

WINE TOURISM MARKETING: A NEW MENU OF BLOGGERS; THEIR CREDENTIALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Introduction

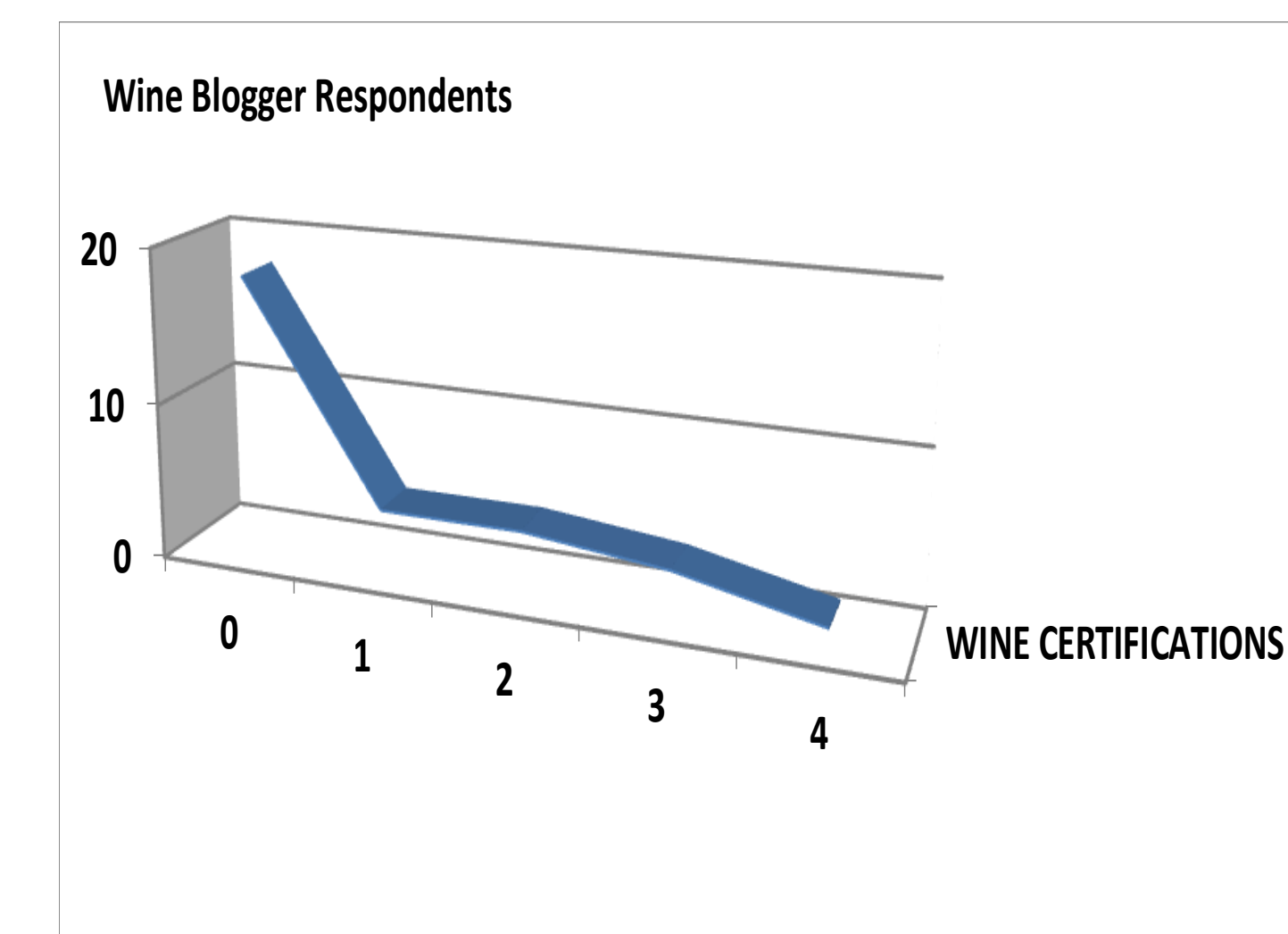
Wine Blogging is a technologically-driven communication of increasing influence on wine tourism destinations. Through investigating and looking into factors, if any, which drive or influence wine bloggers in how they formulate their recommendations for wine destinations I've investigated bloggers' wine certifications, years of professional wine experience and home geographic location.

Materials and Methods

In personal interviews I've investigated the travel experience of each blogger within the last month and other influences on wine destination recommendations. The study involved thirty US wine bloggers, selected from a group of Twitter bloggers, who have at least five hundred followers. Data was collected and analyzed from their blogs posted and personal interviews over a forty-five day period.

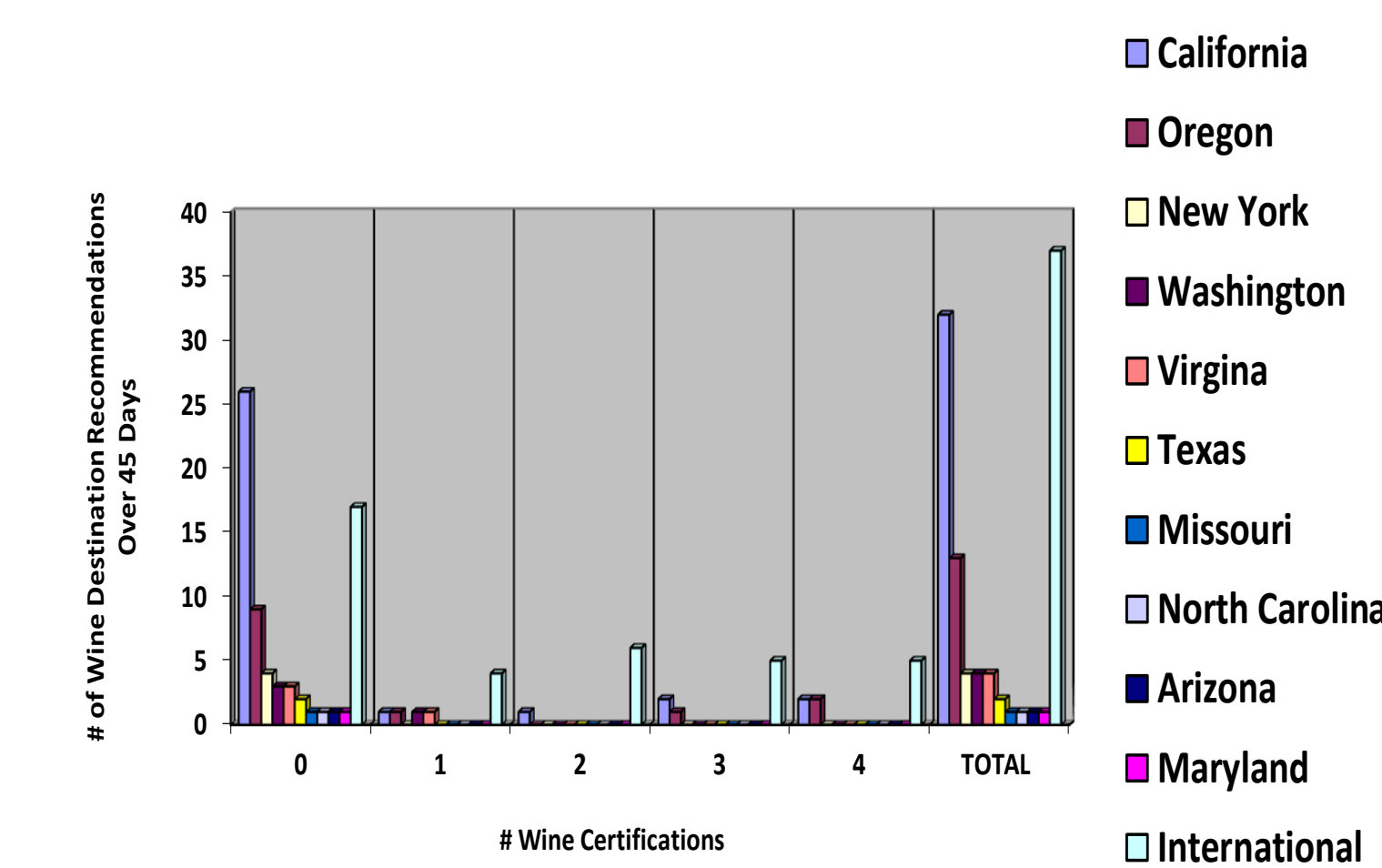
Results

TABLE 1 -
Wine Bloggers with Internationally Recognized Wine Certifications



Of the thirty respondents 60% of the wine bloggers participating have zero internationally recognized wine certifications, 13.3% have one, 13.3% have two, 10% have three and 3.3% have four internationally recognized wine certifications. This research shows a majority of wine bloggers have no wine certifications. A lesser but equal amount of wine bloggers have two or three wine certifications and one wine blogger has attained four internationally recognized wine certifications.

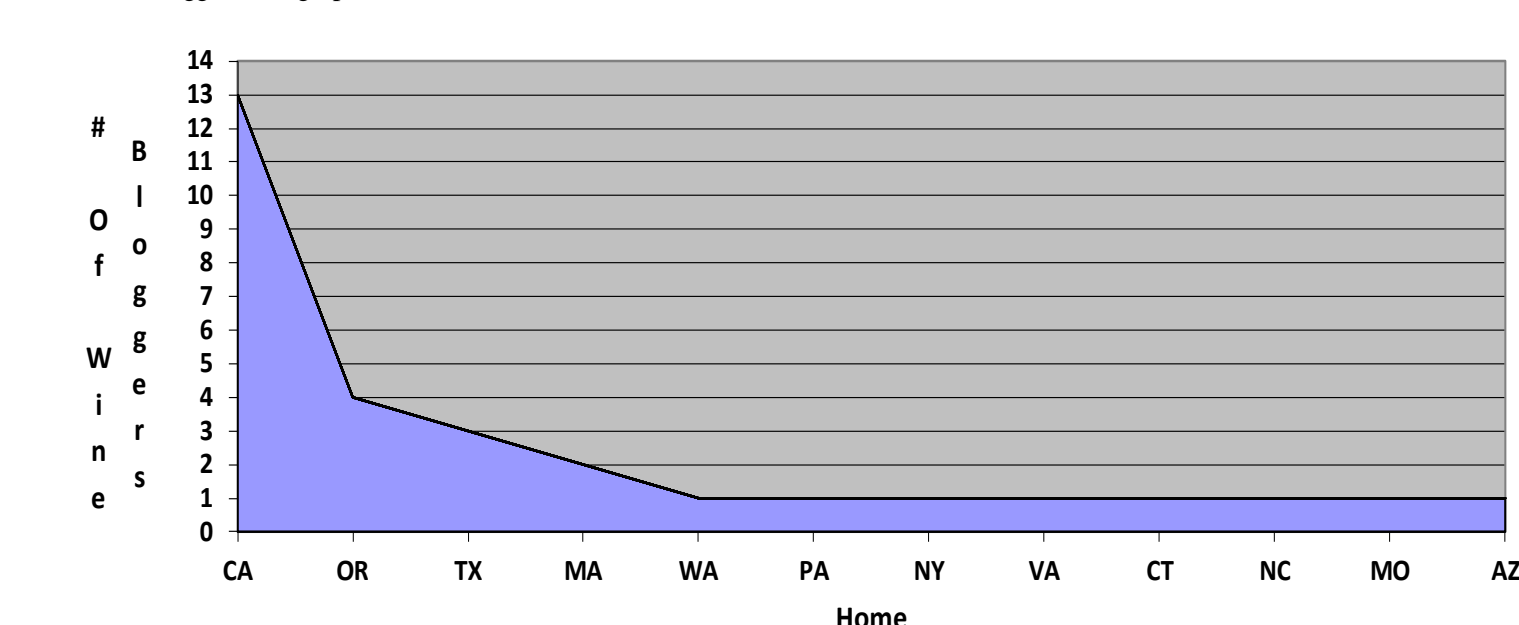
TABLE 2 -
Wine Destination Recommended by Wine Bloggers Based on Wine Certifications Held



Results from the study show wine bloggers with no wine certifications recommended destinations a total of sixty eight times on twitter. Wine bloggers with zero wine certifications tweeted about California (26), Oregon (9), New York (4), Washington (3), Virginia (3), Texas (2), Missouri (1), North Carolina (1), Arizona (1), Maryland (1) and international destinations (17). Wine bloggers with one certification tweeted about California (1), Oregon (1), Washington (1), Virginia (1) and International Destinations (4). Wine bloggers with two wine certifications tweeted about California (1) and international locations. Wine bloggers with three wine certifications tweeted about California (2), Oregon (1) and International Locations (5). The wine blogger with four wine certifications tweeted about California (2), Oregon (2) and International Destinations (5).

In total, tweets by wine bloggers recommending a wine destination totaled one hundred (100) during the observation period. International wine destinations were tweeted about thirty seven times (37), California destinations thirty two times (32), Oregon destinations thirteen times (13), New York destinations four times (4), Washington destinations four times (4), Virginia destinations four times (4), Texas destinations two times (2), and Missouri (1), North Carolina (1), Arizona (1), Maryland (1) wine destinations all once.

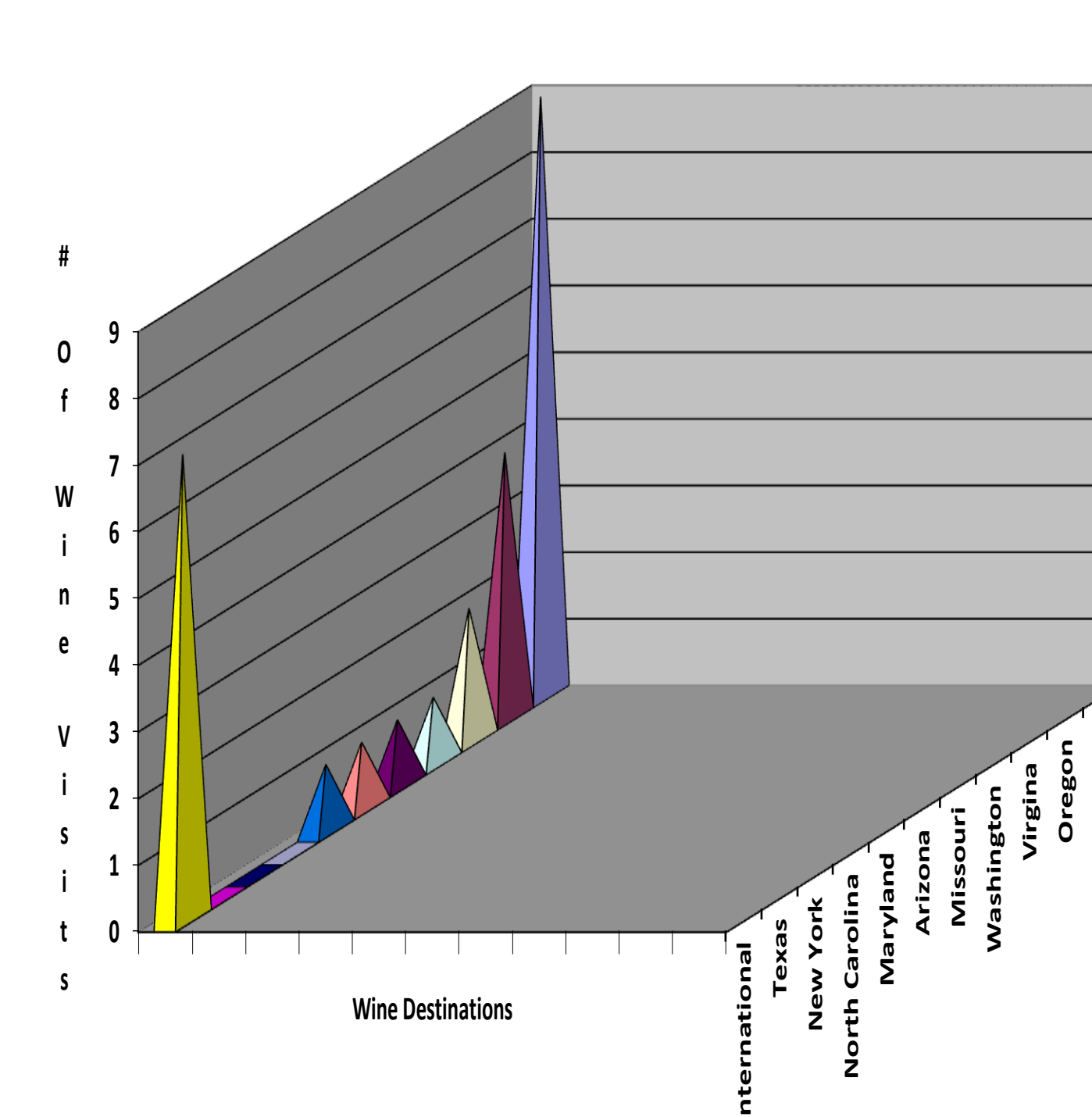
TABLE 3 -
Wine Bloggers Geographic Home



More wine bloggers call California home than any other state, thirteen wine bloggers has residence in California. Four wine bloggers participating in this study live in Oregon, three in Texas, two in Maryland and one each in Washington, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, Connecticut, North Carolina, Missouri and Arizona.

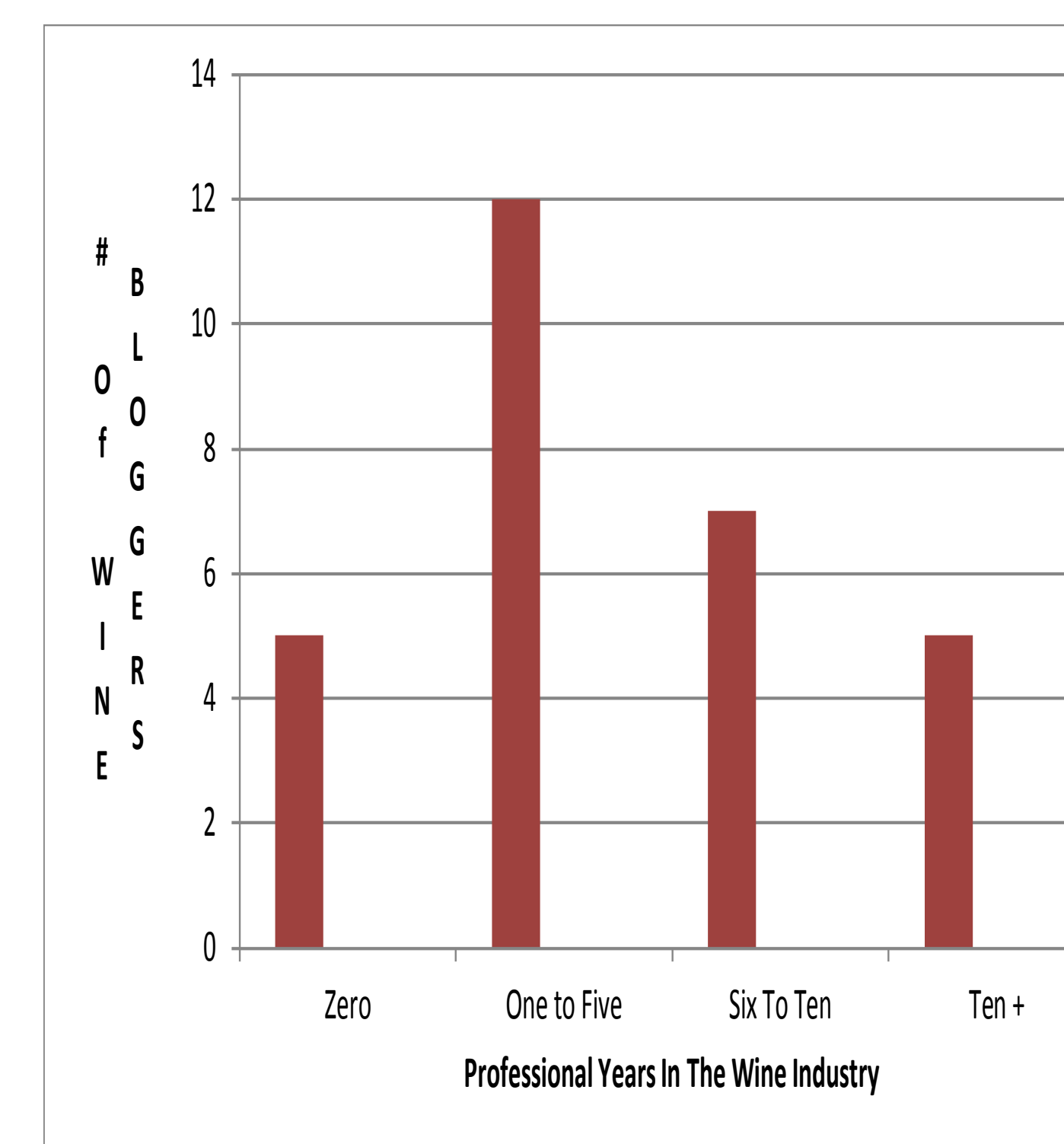
Results

TABLE 4 -
Times That Wine Destinations Were Visited by Wine Bloggers over the Last Thirty Days



The most popular wine destinations for bloggers over the last month were located in California; its wine regions were visited during nine separate trips by wine bloggers. Followed by Oregon which was visited on four separate occasions, Virginia twice, while Missouri and Arizona were each visited once. None of the wine bloggers from the study visited North Carolina, New York or Texas within the last month. International wine destinations were visited on seven separate trips by wine bloggers during the same period.

TABLE 5 -
Professional Years of Wine Industry Experience



Wine bloggers with zero years of professional wine industry experience and wine bloggers with ten plus years of professional wine industry experience are equal, five wine bloggers either have no wine industry experience or over 10 years of wine industry experience. A total of nineteen wine bloggers have one to ten years of professional wine industry experience, twelve respondents with one to five years of wine industry experience and seven participants reporting six to ten years of wine industry experience.

Acknowledgments and Conclusions

TABLE 6 -
OF FOLLOWERS

TWITTER NAME	# OF FOLLOWERS
@ENBYTES	10,624
@WINE.COM	9,092
@CTIVEE_CORNER	7,400
@NORCALWINE	6,533
@WINEWONKETTE	5,189
@MYVINESPOT	5,142
@TOMCWARK	4,590
@REDWINEWIVA	3,802
@AWANDERINGWINO	3,664
@HOUSTONWINO	3,577
@WINEBOREE	3,554
@DRXENO	3,338
@WINEPROF	3,228
@MARCYGORDON	3,047
@FRANKLYWINES	2,954
@LSASHARAHALL	2,571
@TIMHANNI	2,569
@SHONA425	2,250
@WINEORMOUS	2,189
@FABOCCGIRL	2,100
@WINETRAVELTRAVEL	2,031
@MOWINEGIRL	1,883
@JOEWINETRAVELER	1,863
@GRAPECONVICTION	1,621
@INDEVINOS	1,569
@SOUTHWESTWINES	1,533
@WINEABOUT	1,286
@SIMPLYGRAPES	1,229
@VINDLGE	855
@VINESLEUTH	599

FOR THIS STUDY WINE BLOGGERS AVERAGED 3,288 FOLLOWERS AND HAVE A REFERENCE TO WINE TERMINOLOGY IN THEIR TWITTER HANDLE 80% OF THE TIME. ONE OF THESE BLOGGERS IS CONSIDERED AMONGST THE TOP TEN INFLUENTIAL WINE BLOGGERS IN THE WORLD, AND ANOTHER IS DOCUMENTED TO HAVE CREATED THE HASHTAG CAMPAIGN FOR CROATIA AS A WINE DESTINATION # WOCROATIA.