Communicating research results to industry

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Introduction
Which grapegrowers or winemakers will be most interested in your research outcomes, new method, tool or technology (i.e. ‘innovation’)? What information do they seek or need when deciding to trial or purchase (i.e. ‘adopt’) something new?
The recently completed ‘Adoption of wine and grape R&D outputs: Who, what and why?’ project posed and answered these questions.

Methods
Interview data from 81 interviews with winemakers, grapegrowers, service providers and liaison officers were used to test and modify Venkatesh and Davis’s (2000) Technology Acceptance Model for use in the wine industry (Figure 1). This informed a survey which posed questions to grapegrowers and winemakers about their:
• drivers and barriers to adoption of four case study technologies
• business and demographic information
• information seeking behaviour
The survey was administered by phone and online between September and November 2013.

Results
1066 grape growers and winemakers completed the survey, representing a 20% eligibility/ response rate.
The key drivers of adoption were:
✓ how useful the individual perceived the innovation would be to them or their business (i.e. perceived usefulness)
✓ social norms (is it being used and recommended by industry peers)
✓ business outlook (is the business contracting, steady or expanding in size or production)
✓ business scale
✓ costs of adoption (i.e. perceived ease of use)

• 85% of grapegrowers and 95% of winemakers used the web when first seeking research information
• Peer networks were important to validate and interpret research information, and evaluate the innovation
• Service providers and experts were used for problem solving and support during adoption
• Seminars, conferences and magazines were used to ‘keep up with things’ and people and become aware of new innovations
• If the innovation was important, risky, complex or expensive multiple sources of information were sought and it was often trialled or viewed in operation before adoption

Conclusions
In order to effectively communicate research outcomes to the grape and wine market:
1. First identify the ‘market’ for your technology, practice or product (who will it be useful to?)
2. Extension information should detail the potential benefits AND the costs of adoption AND be targeted to the target market
3. Depending on the riskiness and complexity of the innovation, a range of communication tools (i.e. trials, written, interpersonal) will be required.


Figure 1: The Technology Acceptance Model. The purple boxes are the original variables, the green ones the wine industry specific variables derived from interview data.