

# The “Don Valley” the territorial cluster tourist destination media promotion specifics

*Olga Druzhba*<sup>1\*</sup>, *Kseniya Druzhba*, *Olga Zarubina*, and *Larisa Orekhova*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Don State Technical University, Gagarin square, 1, Rostov-on-Don, 344000, Russia

**Abstract.** This article deals with the “Don Valley” the territorial cluster tourist destination media promotion specifics and such a tourist product as the enotours. The authors allocate the features of enological tourism promotion in the region. Structural changes in the tourism industry led to search for new forms of promotion of both traditional directions of tourism and the new tourist products. The pandemic 2020 largely paralyzed the tourist industry while the state measures taken to support this industry are insufficient. There is a need to make active use of all available resources to support tourism and the media resource in particular. The media promotion specifics of the “Don Valley” tourist destination of the territorial cluster have been investigated within the study, existing problems were identified and approaches were developed to solve them. The media promotion today is a promising method for promoting the tourist product. The social media usage problems in terms of promoting the wine tours and developing the “Don Valley” enogastronomic tourism of the territorial cluster are identified. The algorithm of work in a media space allowing attractivation of enological tourism, wine tours promotion, as well as solving some tasks to restore the tourist sector in the region, has been conceived.

## 1 Introduction

In recent years the subject of tourism development in Russia has become particularly topical as evidenced by development and implementation of concepts, various programs for its support from the state and the government. Thus, in the Concept of the Federal Targeted Program "Development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation (2019-2025)" approved by the Government of the Russian Federation is said that tourism is an efficient tool for social and economic development of society. This sector is important for smaller businesses and micro-enterprises, job creation, and self-employment [1]. Tourism also influences the national person's identity formation, contributes to preservation of historical-cultural and environmental heritage.

The modern tourist industry runs in severe crisis due to a pandemic. A number of measures aimed at restoring the sector operation are being taken on the part of the state and the government. However it becomes obvious that the only support from the state is not sufficient to develop tourism in the conditions of pandemic and restrictive measures. It is

---

\* Corresponding author: [odruzhba@yandex.ru](mailto:odruzhba@yandex.ru)

necessary to use the various methods to promote traditional and new tourist products among which the methods of promotion in social media become most popular.

## **2 Materials and methods**

In modern conditions the structure and content of the tourism sector is being transformed. Existing destinations and types of tourism are complemented by the new ones which have to meet the interests and requests of various consumers. The enogastronomic tourism is one of them. This direction is so promising that it became one of the drivers of the tourism sector and the subject of research by the foreign and Russian specialists.

A significant part of the studies is devoted to analysis of such concept's content as "gastronomic tourism" and "enotourism", as well as to identify the potential of various territories for the development of these directions of the tourism sector [2-5].

The marketing of tourist services, and search for efficient tools for enotours promotion came to be one of the most important areas of research [6-8]. The new media in general and social media in particular are among such tools engaging increasingly greater attention [9-14].

In 2020-2021 due to pandemic the tourism sector suffered the most badly and it is obvious that the recovery process will be long, and will require significant efforts both from the enterprises of the tourism sector and from the state. In this context the issues of the sector's current status research, finding new opportunities for development of various areas of domestic tourism, efficient tools of promotion, including promoting the media, tourist services, are particularly relevant [15-17].

One of the promising forms of the tourism development and regions promotion in the current conditions are the territorial clusters.

In modern Russia, a cluster approach for the purpose of socio-economic development of the regions has been implemented for over two decades. At this stage there are two types of clusters: innovative-territorial and industrial ones. Territorial cluster is not only the association of various enterprises and organizations located in a limited territory and linked in terms of R&D and manufacturing within several industries, or in one industry, but it is also the system in which cooperation and coordination of its participants creates and strengthens the synergistic effect, increasing the performance of each participant.

The "Don Valley" territorial cluster was established in 2015. The cluster's specialized focus is on: viticulture, winemaking, science, education and tourism. In the "Strategy for the development of the «Don Valley» the territorial wine cluster", the wine tourism development strategy is described, and the objectives and priorities are specified [18].

At this stage, the educational, research and innovative directions are being most successfully developed within the cluster. At the same time, necessity for active development of such a direction of the "Don Valley" the winery territorial cluster as tourism should be noted and, its enogastronomic direction in particular, which today is very popular and is actively developing in European countries. In view of prevailing travel restrictions for the citizens due to pandemic, the new perspectives related to enotours promotion appear to develop this direction in the country and within the region. Even at the stage of the cluster establishment, there were two routes within the enogastronomic direction presented: to the winery "Elbuzd" and the ethnographic complex of stanitsa "Tsimlyanskaya", and in one of the articles in the magazine "Delovoi Kvartal" was pointed out, that "in case of the wine tourist route development the Don region can receive additional hundreds of thousands of tourists per year. This will provide the enterprises not only with the additional revenues and increase in taxation basis, but with the new job creation as well (on average one tourist provides four job opportunities). Thus, the potential

capacity of the wine tourism market in the Rostov region can be quite comparable to the turnover of the wine branch itself [19].

However, the enotourism of the region is not in high demand of tourists so far. In our opinion this happens due to a number of reasons. Firstly because of high competition; wine tours in Russia are represented by the famous leaders of winemaking: Crimea, Krasnodar region, Stavropol territory. Secondly, this type of tourism product is intended for a unique target audience with special demands, psychographic and demographic characteristics.

Apart from that, and along with certain success in the cluster's tourist destination development, the serious issues that prevent from its development became to be more and more evident over time, and they became the subject of discussion, both in traditional and social media.

The first critical materials appeared in web-based media already in 2016-2017. The "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" in its article "What does impede development of enotourism in Don region?" noting the appearance of special tourist routes resulting in visiting wineries and vineyards, has sounded out the point of view of the winemakers and representatives of the tourist sector, and they were of the same mind that enotourism has been and still in the process of formation and it has not brought any significant profit to tourist agencies and winemakers. At the same time, A. Gavrilov, the President of the Russian Travel Agencies Alliance stressed that "in the regions having the proper natural and climate conditions, including Rostov region, tasting session, and wineries visiting can be possible as one of the tour's components. The South of Russia: Krasnodar territory, Rostov region, Crimea and Stavropol territory, is the most popular among the tourists. The resort Abrau-Durso located in Krasnodar territory is on top of the list of the most visited places. The second most visited one is the Crimean Massandra. The winery Elbuzd in Azov area of the Rostov region is the third popular place"[20].

Note in particular that at the same time another obstacle for development of winemaking and enotourism in Don region has been called. According to Italian expert A.Gorzoni, the Don winemakers lack promotional efforts and creative presentation of goods [20].

At the end of 2017, the information and analytical online media "PROVED" published the highly critical article with a quite expressive title "How the first Russian wine cluster dies", in which Igor Gubin, the managing director of «Villa Zvezda» winery, who has resigned from the post of the chairman of the Winegrowers & Winemakers Association, stated that "the cluster has dissociated due to the absence of support from the regional government, and for the reason that it was founded on the enterprises not engaged in viticulture, nor wine-making and not related to each other technologically" [21].

Kirill Krivonos, chief executive officer of "Kantina" Ltd. located in Anapa area told that "over 4 years the company received subsidies from the Kuban authorities amounting to about a million rubles; while in Rostov region (part of the vineyards are located in Azov area) received 167 thousand rubles. And in order to have it arranged, CEO had to knock on the doors, and moreover, the subsidy processing came at more expensive cost than the subsidy itself "[21]. Besides that the idea that one of the issues in the territorial cluster's enotourism development has been the lack of a well-considered system for the tourist routes promotion, was repeated once again. Such wine estates as "Elbuzd", "Villa Zvezda", "Vina Bani", and "Sarkel" manor had to be engaged in promoting themselves as tourist destinations on their own.

Such kind of publications have revealed not only the serious problems in the sector development, but also formed a negative information field around the cluster. These materials were reposted by various web media many times, as well as by wine bloggers [21]. Thus a year after the first publication, the article about the problems of the wine cluster was placed in the network diary of the wine blogger Valeria Ivannikova and

immediately became the top 25 of the popular LiveJournal records of the southern region [21].

As the result, both for the practitioners and the regional government officials became more apparent that one of the most important factors for the enotourism development, along with the high-quality tourist product development became the information component, and complex, system-based promotion of wine tourism in the South [22,23].

The issue of developing enogastronomic tourism in the Rostov region, the results, problems and prospects were reviewed during the meeting of the sector partners with representatives of the Department for Retail Markets of the Rostov region, which took place in November 25, 2020, in the online format, and where need for developing different directions in the cluster activity and involvement of the representatives of various target audiences to solve the problems, has been noted. In particular, this includes the media expedition on wine routes, popularization in the media.

As the information field monitoring shows, this problem is given inadequate attention. So, for example, on the official website of the territorial cluster's participant, "Tatiana Travel Tour" LLC, there are two wine-gastronomic tours featured, "Along the wine roads of Don", and "Along the wine roads of Don (Azov Edition)" [24] worked out and offered within the wine territorial cluster development. However, the site's content is unattractive for users since in fact it is limited to fact-finding tourist program. "Reina Tour NTV" company's web site contains information about wine tours, there are four main routs: "Wine tour + Rostov sight-seeing tour", "Wine tour to Elbuzd winery", "Wine weekend on free Don", and "Gifts of the Don Vine"[24]. However, the materials and visual content also need to be enhanced.

**Table 1.** The main web-based resources that contain information about the territorial cluster «Don Valley».

	link to a web resource	participants
1.	<a href="https://vk.com/dolinadona">https://vk.com/dolinadona</a>	387
2.	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/dolinadona">https://www.facebook.com/groups/dolinadona</a>	56
3.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJpxk4HeOVyIBoRtHcC6e">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJpxk4HeOVyIBoRtHcC6e</a>	10

The another web-based resources where information is available should be noted, it is the official cluster's website (<http://dolinadona.com/>); the magazine "Don Valley" being under development.

In September 2017, a channel on YouTube was created, which postures itself as the official account of the "Don Valley" territorial cluster but only three videos are posted there, the total number of views is 711, there are no links to other channels. As to other information resources, the "Russian wine" site should be noted, which provides information on the Don Valley, winemaking and winery in the region, but there is no data on wine tours of the region [25].

The event-actions became the efficient information reasons for Don tourism promotion. So, for example, in October 2019, the first regional enogastronomic festival "Don Valley" took place in Levoberezhnyi park, which had not been held in 2020 for objective reasons due to pandemic. Information about the festival was posted on the official website of the Rostov region Government, and the "Don Valley" territorial cluster, as well as in social media. In 2020, "Don Vine" festival, the annual cultural and tourist event in khutor Pukhlyakovsky was canceled since a number of restrictions introduced due to the epidemiological situation in the region [26].

The Festival "Cheese, Wine and Jazz" also is considered to be of the events promoting the enogastronomic direction, and holding of it is a cultural event in the city, and the "Vineyards Picnic" is popular as well, and it is announced that from May 2021 their conduct shall be resumed. For the event information support a specially created website

www.jazzwine.ru is used, which has been set up with minimalist approach, and information posted here is not sufficient to promote enotourism in the region. Apart the site there is a group in Instagram [27], the number of subscribers is 1891, and Facebook account [28]. Number of subscribers amounts 1396, video about the festivals held in various years on the channels: "Rostov-City", "Made in Don region", "Don Valley", "Klaus Rostov", "Vinoholik" are posted on YouTube. The greatest number of viewed video achieved on the event on the channel "Made in Don region" - 5394 views, also comments are available. However, the content video does not relate to wine tourism promotion in the region, it can only be spoken in favor of attractivation of winemaking in Don region and promoting wine-made products.

The project of the online guidebook "Tourism subtle details" where there is a section for wine tourism is a point of real interest [29]. The project "Komsomolskaya Pravda", and "Otdykh v Rossii" also contains a section for wine tours, but only the tours within Krasnodar territory and Crimea are promoted there [30]. All these resources are focused on different audience, and enotours are positioned as a way to diversify the journey, soak up the culture of winemaking, and also the separate nontraditional and exceptional programs for visiting vineyards and wineries are offered. Separate segments in the media field are occupied by the media resources of travel companies; these are the official websites of companies which under conditions of economic crisis search for new ideas to overcome the crisis and they offer wine tours around Russia.

### **3 Discussions and Results**

The problem of popularizing and promoting tourism, and wine tourism in particular, became aggravated in the context of tourist sector crisis at this stage. The information field monitoring carried out by us for the period from 2016 to 2021 revealed a number of issues in this direction, which also from time to time have been raised in the media.

The absence of high-quality media promotion system in the tourist destination should still be evaluated as the main problem. The developed wine tours were virtually inadequately provided with media support.

The lack of sufficient advertising and information support for this direction is another problem. Before the pandemic hit, such tools as event communications and special events were used quite successfully for wine tours promotion. Based on the conducted event-analysis, and event dynamics investigation within this study such significant activities as the All-Russian Summit of winemakers, the Festival "Cheese, Wine and Jazz", the Tourist Forum "Rostov-on-Don is the Heart of the Don Region", and annual Festival "Day of the Don Vine" should be noted.

It is worth noting the high communication efficiency of these events, which is manifested in visibility, memorability, and attractiveness along with annual increase in the number of participants, richness of information field around the event, positive feedback and comments.

In the conditions of the pandemic and border closure for away foreign tours, the "Don Valley" territorial cluster gains great opportunities to promote the tourist destination and wine tours at the domestic level. To do this, not only marketing tasks should be solved, but also an integrated communication strategy to be developed for promoting this direction, part of which is media promotion.

According to the authors the options for solving the designated problems may be the following: allocating a special unit within the company structure for media communications or at least a specialist, whose functions include the development of content strategy and the content plan, creating a high-quality media product (movies, pictures, video reports, promotional videos), SMM. Extensive use of own information distribution channels and

placement of information products on the pages of cluster participants: pitched stories, columns, or other content on tourist portals.

Today, the territorial cluster "Don Valley" virtually does not use specialized media and tourist portals to promote enotours. The Russian media environment associated with the promotion of wine tours is relatively poor, mostly these are portals dedicated to tourism as a whole.

The promotion of the tourist destination of the cluster being reviewed in our study is associated directly with the "Don Valley" brand, which is taken by the target audience as a wine territorial cluster. Hence the reasonable need to study the interests and requests of targeted audiences: consumers of tourist services, tour operators, and journalists. It is necessary to arrange and conduct evaluation studies of the priority community groups, and based on the findings to develop the tourist destination media promotion strategy for the cluster and the "Don Valley" brand.

The event management technology to be used for establishing media communications, and media actions for journalists, bloggers to be carried out, as well as media expeditions supposed to be resumed.

In forming effective communications with stakeholders, the form and used genres of material representation hold much significance, so special attention should be paid to this. In order to popularize enotours and draw attention of the target audience it would make sense to use multimedia, info-graphics and other formats.

Today, the majority of tourist services consumers use mobile applications. Development and implementation of the mobile applications for publicizing and promoting enotourism is one of the marketing tasks that require an immediate solution.

In general, the proposed solutions identified during the study of problems can be the subject of discussion with participation of all the parties interested in the development of the Don Valley territorial cluster as a whole, and its individual directions, the enotourism in particular.

## 4 Conclusions

The tourist destination media promotion specifics has been investigated in this article based on the analysis of the media field and Internet resources of the "Don Valley" territorial cluster, and using the methods of monitoring, content analysis and event analysis. The problematics of the topic under study were updated due to the crisis in the tourist sector. In finding solutions to overcome the crisis the tour operators began to offer a variety of tours within the country. For the Don Valley brand it is an opportunity to popularize its own wine tours, create efficient media communications, and promote a tourist product in the domestic market. As a result of analysis the significant issues in media promotion have been identified, and for their solution participation of all interested parties is expected. Without the active use of media capabilities, it is extremely difficult to achieve the goals and solve marketing, and communication tasks faced by the cluster at this stage.

## References

1. The concept of the federal target program " Development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation (2019-2025)", URL://www.russiatourism.ru/upload/iblock/b6a/Concept. (data accessed: 20.02.2021)
2. E. Wolf, What is gastronomic tourism? (Bustard, Moscow, 2001)
3. G. M. Taber, In Search of Bacchus: Wanderings in the Wonderful World of Wine Tourism (Scribner, 2013)

4. L. Thach, S. Charters, *Best Practices in Global Wine Tourism: 15 Case Studies from Around the World* (Miranda Press, 2015)
5. A.E. Vasechko, O.V. Dudkina, *Forum of Young Scientists*, **3**, 86-94 (2017)
6. M. Hall, L. Sharples, R. Mitchell, N. Macionis, B. Cambourne, *Food Tourism around the World Development, management and markets* (Transferred to Taylor & Francis, 2011)
7. C. Hirst, R. Tresidder, *Marketing in food, hospitality, tourism and events* (Goodfellow Ltd., Oxford, 2012)
8. M. Sigala, R. N. S. Robinson, *Management and Marketing of Wine Tourism Business: Theory, Practice* (2019)
9. A. Sharma, G. James, R. M. J. Rosales, *Blogging Made Easy* (Chronicle Books, San-Francisco, 2016)
10. D. Fox, *365 Blog Topic Ideas: For the Lifestyle Blogger Who Has Nothing to* (Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, San-Francisco, 2014)
11. A. Sharma, *The Google Checklist: Marketing Edition 2016: SEO, Web Design, Paid Advertising, Social Media, PR* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016)
12. D. M. Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR: How to Use Social Media, Online Video, Mobile Applications, Blogs, News Releases, and Viral Marketing to Reach Buyers Directly* (Wiley, 2015)
13. D. Lim, *Blogging: How To Start A Profitable Blog: A Guide To Create Content That Rocks, Build Traffic, And Turn Your Blogging Passion Into Profit* (Blog Mastermind Booklets) (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015)
14. M. Kothand, *The One Hour Content Plan: The Solopreneur's Guide to a Year's Worth of Blog Post Ideas in 60 Minutes and Creating Content That Hooks and Sells* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2017)
15. R. Kasey, *Making Money on Blogging: 2020 edition - How to Start Your Blogging Blueprint and Make Profit Online With Your Blog - How do People Make Money* (Best Financial Freedom Books & Audiobooks) (Independently published, 2019)
16. B. Blueprints, *Blogging a 6 Figure Business Strategy in 2020: The Ultimate Beginner's Guide on How to Make a Profit and Passive Income Online for a Living, Using Social Media, Seo, and Affiliate Marketing Secrets* (Independently published, 2019)
17. Sparrow Amie PR and the pandemic: Rethinking your communications strategies. The Drum Network Tricks of the marketing trade, URL: <https://www.thedrum.com/opinion/2020/03/27/pr-and-the-pandemic-rethinking-your-communications-strategies>.
18. R. Kris, *Coronavirus Impact on Social Media, PR, Brand Marketing & Advertising Agencies*. March 8, 2020 (2020), URL: <https://rubymediagroup.com/coronavirus-impact-social-media-pr-brand-marketing-advertising-agencies/>.
19. N. Ayelet, *PR and marketing tips for companies in the COVID-19 era* (2020), URL: <https://thenextweb.com/podium/2020/04/23/pr-and-marketing-tips-for-companies-in-the-coronavirus-era/>.
20. *Development strategy of the territorial wine cluster "Don Valley"* (2021), URL: <http://www.dprro.ru/index.php4?mod=1554>
21. *In Rostov, the strategy of the wine cluster was approved* (2021), URL: <https://rostov.dk.ru/news/v-rostove-utverdili-strategiyu-vinodelcheskogo-klastera-237002608>

22. M. Brovkina, Rossiyskaya Gazeta, **247(7115)** (2016), URL: <https://rg.ru/2016/11/01/reg-ufo/pochemu-v-rostovskoj-oblasti-ne-razvivaetsia-etnoturizm.html> (data accessed: 03.21.2021)
23. How the first Russian wine cluster dies (2021), URL: <https://tasting-of-life.livejournal.com/934223.html>
24. M. Papushenko, Rostov region can give a tourist everything and immediately (2021), URL: <https://rostov.rbc.ru/rostov/interview/21/10/2016/57ff7fba9a794775209db04d>
25. A. Bakeev, A. Wine tourism becomes driver of the tourist sector (Expert Yug, 2018), URL: <https://expertsouth.ru/news/vinnyy-turizm-stanovitsya-drayverom-turindustrii/> (data accessed: 01.21.2021)
26. Wine-gastronomic tour “Along the wine roads of Don” (2021) URL: <https://www.tt-tour.ru/Vinno-gastronomicheskij-tur-Vinnymi-dorogami-Dona.html>
27. To buy best Rostov wine from Rostov, URL: <https://russianvine.ru/region-rostov/> (data accessed: 04.14.2021)
28. The most popular Festival of the Rostov region is canceled, URL: <https://big-rostov.ru/otmenyon-samyj-populyarnyj-festival-v-rostovskoj-oblasti/> (data accessed: 04.14.2021)
29. Instagram official account, URL: [https://www.instagram.com/jazz\\_wine\\_rostov/](https://www.instagram.com/jazz_wine_rostov/)
30. Facebook. official account, URL: <https://www.facebook.com/gorodparkrnd/>
31. Tonkosti. ru official website, URL: <https://tonkosti.ru>
32. Kp.ru. official website, URL: <https://www.kp.ru/russia/ture-po-rossii/vinny>