hotel, increased towel *reuse* by 44%, thus priming consumption behavior (Baca-Motes, Brown, Gneezy, Keenan & Nelson, 2012). Moreover, mindfulness, which Barefoot will teach online, is linked to protective behavioral strategies, shown to lead to heightened self-control and reduced negative outcomes from alcohol consumption (Brett et al., 2017).

Thus, #NotWasted works by promoting *attitude* change online and inciting *behavioral* change through contextual alternations offline, which combine to promote wider change (Figure 6). Such online public commitments have shown to be effective in establishing compliance (Baca-Motes et al., 2012). Furthermore, word-of-mouth is perceived increasingly credible by consumers (Smith & Brower, 2012), making this a strong driving force for #NotWasted. Along with these influences, pop-up bars make use of additional tactics.

Figure 6. #NotWasted Strategy



3. Want to taste the difference to make a difference? Show (social) ID first.

Barefoot should bring their wines to customers by hosting pop-up bars. Since consumers desire direct engagement with brands (Porter et al., 2011), this is an opportunity for Barefoot to meet Barefooters and attract new customers. The purpose of the free tasters and recyclable cups is three-fold. First, it can reduce potential stigma around wine on tap. Studies reveal that sensory brand experiences drive brand loyalty (Ong, Lee & Ramayah, 2018). Second, by encouraging consumers to recycle the cups, “voting” where donations go, this builds positive associations with the act. Receiving free wine can also work to activate the “norm of reciprocation,” (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004: 599) or “reciprocal altruism” (Bird & Smith, 2005: 226) whereby people feel

obliged to return a received favor, thus recycling. As installations or objects with “positive valence,” the bins also actively “challenge” people to recycle (Lahlou, 2018: 92).

Like prosocial behaviors online, donations work to enhance reputations (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013) through symbolic capital attained from “conspicuous generosity” (Bird & Smith, 2005: 223). Public recognition is also an important motivator for donating (Harbaugh, 1998). By tagging people’s Instagram accounts next to their footprints on social media, this plays on this exact desire. How Barefoot presents donation messages also matters. Research shows that phrases like “every [pound] helps,” has a profound influence of charitable donations, because not donating such a small amount will threaten self-presentation (Shearman & Yoo, 2007: 273), thus this technique should be applied online, at the bar and tent. Furthermore, having agreed to recycle, thereby “donating,” may also increase charitable giving at the tent, because agreeing to a small request has shown to increase the likelihood of agreeing with a similar larger one (Freedman & Fraser, 1996). Some people might even donate to avoid feelings of regret from missing out on experiential purchases (Carter & Gilovich, 2012). In line with Social Identity Theory, people may also be driven by the community’s shared sense togetherness to reach common goals, leading to enhanced cooperation (Reicher et al., 2018) – thereby filling the page with footprints. Since loyal consumers are less price sensitive towards brands (Ong et al., 2018), if done right, online efforts could lead to increased donations online and offline.

Conclusion and Limitations

In conclusion, this integrated strategy sustainably changes attitudes and behaviors, while increasing Barefoot’s profits. Reduced packaging costs and unchanged price levels enable the company to make charitable donations without having a negative impact on the bottom-line. Going beyond corporate social responsibility, this strategy embeds sustainability at the core of the business model. However, the approach does not come without limitations. Attitude change does not always translate to changed behaviors (Baca-Motes et al., 2012). Online efforts may

thus be ineffective. Furthermore, the option to recycle could have the unintended effect of increasing consumption and lead to less sustainable future behavior (Catlin & Wang, 2013). Ironically, increased consumption means increased alcohol intake, going against the purposes of #NotWasted. Excessive wine consumption may also occur due to tensions between individuals' "want self" and "should self," whereby immediate pleasures like drinking are pursued instead of long-term ethical and health-related goals (Reczek, Irwin, Zane & Ehrich, 2017: 186). Overall, however, this strategy has more strengths than weaknesses.

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