

Collective and individual identities in the external  
communication of regional cluster firms:  
The case of Franciacorta wineries

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## ABSTRACT

Researchers have expressed growing interest in how organizations communicate their identities to claim institutional positioning (Foreman, Whetten, & Mackey, 2012; McPhee & Zaug, 2000) in their fields and to seek a strategic balance between legitimacy and distinctiveness (Deephouse, 1999). They have also paid increasing attention to less explored forms of organizational fields, such as regional communities (Marquis, Lounsbury, & Greenwood, 2011). However, little empirical attention has been given to organizational identity projections aimed at legitimacy and distinctiveness in regional communities, and what research does exist has focused primarily on organizations and their referent industries (Lamertz, Heugens, & Calmet, 2005; Navis & Glynn, 2010). The aim of the current research is to explore how organizations in a regional business cluster combine collective regional identity elements and individual organizational elements in their external identity projections (RQ1), how they differently use collective and individual identity elements in external identity projections to attain legitimacy and distinctiveness (RQ2), and what influences the patterns of their identity projections (RQ3).

Considering the exploratory nature of the research questions, and the aim of identifying patterns and understanding relationships, the research adopted a nested case study design (Yin, 2003), whereby the case is a regional wine cluster and the nested units of analysis its wineries. The Franciacorta wine cluster (Italy) was selected as an extreme revelatory case, providing both relevance and visibility of the processes to be investigated. The findings identified three strategies that organizations use to combine regional collective identity elements with organizational identity elements into their external communication. These strategies further emphasize different intents for legitimacy and distinctiveness and are influenced by various organizational social variables and managers' identification with the regional cluster.

The model and propositions emerging from this research mainly contribute to organizational identity theory by refining the understanding of how macro-institutional identities constrain and enable the processes by which organizations develop identity contents to claim legitimate distinctiveness. In particular the model shows that organizations try to achieve legitimate distinctiveness by orchestrating both conforming and under-conforming claims through multi-modal identity projections (i.e., visual and verbal) and that some organizations over-conform to the regional cluster identity and prefer distinctiveness through inter-group comparison rather than through intra-group comparison. Furthermore, the findings reaffirm the value of considering the role of both organizational idiosyncratic characteristics and collective institutional elements in the processes of organizational identity construction, thereby supporting recent theories of identity formation and claiming (Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton, & Corley, 2013). Finally, the findings provide insights that contribute to the existing literature on institutional work and on regional business clusters by suggesting directions for future research.

**Keywords:** Organizational identity, collective identity, regional business clusters, identity projections, legitimate distinctiveness.



To Andrea, Mario and Biagio





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# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS<sup>1</sup>

The interdependence between collective supra-organizational identities and organizational identities is increasingly gaining attention in both organizational studies (Fiol & Romanelli, 2012; Glynn, 2008; Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006; Schultz, 2012) and organizational communication research (Lammers, 2011; Lammers & Barbour, 2006; McPhee & Zaug, 2000; van Halderen, van Riel, & Brown, 2011). The paradox of uniqueness (Martin, Feldman, Hatch, & Sitkin, 1983), showing that firms are extremely similar despite claiming their uniqueness, and the paradox of embedded agency (Seo & Creed, 2002), showing that despite isomorphism organizations are able to introduce change into organizational fields, has led to increased attention on the dynamics that link macro isomorphic processes and micro organizational sense-making (Glynn, 2008; Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008; Weber & Glynn, 2006). Under these premises, organizational identity projections (Hatch & Schultz, 2002) have drawn attention as a concept connecting the micro organizational context with macro environments (Glynn & Halgin, 2011). Identity projections are central in the organizational search for a strategic balance between legitimacy and distinctiveness (Deephouse, 1999; Glynn, 2008). Communicating an identity that is sufficiently similar to the collective identity of the reference group makes the organization more appropriate in the eyes of peers (Lamertz, Heugens, & Calmet, 2005), more understandable by external audiences (Navis & Glynn, 2010; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001; Suchman, 1995), and more likely to benefit from categorical status in its markets (Zhao & Zhou, 2011). However, organizations also need to communicate what is central, enduring, and distinctive about them (Albert & Whetten, 1985) to distinguish themselves in global markets that are increasingly competitive and

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<sup>1</sup> During the development of this research, provisional versions of the literature review, methodology and findings have been presented to various academic seminars and conferences. For details see the following papers in the reference list: Zamparini (2007); Zamparini and Lurati (2011); Zamparini and Lurati (2013 a and b). Furthermore preliminary findings presented in chapter 5 have been published in the paper Zamparini and Lurati 2012 (see further specifications at the beginning of chapter 5).

homogeneous (D'Aveni, 2010) as well as stand out from their peers (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). Many researchers have asserted that the key for understanding how to overcome the embedded agency and uniqueness paradox lies in the understanding of how institutional fields both constrain and enable organizational sense-making and claims (Glynn, 2008; Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006; Weber & Glynn, 2006). However, such understanding is still in its early stages. For what concerns identity in particular, the influence of collective supra-organizational groups on organizational identity claims has rarely been addressed empirically and has primarily been examined by considering the collective influence from the industry (Lamertz et al., 2005; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001) or market category level (Navis & Glynn, 2010). The aim of this research is to explore how and why organizations in a regional business cluster differently combine the local collective identity elements and individual organizational elements in their external communication to claim legitimate distinctiveness.

Regional business clusters are “geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field” (Porter, 1998, p. 78), thereby resembling the characteristics of an organizational field as an aggregation of organizations that “constitute a recognized area of institutional life” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148) and are “meaningful to participants” (Davis & Marquis, 2005, p. 337). If we take the neo-Marshallian definition of a regional business cluster (Becattini, 1990, p. 38) as a “socio-territorial entity which is characterized by the active presence of both a community of people and a population of firms in one naturally and historically bounded area,” the resemblance of this entity to communities as institutional orders as defined by Marquis, Lounsbury, and Greenwood (2011, p. xvi) is evident: In these communities, not only is social proximity relevant, but it is also the “interest in a common goal, and a common identity,” that shapes firms’ actions. In fact, regional business clusters are often invoked as inspiring objects of analysis to deepen the understanding of relationships between macro collective identities and organizational identities (Glynn, 2008; Marquis et al., 2011; Swaminathan, 2001), and they are considered contexts in which collective identities are generally highly institutionalized and visible given the presence of trade associations and local cultural institutions that act as identity coordinators (Fiol &

Romanelli, 2012; Wry, Lounsbury, & Glynn, 2011). Hence, the first research question this research addresses is:

*RQ1: How do regional cluster firms combine collective and individual identity elements into their external communication?*

The word *collective* here refers to the collective regional cluster level, whereas the word *individual* refers to the organization level, insofar as organizations are considered individual members of the regional cluster.

This research also aims to understand how organizations differently use collective and individual identity elements to seek legitimacy and distinctiveness as well as what influences differences among firms. Hence, the second research question is:

*RQ2: How do regional business cluster firms claim collective and individual identity elements in external communication to seek legitimacy and/or distinctiveness?*

Previous research has discussed the influence of different types of variables on organizational conformity to strategic clusters or industries, with some scholars offering competing explanations (McNamara, Deephouse, & Luce, 2002; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001; Peteraf & Shanley, 1997; van Halderen et al., 2011). Furthermore, the literature on regional business clusters suggests that regional cluster firms often adopt different behaviors depending on, among other factors, demographic variables and investments in communication (Foresti et al., 2007). Therefore, the third question of the present research is:

*RQ3: What influences the different ways in which firms combine collective and individual identity elements in their external communication?*

The next sections discuss the assumptions that inspired and guided this research, provide an outline of the thesis, and finally anticipate the main contributions of this research.

## **1.2 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS**

Organizational identity is traditionally defined as that which is central, distinctive, and enduring about the organization and answers the basic question “who are we as an organization?” in contrast to the typical question raised by external audiences “what kind of organization is this?” (Albert & Whetten, 1985, p. 269). Building on this seminal definition of identity, organizational scientists have developed two main perspectives in the study of organizational identity since the 1980s. One perspective investigates identity in organizations, focusing on members’ shared perceptions about who they are as an organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Gioia, Thomas, Clark, & Chittipeddi, 1994); the other one investigates the identity of organizations, conceptualizing the organization as a social actor that has the agency to develop a self-definition and institutionalized identity claims directed to its members as well as the external environment (Whetten & Mackey, 2002, p. 395). Coherent with the latter perspective, this research assumes an agentic role of organizations that intentionally claim their self-definitions to influence external stakeholders’ perceptions (Foreman, Whetten, & Mackey, 2012).

Scholars studying the identity of organizations are more interested in understanding the processes by which identity is a means for linking the organization to its societal environment (Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Whetten & Mackey, 2002). Organizational identity is institutionalized once the founders’ and leaders’ choices are “infused with value” (Selznick, 1957, p. 17); identity defines what the organization has in common with organizations of the same type and what makes it unique (Whetten & Mackey, 2002). At the same time, organizational identity is also a strategic claim of the organization’s essence that impresses an image of the organization in stakeholders’ minds; in fact, the image that stakeholders hold of the organization generates a reputation (Fombrun & van Riel, 2004) that, according to Hall (1992, p. 138), “can be a major factor in achieving competitive advantage through differentiation.” Thus, organizational identity is a “self-descriptor” that supports the definitional criteria of continuity, representing a constitutional reference point to organizational behaviors, and

of distinctiveness, claiming what distinguishes the organizational self from other comparable actors (Whetten & Mackey, 2002, p. 396).

Drawing on the tradition of organizational identity theory, this research assumes that organizational identity is an internally defined concept (Gioia et al., 2013), whereas stakeholders' expectations and perceptions are conceptualized as organizational image. In the same vein, drawing on Peteraf and Shanley (1997, p. 166) and Sammarra and Biggiero (2001, p. 69), this research applies Albert and Whetten's definition of identity to the collective identity of the regional business cluster as "the central, enduring and distinctive characteristics of the group." This is an essential terminology clarification to avoid misleading overlaps with recent conceptualizations of organizational identity that macro-economists have used to define how stakeholders categorize an organization (Hsu & Hannan, 2005).

The main object of analysis of this research is organizational external identity projections. Identity projections are the expressions of an organization's identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002), strategically conveyed to external audiences to impress a positive organizational image (Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Rindova & Fombrun, 1999). The projection of an organization's identity through organizational communications refers to the set of signs "manufactured to portray and promote the organisation and its products" (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001, p. 305). Organizations produce signs—narratives, pictures, symbols, artifacts—about their identity; these signs, in the form of value statements, narratives, and visual symbols, are continuously co-constructed in the interaction between internal and external stakeholders (Christensen & Corneliussen, 2011; Hatch & Schultz, 2002). While acknowledging this, this research specifically takes an inside-out perspective, addressing projected identities to understand how organizations strategically combine collective and organizational identity elements to claim legitimacy and distinctiveness within their field.

### **1.3 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS**

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 describes the conceptual background that informed the research questions and addresses the debate on the relationship between supra-organizational collective identities (e.g., organizational fields, industries, strategic

groups, local communities) and organizational identities as well as the specific role of organizational identity projections in the quest for legitimacy and distinctiveness. Chapter 3 reviews more specifically the literature on collective and organizational identities within regional business clusters; it addresses the evolving debate about the strategic relevance of regional cluster identities for organizations.

Considering the exploratory nature of the research questions and the aim to identify patterns and understand relationships, the research adopts an exploratory case study design (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2003). Chapter 4 details the nested design of the case, whereby the case is a regional wine cluster and the nested units of analysis are its wineries. This design leads to insights regarding the collective identity of the regional business cluster (i.e., the case) and organizational identity projections (i.e., embedded units of analysis). The Franciacorta wine cluster in Italy was selected as an extreme revelatory case (Eisenhardt, 1989), providing both relevance and visibility of the processes to be investigated. Data collection and analysis comprise a preliminary quantitative content analysis of all regional wineries' websites; this is followed by a detailed qualitative part analyzing the written and oral identity projections of a theoretical sample of wineries.

Chapter 5 provides a description of the preliminary content analysis results. These already suggest that indeed there are different ways of combining collective and organizational identities into wineries' external projections, and they provide data to select a theoretical sampling of wineries to be further investigated. Chapters 6 and 7 provide a rich narrative description of qualitative findings, identifying and defining three wineries' identity combination strategies: blending, personalizing, and shifting.

Chapter 8 describes the emerging model and related propositions. The findings show that in fact different identity combination strategies highlight different emphases on legitimacy and distinctiveness claiming. Furthermore, the findings suggest that organizations' social role in the cluster, managers' identification with the cluster, and size and foundation date influence the enactment of different identity combination strategies.



Finally, Chapter 9 discusses the main contributions of this research to the literature on organizational identity as well as further implications for the literature on institutional work and regional business clusters.

#### **1.4 MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS**

The model and propositions emerging from this research mainly contribute to organizational identity theory by refining the understanding of how macro-institutional identities influence organizational identities, both constraining and enabling them (Glynn, 2008). The findings from this research offer four main contributions.

The first two contributions challenge the assumption implying that conforming claims are aimed at legitimacy building and under-conforming claims are aimed at distinctiveness building (Deephouse, 1999; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). In fact, the findings indicate that assessing how much organizations conform to or distinguish themselves from a specific supra-organizational group provides a limited understanding of how they try to achieve optimal distinctiveness. As a first contribution, the emerging model shows that organizations try to achieve legitimate distinctiveness by mixing and orchestrating both conforming and under-conforming claims through multi-modal identity projections (i.e., visual and verbal). Furthermore, as a second contribution, the findings show that organizations do not always seek distinctiveness through under-conforming. To the contrary, some organizations over-conform to the regional cluster identity and prefer distinctiveness through inter-group comparison to intra-group comparison. This is an aspect of the socio-psychological optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) that has thus far been underestimated in empirical studies on the organizational strategic balance search.

The third and fourth contributions of this research instead offer support to recent organizational identity formation models. More specifically, the emerging model affirms the value of considering organizational idiosyncratic elements to reach a better understanding of how organizations make sense and elaborate collective identity elements, which is consistent with recent research investigating how organizational identities are constructed in relation to their supra-organizational environment (Gioia et al., 2010; Kroezen & Heugens, 2012; Lerpold et al., 2007). In fact, as a third

contribution, the findings show that organizations construct their identities not only by differently re-combining elements available in the collective repertoire (Glynn, 2008), but also by adding to these re-combinations contents that are organization specific, such as organizations' characters, entrepreneurs' particular ideologies, or past events. In addition, as a fourth contribution, the findings show that organizations' own characteristics, linked to their history or social role, and managers' identification with the cluster indeed influence the adoption of different identity combination strategies, thereby influencing the way in which they make sense and enact the regional cluster identity. Furthermore, these organization-specific variables influence the conformity of organizational identity projections more than other externally driven variables, such as status (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001).

In addition to the already identified contributions, the emerging model and propositions have some implications for other literature, inasmuch they provide insights suggesting interesting directions for future research. The findings have implications for the stream of new institutionalism studying institutional work and investigating how organizations influence their macro institutional environments (Fiol & Romanelli, 2012; Phillips et al., 2004). In particular, the findings show how, by differently combining collective and organizational elements, organizations construct texts that constitute inputs that might contribute to the maintenance or slow transformation of the community field's macro discourse. Finally, the findings have implications for the literature debating the relevance of regional business cluster identities (Becattini, 2003; Lazerson & Lorenzoni, 1999; Sammarra & Biggiero, 2001; Staber, 2010). The findings suggest that the regional cluster identity is used as a resource for organizational strategic communication. In addition, the findings show that organizations' identification with the cluster influences more conforming organizational identity projections, potentially suggesting that identified organizations might contribute to the cluster survival not only through actual cooperative actions (Biggiero & Sammarra, 2003b), but also through organizational communications that might support the cluster's symbolic survival against the current disruptive evolutionary trends emphasized in the literature (Belussi & Sammarra, 2010; Camuffo & Grandinetti, 2011).

## CHAPTER 2. ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY PROJECTIONS AND LEGITIMATE DISTINCTIVENESS

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According to organizational identity theory, organizations project their identities to communicate who they are and what they do to their stakeholders (King & Whetten, 2008; Whetten & Mackey, 2002). According to this view, identity projections are the expression of the organizational culture and represent a coalescence of the unique mix of idiosyncratic characteristics of the organization, its historical development, and interaction with its stakeholders through time (Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Rindova & Fombrun, 1999). Although the influence of the external environment on organizational identities has been acknowledged since the first conceptualization of organizational identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985), the main focus of organizational identity theory has emphasized its uniqueness (Rindova, Pollock & Hayward, 2006; Schultz, Antorini, & Csaba, 2005), thereby considering it a strategic resource that is rare and difficult to imitate (Stimpert, Gustafson, & Sarason, 1998; Whetten & Mackey, 2002).

Meanwhile, scholars adopting a new institutional approach have emphasized the similarity of organizational identities (Glynn & Azbug, 2002). According to new institutional theory, organizations conform to isomorphic pressures coming from their organizational fields to attain not only material resources, but also legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Organizations conform through the adoption of practices, but also with the development of a vocabulary that makes them recognizable (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) in the institutional field.

The following literature review illustrates the debate on the two opposite needs of legitimacy and distinctiveness that an organization has to face and on the role of organizational identity projections to manage external perceptions of legitimacy and distinctiveness.

## **2.1 THE NEED FOR A LEGITIMATELY DISTINCTIVE IDENTITY**

Paralleling Pedersen and Dobbin's (2006) comparison of organizational culture and new institutionalism, it can be said that organizational identity theory focuses mainly on distinctiveness and polymorphism whereas new institutionalism focuses on conformity, similarity, and isomorphism. For new institutionalists, the very need for uniqueness is an institutional prescription. Organizational identity scholars conversely contend that "Identity is an important source of heterogeneity that may explain why some organizations have a sense of purpose or mission that makes them resistant to dominant institutional logics, norms or rules" (King, Felin, & Whetten, 2010, p. 299).

Both traditions have their paradoxes with which to deal. Empirical studies on organizational identity emphasized what Martin and colleagues (1983) called the uniqueness paradox—that is, the acknowledgement of the fact that very often organizations claiming their distinctiveness result in becoming similarly distinctive in the competitive landscape. The paradox is explained by the fact that the external environment influences organizational sense-making and, thus, identity communications. As Rindova and Fombrun (1999) explained in their competitive advantage model, not only does organizational identity shape strategic projections, but the macro-culture that embeds the organization also defines the industry paradigm that affects organizational strategic decisions.

Meanwhile, the paradox emerging from new institutionalism is that of embedded agency (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Seo & Creed, 2002). If organizations are prone to isomorphic pressures and conform to the institutional logics prevailing in their field, how can change and variation in organizational fields be explained? Do embedded organizations have agency to introduce variations and modify the very context that constrains and guides their behavior?

The rest of this section illustrates different contributions that more or less explicitly address these two paradoxes, investigating the interplay between micro self-definitional identities and macro environmental identity prescriptions.

### **2.1.1 Organizational identity as a bricolage of collective elements**

The paradox of embedded agency (Seo & Creed, 2002) inspired a shift in new institutional theory, with the introduction of the concepts of institutional and cultural entrepreneurship and a reinterpretation of the construct of institutional logics. Institutional logics are defined as “supra-organizational patterns, both symbolic and material, that order reality and provide meaning to actions” (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 803; Friedland & Alford, 1991). According to this new stream of new institutionalism, different recombinations of legitimate logics, caused by idiosyncratic characteristics of organizations lead to the emergence of differentiation or enumeration in institutional fields, and these recombinations explain the different degrees of inclusion in a social category (Wry, Lounsbury & Glynn, 2011). In their reinterpretation of Weick’s (1995) work on sense-making, Weber and Glynn (2006, p. 1644) argued that institutional fields supply “raw materials” to organizational sense-making, and these materials circulate in the field mobilized by “institutional carriers.” They elaborated upon three mechanisms, explaining how the institutional context enters into organizational sense-making. “Priming” is the mechanism by which organizations import social cues into the institutional field; “editing” explains how institutions guide the editing of social cues by organizations, providing them with social feedback; and finally, “triggering” implies that the ambivalence and endogenous contradictions in the institutional fields trigger organizational sense-making (Weber & Glynn, 2006, p. 1648). If Weber and Glynn are more concerned with expanding the process of institutional influence to explain change, going beyond the classic conceptualizations of isomorphic forces, other scholars try to further understand how organizations make use of institutional cues and editing rules to introduce variations in the field. Sahlin and Wedlin (2008) proposed that editing by organizations is a repetitive translation of templates that circulate in the institutional environment; the continuous editing process might gradually change the focus, content, and meaning of the original template. Similarly, but in broader terms, Glynn (2008, p. 424) explained the relationship between the institutional context and organizations’ identity construction, proposing the notion of “institutional bricolage”:

As Swidler (1986) reminds us, culture serves as a kind of “toolkit” from which organizations can draw identity elements. Thus, the process of identity construction becomes the process of institutional bricolage, where organizations incorporate cultural meanings, values, sentiments and rules into their identity claims.

Organizations act as bricoleurs in that they use the raw materials provided by their organizational fields and combine and recombine them in unique compositions, thereby being able to communicate their legitimate, but distinctive identities. The concept of bricolage is not new to new institutionalism. The first mention of it dates back to Douglas (1986), who noted that in anthropology men are often viewed as bricoleurs insofar as they borrow elements from the environment in which they are embedded and start to experiment with them, giving birth to original solutions. Strictly relating the concept of bricolage to that of institutional leakage (Douglas, 1987), Cleaver (2002) relates the use and recombination of resources available in the institutional field to the study of collective action. However, Glynn’s use of the word *bricolage* is more concerned with cultural aspects, which is coherent with Lévi-Strauss’s (1962/1966) description of bricolage. In fact, Glynn proposed bricolage as a mechanism of identity construction. Similarly, Rao, Monin, and Durand (2005) applied the concept of bricolage to the recombination of routines, artefacts and symbols that starred French chefs perform, after borrowing these elements from the rival category of nouvelle cuisine. The bricolage of symbolic elements pertaining to rival categories actually blurs the boundaries between the two categories of classic and nouvelle cuisine. Their study used the concept of bricolage to explain the disruption of pre-existing categorical boundaries and the setting and recognition of new boundaries. However, they did not demonstrate, as Glynn proposed, that bricolage is used by social actors within the same category to creatively deploy distinctive identities created by the use and recombination of legitimate elements within the category.

Organizational identity scholars have increasingly addressed the influence of the macro-social environment on organizational identity construction. Organizational fields and supra-organizational groups provide categorizing cues that give to organization the opportunity to self-categorize as being similar to some groups but different from other groups (Gioia et al., 2010; Lerpold et al., 2007). Furthermore, new organizational

identities form by combining attributes and discursive resources coming from their macro societal environment as well as from their organization-specific reservoir (e.g., founders' beliefs and values, organizational narratives) (Kroezen & Heugens, 2012; Vaara, Tienari, & Irrmann, 2007).

However, there is still scarce empirical attention to the processes by which organizations perform a bricolage of various identity elements to achieve and maintain a strategic balance (Deephouse, 1999) between being a legitimate member of a business community and being distinctive enough to be chosen by external audiences (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). The following section describes in more detail the organizational need for strategic balance, introducing the socio-psychological concept of optimal distinctiveness.

### **2.1.2 Strategic balance through optimal distinctiveness**

The literature reviewed herein demonstrates that different debates have developed around the understanding of how collective identities influence organizational identities as well as how organizational identities allow for differentiation and change within collective identities. In particular, within these broader topics, the embedded agency paradox and the uniqueness paradox inspired a debate on the strategic need for organizations to find a balance between conforming to have legitimacy and differentiating to have distinctiveness. Like individuals do with their referent groups, so too do organizations need to find an equilibrium between conforming identity claims to be perceived by external audiences as legitimate members of a collective identity and with a distinctive identity to be perceived by external audiences as different and unique within their collective identity (Deephouse, 1999).

Before delving into more detail about the theory of strategic balance, it is important to define legitimacy and distinctiveness. A classic definition of legitimacy given by Suchman (1995, p. 574) says that "legitimacy is a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions." Suchman developed a typology of legitimacies, depending on their output. The first type is pragmatic legitimacy, which refers to the legitimacy given to the organization by its most important stakeholders. It involves influences and exchanges with self-interested constituencies

and is managed in order to build trust relationships with relevant stakeholders who directly support the organization. A second type is moral legitimacy, which is more concerned with a “positive normative evaluation” of the firm’s activities by society at large (Suchman, 1995, p. 579). Finally, there is a cognitive legitimacy, which is based on the “comprehensibility,” or further on the “taken for grantedness,” of the organization and its activities by society. Taking it to the extremes, failing to achieve cognitive legitimacy means lacking the license to operate, not for “overt hostility,” but simply because of the impossibility to think about the organization because it falls out of stakeholders’ categorical and cultural interpretations (Suchman, 1995, p. 582).

This research takes into consideration principally cognitive legitimacy, inasmuch it explores how organizations draw on their local field identities to be perceived as proper members of their regional business cluster. Distinctiveness according to the resource-based view of a firm (Barney, 1991; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) makes the firm more difficult to imitate, providing a competitive advantage and increasing the probability to be chosen by stakeholders who give resources. Organizations who express their uniqueness are more likely to build strong reputations (Fombrun, 1996). If it is true that being socially accepted lays the ground for reputation building, then distinction is the most important lever for increasing reputation (Deephouse & Carter, 2005). Both legitimacy and distinctiveness should aim to promote organizations’ acquisition of resources. In fact, legitimacy provides a license to operate insofar as it makes the organization not only understandable and appropriate in the eyes of its stakeholders, but also “more meaningful, more predictable, and more trustworthy” (Suchman, 1995, p. 575). Legitimacy and distinctiveness “stay in a dialectical relationship to one another” (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001, p. 384). Legitimacy satisfies the criteria for social acceptance and understandability, whereas distinctiveness satisfies social comparison between qualified and outstanding organizations (Deephouse & Carter, 2005).

Deephouse (1999) specifically addressed this aspect while analyzing conforming and differentiating strategic claims of commercial banks. Strategic conformity improves legitimacy, but could hinder performance rates due to competition pressure. In the same way, strategic differentiation increases competitiveness, but could impose legitimacy



costs, thus again reducing performance. Therefore, Deephouse proposed a theory of strategic balance whereby firms should have “moderate levels of strategic similarity” (p. 154). A moderately similar firm faces reduced competition for resources, so its performance is higher than firms of a highly similar type.

The firm is not so different that members of the organizational field challenge its legitimacy, so its performance is higher than firms that have low similarity. Thus, firms with moderate levels of strategic similarity are expected to have high performance because they benefit from reduced competition while maintaining legitimacy. (Deephouse, 1999, p. 154)

Therefore the theory of strategic balance proposes that organizations should strive to obtain distinctiveness that is as legitimate as possible.

The concept of optimal distinctiveness has been frequently applied to organizations (Glynn, 2008; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; Navis & Glynn, 2010) to describe their need to achieve a strategic balance. Optimal distinctiveness was originally conceptualized by social psychologists (Brewer, 1991; Brewer, 1993) to understand how people try to reconcile the opposite needs of similarity and differentiation from others as well as how people use social identities to find a balance that is neither too individualistic nor too inclusive in a social category:

Social identity derives from a fundamental tension between human needs for validation and similarity to others (on the one hand) and a countervailing need for uniqueness and individuation (on the other). [...] In general these models assume that individuals meet these needs by maintaining some intermediate degree of similarity between the self and relevant others. (Brewer, 1991, p. 447)

People achieve sameness via group inclusion and uniqueness via intergroup comparison. Therefore, membership to a collective entity is a good premise to satisfy the need for optimal distinctiveness. However, people feel the need for individuation within the group as well; otherwise, a complete identity overlapping between group and personal identity would lead to complete de-individuation. Usually both multiple social memberships and different degrees of conformity satisfy the need for within group individuation.

The term *optimal* does not imply the accomplishment of a determined amount of legitimacy and distinctiveness; rather, optimal designates an equilibrium that, according

to Brewer, simultaneously avoids depersonalization into collectivities and excessive self-worth judgments due to over-individualizations. In her model, de-individuation and individuation are not two opposites on a continuum, but rather two opposing processes that meet at a certain point. The meeting point, which defines the equilibrium, is different for each person, depending on culture, socialization propensity, and previous experience (Brewer, 1991). Therefore, optimal distinctiveness is not a state, but instead a continuous quest between the opposing forces of conformity and differentiation that stand in a dialectical relationship to each other (Brewer, 1991; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001).

The concept has been frequently used as a theoretical lens to investigate the strategies that entrepreneurs and organizations put in place when they “strive for optimal distinctiveness” (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001, p. 559) in various settings like startups (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001), organizations in new emerging market categories (Navis & Glynn, 2010), and filmmakers in the film-making industry (Alvarez, Mazza, Strandgaard Pedersen, & Svejnova, 2005).

In all settings scholars acknowledge that organizations, and mostly their managers, have to “be able to astutely assess the degree to which stressing sameness or distinctiveness will lead to the acquisition of resources and wealth creation,” which is not an easy task, considering that there is not a right level of balance and that the balance continuously changes according to the organization’s life stage, the industry, and the point of view of different stakeholders (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001, p. 552).

As many authors have recognized, communication processes and all their instruments of symbolic and impression management are a privileged channel for engaging in optimal distinctiveness seeking (Deephouse & Carter, 2005; Suchman, 1995). In addition, organizational identity is a multilevel concept that can span from individuals to organizations and entire fields (Albert, 1998; Foreman, Whetten, & Mackey, 2012). The following section offers a review on identity projections and their relevance to address the issues of legitimacy and distinctiveness (Navis & Glynn, 2010; Whetten & Mackey, 2002).

## **2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY PROJECTIONS FOR LEGITIMACY AND DISTINCTIVENESS**

As outlined in previous sections, identity projections are a key concept linking the organization to its macro societal environment. Organizations communicate who they are and what they do to their multiple internal and external stakeholders. They claim their social identity as members of determined categories, but they also claim their distinctiveness from competitors.

Researchers have increasingly focused on identity projections embedded into organizational identity stories and corporate messages by new institutionalism (Fiol & Romanelli, 2011; Navis & Glynn, 2010; Wry, Lounsbury, & Glynn, 2011). Nonetheless, the topic of external identity projections is traditionally the domain of corporate identity and corporate communication studies (see Christensen & Corneliussen, 2011). This section starts by reviewing identity projections transmitted through external corporate communication and then goes into more detail on the role of managed identity communication in fostering legitimacy and distinctiveness.

### **2.2.1 Identity projections as organizational impression management**

The study of how organizations express a sense of self to external stakeholders is traditionally been the domain of corporate identity studies. Nevertheless, this domain developed under a multiplicity of conceptualizations of the very concept of corporate identity (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001), generating a Babel's Tower of corporate identity definitions (Hatch & Schultz, 2000).

Despite this definitional fuzziness, corporate identity mainly covers the topic of the strategic development of organizational identity communications through the so-called "corporate identity mix"—that is, symbols, formal communications, and behaviors (Corneliussen & Elving, 2003; van Riel & Balmer, 1997). The three elements of the mix convey messages about who the organization is, what it does, how it does it, and where it wants to go (Olins, 1995). Although symbolism and formal communication are usually developed to be directed at external stakeholders, it is widely acknowledged that they are indeed received and interpreted also by internal stakeholders (Hatch & Schultz, 2001). However, as the focus of this research is on external communications, the rest of the

discussion on identity communication will concentrate mainly on external audiences and on “external communication as communication directed to [...] audiences considered in everyday terms to be nonmembers of the organization” as well as to whom the organization wants to communicate a somewhat consistent sense of self (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p. 235).

The academic interest in identity communication raised together with the need for consultants to help organizations to manage their external communications in a way to make them stand out from the crowd of competition. Derived from the fields of public relations and design, this concept of corporate identity was first pronounced by Lippincott and Margulies in 1957, who referred to visual cues, like logos, visual symbols, and nomenclature that make an organization’s identity recognizable to external audiences (Cornellissen & Elving, 2003). This sparked a rich stream of studies, and the so-called design school (van Riel, 1995) developed, mainly during the 1970s and 1980s, extensively studying corporate visual identity from a strategic managerial perspective (Bernstein, 1986; Birkigt & Stadler, 1986; Olins, 1989; Selame & Selame, 1975). The visual identity mix—later included in the more comprehensive corporate identity mix—comprises the company name, logo, colors, and type fonts (Dowling, 1994), but also artifacts like buildings, product packaging, uniforms, letterheads, and the like (Balmer, 2006; Olins & Selame, 2000).

During the 1990s, a shift occurred, and scholars started to expand their views on corporate identity, noting that the visual identity mix fosters immediate recognition, but does not fully express the content of an organizational identity (van Riel, 1995). Kammerer (1989) made an early distinction between indicative identity, an aesthetic frame including all those visual cues that allow for immediate recognition, and thematic identity, which includes the communications about the company’s strategy, principles, and values. It is under this perspective that formal written and verbal communications were added to the corporate identity mix, together with behaviors, which are evident expressions of a company’s identity. Hence, corporate identity comes to identify the essence of the organization, and ideally corporate communications are viewed as an

authentic strategic expression of organizational identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Rindova & Fombrun, 1999; van Riel, 1995).

More recently, some authors have criticized the essentialist conceptualization of corporate identity. As Corneliissen and Harris (2001) emphasized, in addition to adding the content to the design-visual school, the behavior-based conceptualization broadened the very concept of corporate identity, assuming that the representation of an organization's identity also includes its very essence. On the one hand, this assumption of authentic representation could be a strategic option to be transparent toward stakeholders and more easily gain a reputational advantage; it nevertheless overrules that in fact identity communications are in practice a strategic decision of management. As Corneliissen and Harris (2001, p. 62) explained:

Communication is an interest-laden activity employed by an organization to “position” the organization and to exert symbolic control over its environment [...] empirical research has shown that corporate communication does not follow the “correspondence theory” of communication as prevalent in the first two theories, but rather adheres to a rhetorical view of corporate communication (Olasky 1987; Cheney 1991; Grunig and Grunig 1992; Ewen 1996). This thought ties in with the view of corporate identity management as the metaphor of conscious impression management, as an issue of specific attention and social engineering to manufacture images.

Actually the metaphor of impression management is perfectly coherent to the models of organizational identity communication proposed both by van Riel (1995) with “projected identity” and Hatch and Schultz (2002) with “impressing,” as well as with the broader organizational conceptualizations of identity claims made by organizations as social actors to create organizational images in external audiences (Elsbach, 2003; Foreman, Whetten & Mackey, 2012; King & Whetten, 2008; Whetten & Mackey, 2002).

According to micro-sociological studies on impression management and symbolic interactionism, individuals try to impress others, deliberately projecting relevant and positive aspects of their identities, in order to form positive images of themselves in the eyes of interacting actors. Using a theatrical metaphor, Goffman (1959) stated that people act as performers, expressing characters and trying to impress the audience that can credit or discredit them. When a favorable image is created in the audience's mind, individuals get social power over them, with tangible benefits in the management of

interactions and transactions (van Raaij, 1986, cited in van Riel, 1995). In the same way, organizational identity projections are one aspect of the ongoing conversation between the organization and its external constituencies and provide stakeholders with part of the information they use to form an image of the organization (Hatch & Schultz, 2002). Corporate identity is therefore a social construction resulting from the continuous dialogue between an organization's culture and image.

In their expression of “who we are” organizational members use various artefacts and symbols produced within the organizational culture but are also influenced by the ways in which others view the organization and interpret its symbols and values [...] identity analysis focuses on how the symbols and values of the organization, in combination with external influences, are used as resources for constructing organizational identity and projecting it to others. (Hatch & Schultz, 2000, p. 26)

Very often the management of identity projections needs to take into account the complexity of the multiplicity of identities coexisting within the organization (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). Multiple identities can be a source of conflict and risk undermining the consistency of external identity projections; however, the challenge is to discover and highlight those elements that compose the overarching identity of the company, encompassing multiple diversities (van Riel & Fombrun, 2007), or to strategically exploit this richness and choose which facets of an organizational identity to communicate in order to better address the different needs of diverse stakeholders (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Cornellissen & Harris, 2001). According to Hatch and Schultz (2000), these choices are usually made by top managers, but the practice shows that decision makers increasingly base their choices on perceptions and reactions of other organizational members. Hatch and Schultz indicated that the identity elements circulating within organizations (symbols, language, narratives) are strategic resources that the top management can use to formulate corporate identity programs. In addition, the needed competitive positioning and the industry or other macro-social factors influence the managerial choices regarding which elements of a company's identity to communicate (Cornellissen & Harris, 2001; Lerpold et al., 2007; Rindova & Fombrun, 1999).

Although acknowledging and trying to manage the presence of multiple identities, organizations usually want to convey a sense of unitarian identity through their corporate communications, which is at the same time appealing to many different stakeholders.

Corporate messages speak to many audiences at once in the hope of establishing and maintaining favorable and coherent corporate reputations across different stakeholder groups. [...] In many ways this mindset corresponds with the etymological roots of the adjective “corporate”. Derived from the Latin “corpus”, corporate suggests a collective entity united into one body. Thus, to label communication as “corporate” means to invoke a bodily metaphor of unity and totality. When we conceive of communication as a specifically corporate endeavor, we therefore refer to the efforts of organizations to communicate as whole, total, or “bodily entities.” (Cheney, Christensen, & Morsing, 2008, p. 3)

Stories are often used to convey identity projections and provide a complex and rich sense of wholeness, which contains elements appealing to multiple stakeholders. Scholars adopting a narrative approach define organizational identity projections as narratives of an autobiography (Czarniawska, 1997), in contrast to reputation assessments, which could be analogically called biographies (Whetten & Mackey, 2002). According to Czarniawska-Joerges (1994, p. 196), organizational identity has a “narrative character” and “persists through an ability to narrate one’s life, formulate it into a narrative composed of terms that will be accepted by the relevant audience.” This view resonates with Giddens’s claim that a person’s identity is not found in behavior or in the reactions of others (although this is part of the picture), but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going (Giddens, 1991, p. 54). Organizational stories express the organizational identity, narrating “a single, unified sequence of events, apparently drawn from the institution’s history. The heroes and heroines of such stories are organizational members” (Martin et. al., 1983, p. 439). Corporate storytelling usually refers to the formal identity narratives drafted by the management and directed to internal and external stakeholders (van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). Corporate stories are a valuable means of communication insofar as they “are hard to imitate and they promote consistency in all corporate messages” (van Riel, 2000, p. 157). Furthermore, they are more easily remembered than isolated statements, increase credibility, and generate receivers’ enthusiasm (Shaw, 2000). Corporate stories are increasingly important self-

portraits that help organizations better manage their search for a coherent identity and legitimation by external stakeholders (Cheney & Christensen, 2001). Rindova (2007, p. 158) nicely explained the role that corporate communications and identity projections have in linking the organizations to their external stakeholders and to the macro environment:

Corporate communications reflect only the official, executive-sanctioned identity claims of an organization. However, despite this characteristic, and often because of it, corporate communications play an important identity-constructing role because they are carefully crafted self-presentations that reflect how an organization wishes to be viewed and treated. As such, they play an important role in defining the nature of exchanges between firms and their stakeholders.

The rest of this section illustrates how identity projections link organizations to their macro-environments, especially in terms of what concerns the organizations' quest for distinctiveness and legitimacy.

### **2.2.2 Claiming legitimate distinctive membership to supra-organizational groups**

According to Rindova and Schultz (1998), corporate identity communication is the set of tangible manifestations of organizational beliefs aimed at differentiating the organization in the external environment. The strategic projection of identity through communications means giving salience to those aspects that are central and distinctive to an organization, providing that asymmetry and uniqueness that the resource-based view of the firm considers fundamental for the achievement of competitive advantage (Hall, 1992; Stimpert et al., 1998). Communicating the organization's identity is a resource in creating a competitive advantage because it is "valuable, rare and difficult to imitate" (Rindova & Fombrun, 1999, p. 694). In fact Rindova and Fombrun (1999) assigned strategic identity projections a role that is absolutely complementary to the one accomplished by strategic investments. If strategic investments from the firm get back material resource allocations by the organizational field, the strategic projection of identity gets feedback from external audiences in terms of definitions of success. The communication of identity is thus a strategic issue—not only for corporations, but for all kinds of social aggregations. For instance, Polletta and Jasper (2001, p. 296) contended



that activists in social movements communicate identities strategically with reference to the groups to which they are identified and with different purposes of meaning construction. Therefore, they reject the dichotomy of “identity as expressive and strategy as instrumental,” emphasizing the instrumentality of expression.

Although organizational identity should be difficult to imitate, it is also true that it is difficult to craft a message that stands out in the overcrowded communicational landscape. Organizations are like castaways trying to send their message in a bottle, but they are not even able to see the water because it is too crowded by other bottles. Cheney and Christensen (2001, p. 240) used this example and, referring to Baudrillard (1981), emphasized the phenomenon of “the ‘explosion’ of communication” as well as the fact that “standing out with a distinct and recognizable identity in this cluttered environment is at once absolutely necessary and almost impossible.” Organizations try to invoke in their corporate messages unique traits of their culture, market leadership, or innovations (van Halderen et al., 2011); however, very often these cultures, leadership styles, and innovations are the result of imitative processes in the organizational field (Czarniawska-Joerges & Sevón, 1996). Here again, organizational identity and corporate communication scholars warn against the risks of the uniqueness paradox (cf. Section 2.2), which often emerges from the striking similarities of corporate identity messaging (van Riel, 2000).

Despite the fact that organizational identity projections are often similarly distinctive, it is also true that some organizations are able to impress very peculiar identities that make them recognizable, without delegitimizing them. On the contrary, when these identities are too peculiar and appreciated by stakeholder support, they often threaten the orthodoxy of accepted institutional logics. This is what happens when organizations engage in cultural entrepreneurship, introducing variation in stable institutional environments and building new forms of institutional legitimacy (Croidieu & Monin, 2011; Rao et al., 2003; Rao & Giorgi, 2006). Identity movements that form in opposition to legitimate institutions are one clear example of how distinction emerges within a field: Rao et al. (2003) provided insightful examples of the key role of identity expressions by the new identity movement of *nouvelle cuisine* chefs in communicating a distinctive

identity through stories, symbolic communication, and new names. Despite the fact that the seminal work of Meyer and Rowan in 1977 stated that “a most important aspect of isomorphism with environmental institutions is the evolution of organizational language” (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p. 349), only recently has macro industrial sociologists’ interest in organizational communications grown. This increased attention co-occurred with an interest in how change happens through linguistic cultural entrepreneurship by organizations (Chreim, 2005; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006) and on how new legitimacies are built (Fiol & Romanelli, 2011; Khaire & Wadhvani, 2010; Navis & Glynn, 2010, 2011; Wry et al., 2011). On the other slope of the mountain, as Lammers (2011) put it, organizational culture and identity researchers are increasingly analyzing the legitimating role of identity claims (Lammers, 2011; van Halderen et al., 2011).

Some authors have recently adopted a narrative approach to account for the micro organizational influence on the emergence of supra-organizational identities. Drawing on narrative theory, Fiol and Romanelli (2011, p. 5) and Wry et al. (2011, p. 453) proposed models of how “small talk” within and between organizations build up collective identity “story worlds” to which entrepreneurs identify and identity “growth stories” that influence the identity stories of new entrants, thereby creating a coherent “collective identity story” that can be recognized and legitimated by external audiences.

Wry et al. (2011, p. 450) defined a collective identity story as a “verbal or written expression employed by a group of entrepreneurial actors to help project an image of themselves collectively, as a coherent category with a meaningful label and identity.” Firms communicating a collective identity story can express their legitimacy, positioning themselves within the legitimate symbolic boundaries of a category. At the same time, firms identifying with a collective identity story, and communicating it, claim their distinctiveness toward the rest of the world in terms of what Brewer (1993, p. 475) called “distinctive category membership” (Fiol & Romanelli, 2011; Wry et al. 2011). Therefore, by describing the emergence of collective identities, Fiol and Romanelli elaborated on how collective identity stories can become a mean for distinctiveness, not only legitimation. They suggested that entrepreneurs identify with these story worlds,

which help them make sense (Weick, 1995) of their existence and activity; through the identification with the collective identities, entrepreneurs enhance their self-consistency and self-distinctiveness. Collective “story worlds” (Fiol & Romanelli, 2011, p. 5), characterizing collective identities, are in fact part of that cultural repertoire from which individual firms draw to define their identity stories. As Chreim (2005, p. 571) emphasized:

Drawing on the broader discourses, however, in no way confines the author of an organizational identity narrative. Social discourses are available only as a range of possible themes for defining identity (Brown 1994). The range of possibilities gives rise to the act of “hermeneutic composability”, which, as Bruner (1991) indicates, is a property of narrative construction. An author has a variety of resources, discursive and experiential, internal and external to the organization, with which to compose the narrative (...) They can establish continuity with the past or break with it.

Despite the rising interest in the role of identity claims in seeking legitimacy and distinctiveness, thus far few empirical investigations have addressed the topic.

Navis and Glynn (2010) studied the role of organizational identity announcements in the emergence of a new market category, then shifted their attention to the distinguishing organizational identity claims after the market category legitimation. They analyzed the communication of the two major players during the first 16 years of the U.S. satellite radio market. They demonstrated that organizational identity projections in the first phase were more concerned with “what we do” statements and were similar for both firms, who claimed their identity as satellite radio providers and sought to distinguish them from the traditional radio market. After the first years, however, the identity projections of the two organizations shifted focus from “what we do” as satellite radio providers to “who we are” as a specific and unique satellite radio provider. Once the market category achieved “taken for grantedness” from external audiences, firms’ identity communications stopped using metaphors highlighting their distinctiveness from the traditional radio market and started to use a more relational language to position the firm within the collective identity (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001), like “the nation’s premier provider of live professional and collegiate sports events and sports talk on satellite radio” (Navis & Glynn, 2010, p. 456).

Therefore, Navis and Glynn proposed a two-step model of organizational identity claims during market category emergence: In the first phase, firms claim a collective identity to establish legitimacy; in the second phase, once legitimacy is established, firms can start claiming their individuality.

Within the meaning system supplied by the collective whole, an individual organization can claim an identity of “optimal distinctiveness” (Brewer 1991), distinctive enough from other members to individuate it, but not so distinctive as to make it unrecognizable as a rightful member of the category (Navis & Glynn, 2010, p. 442).

A similar process has been proposed for new ventures in established fields. Once collective identities are established and legitimated, new ventures claim their identities, making a specific announcement of congruence with the symbolic and normative realms of the collective identities to which they claim membership. At the same time, their identity stories narrate what is specific about the new venture—that is, they build their individuation on the grounds of the accepted and recognized collective identity (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001). “Identity stories help create competitive advantage for entrepreneurs through focal content shaped by two key forms of entrepreneurial capital: firm specific resource capital and industry level institutional capital” (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001, p. 545).

The greater attention focused on the role of organizational identity projections in building legitimacy and differentiation is concentrated on collective identity emergence (Fiol & Romanelli, 2011; Khairi & Wadhwani, 2010; Navis & Glynn, 2010; Wry et al., 2011) or early phases of organizational identities legitimation and differentiation (e.g., new ventures in Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001). Nonetheless, few works have examined organizational identity projections in mature industries, trying to attain a better understanding of the relationship between organizations’ claimed identities and their attempt to reach optimal distinctiveness. Lamertz et al. (2005) mapped the identity claims in corporate messages of breweries in the Canadian beer brewing industry. As a first step, breweries’ identity claims convey messages aimed at projecting essential and prototypical attributes of the beer brewery industry. The first type of distinctive identity claim refers to what they call normative principles of some peer breweries, depicting the

brewery as a legitimate member of a specific strategic cluster within the broader industry (e.g., artisan/specialist versus industrial producer). Finally, a second type of distinctive identity claim specifically addresses the interest of unique stakeholders, depicting the brewery as distinctive within the strategic cluster thanks to self-categorization into some other external category (e.g., perfectionist, aesthete, global company, merchant, entertainer). Lamertz et al. (2005, p. 839) emphasized the role of different organizational self-categorizations in balancing the need for homogeneity versus heterogeneity:

Organizations with limited ambitions self-categorize themselves in a direct peer group only and aim at “taken-for-grantedness” a state also known as cognitive legitimacy (Suchman 1995). In addition, organizations seeking positive evaluations rather than credibility alone (Zuckermann 1999) may claim identity attributes and normative principles that are commonly associated with social actors from other groups in the field, in an attempt to establish pragmatic and moral legitimacy (Suchman 1995).

Van Halderen et al. (2011) contributed more specifically to corporate messages aimed at moral legitimacy in the highly sensitive and mature oil industry. They analyzed the institutional identity claims (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006) of six oil firms and found that the main concern of organizations is sending out legitimizing identity claims. Nonetheless, interestingly they found two distinctive messaging patterns not based on self-categorization into different groups, but rather on over-conformity and under-conformity to the institutional normative prescriptions. Furthermore, they proposed that the specific organizational identities might lead to the use of these two distinctive messaging patterns, showing that organizations that have a more “prospector oriented” identity project over-conforming identity claims (e.g., BP) whereas organizations that have a more “defender oriented” identity project more under-conforming identity claims (van Halderen et al., 2011, pp. 290–291).

All these studies echo the two stages of candidate behavior described by Phillips and Zuckerman (2001), in which organizations first need to be intelligible by external audiences and only then can compete to make their identity announcements more attractive in order to be actually chosen. Furthermore, Phillips and Zuckerman proposed different types of identity announcements depending on different strategies of conformity and differentiation enacted by firms. More specifically, they tested an

inverted U relationship between status and conformity, asserting that middle status firms are those more prone to send out conforming identity announcements. High status firms are confident about being perceived as legitimate actors by their stakeholders; therefore, they feel free to deviate from conformity more often. To the opposite extreme, low status firms are outside the choice range of external audiences, so they do not need to compete within the conformity boundaries; instead, they rather differentiate. Between the two extremes are the middle status actors, who are in the choice range and want to remain there, so they do not risk losing their legitimacy.

The theoretical and empirical contributions described in this section show an increasing interest in the role of identity projections in building collective legitimacies and organizational legitimate distinctiveness. Furthermore, they all call for further research on identity communication related to legitimacy and distinctiveness issues, suggesting a focus on different levels of analysis (Glynn, 2008) and furthering address the relationship between organizational characteristics and different strategic choices of conforming versus distinctive identity projections (van Halderen et al., 2011).

## CHAPTER 3. IDENTITY IN REGIONAL BUSINESS CLUSTERS

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Regional business clusters have been the object of academic interest since the reintroduction of the Marshallian concept of district (Marshall, 1923) by the Italian economist Becattini (1979). The post-war Italian economy proved that these district systems could achieve better performances than their large competitor firms in both Italy and Europe (Becattini, 1991), opening an alternative perspective to the dominant Fordist perspective. Porter's (1990, 1998) work on the competitive advantage of nations and Saxenian's (1994) work on the Silicon Valley and Route 184 resulted in greater interest in regional business clusters among researchers worldwide, especially in the fields of strategy, economic geography and regional studies, socioeconomics, and strategy (Paniccia, 2002). Regional business clusters have been defined in a multitude of ways, and the issue of a shared definition continues to be debated (Porter & Ketels, 2009); however, probably the most referred to definitions are those provided by Becattini and Porter. Becattini (1990, p.38) defined the industrial district as a "socio-territorial entity which is characterized by the active presence of both a community of people and a population of firms in one naturally and historically bounded area." Meanwhile, according to Porter (1998, p. 78), "clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field."

Accordingly, given the aim of this research, the next sections offer a brief review of the debate on regional cluster identities. Section 3.1 starts with the neo-Marshallian view on the collective identity of regional business clusters and then addresses the criticisms this view encountered from micro firm-based perspectives. Section 3.2 presents a review of those conceptualizations of collective supra-organizational identities based on cognitive and socio-psychological assumptions. The first contributions in this sense date back to the 1980s and 1990s, with the seminal works of Porac et al. (1989) and Peteraf and Shanley (1997) on strategic group identities. Then, drawing explicitly on this tradition,

more specific contributions on regional business cluster identities have been proposed (Sammarra & Biggiero, 2001; Staber, 2010). Finally Section 3.3 addresses the topic of identity claims and communication by regional cluster firms—a topic that has received limited attention thus far (Alberti & Sciascia, 2007)—and the focus narrows down to regional wine business clusters, where instead the communication of collective regional identities and individual firm identities is more debated (Carlsen, Dowling, & Cowan, 1997; Bernetti, Casini, & Marinelli, 2006).

### **3.1 COLLECTIVE REGIONAL IDENTITY VERSUS INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY**

#### **3.1.1 The neo-Marshallian view on industrial district identity**

The Marshallian concept of industrial district (ID) (Marshall, 1923) was reintroduced in the economic literature by Becattini (1979) in the analysis of the Italian phenomenon of large numbers of small firms being clustered in one geographical area. Becattini embraced a sociological perspective to explain the economic process of district development; building upon the concept of “industrial atmosphere” that Marshall attributed to districts, he underscored the fundamental role played by common social and cultural features in the formation and successful development of an industrial district. This line of inquiry has been adopted by many scholars who have intensively studied the Italian cases, focusing on historical and geographical backgrounds to explain the cultural platform on which districts’ competition and coordination are based (Dei Ottati, 1991; Piore & Sabel, 1984). The neo-Marshallian perspective inspired a great number of empirical studies—using primarily the Italian context, but also contexts of other European regions. Many recent empirical studies continue to refer to Becattini and use the Italian district model in environments that are very different from Italy (Dunford, 2006; Molina-Morales, 2001; Schmitz, 1995).

The Italian school of economists adopting the neo-Marshallian approach defines IDs as socio-economic systems formed by a large number of firms, characterized by small or moderate size, clustering in one geographical area or district (Dei Ottati, 1991). According to Becattini (2000), there are two sides of IDs that are strictly interconnected: the economic/productive side and the socio-cultural one. On the economic/productive



side, IDs are characterized by the vertical disintegration of production, long-term intra-districtual links between suppliers and producers, a local system of prices, diffused monetary capital, intra-districtual labor mobility, and frequency of transactions (Becattini, 2000; Dei Ottati, 1991). At the same time, on the socio-cultural side, IDs are defined by contextual tacit knowledge, a sense of belonging, trust, shared language, shared values and implicit rules of behavior, local identity, social intra-districtual mobility, and cultural propensity to entrepreneurial risk (Becattini, 2000; Dei Ottati, 1991). According to this perspective, intangible resources play a crucial role. The local milieu and entrepreneurial propensity are social forces that foster the very formation and development of IDs; shared knowledge, language, and values, together with trust and a sense of belonging, guide the frequent transactions inside IDs, facilitating cooperation despite competition in the same industry.

The collective district identity is considered a fundamental collective resource that has an equal weight in guaranteeing districts' success as other economic advantages provided by agglomeration. The collective identity and individual firms' sense of belonging to it are necessary conditions for the very existence of the Marshallian district and act as a support for the action of the population of district firms in external markets (Becattini, 2003; Belussi & Sammarra, 2010). Collective identity is considered by Becattini to be "a local identity *considered true*—and as such a genuine historic force—by a group of men" and the sense of belonging to it is an essential mechanism at the basis of the industrial district:

A task which I cannot quite explore properly, but which I feel is essential, is the focussing of the "senses of belonging", which are the immediate guarantees of the self-containment of the process of division of labour, on which the whole question of the industrial districts is based. (Becattini, 2003, p. 12)

The collective identity provides the originality of the "productive language" of the districts, which makes it different from other firms or groups providing the same product (Becattini, 2003, p. 13). Furthermore collective identity makes the district a "collective agent" that must communicate externally to final markets in order to secure survival. In other words, the success of a district also depends "on developing an 'image' of the

district that is separated from and, in a sense, summarizes those of the individual firms that make up the district” (Becattini, 1991, p. 85). This acknowledgement leads to the argument that local institutions should contribute with their policies to the maintenance of the ID sociocultural environment and collective identity, not only limiting their efforts to material and structural support (Becattini, 2000; Visconti, 2002). Different collective actors, like service centers, trade associations, and buying and selling consortia should engage in meta-management actions at the ID level that support and spread entrepreneurial culture and the intangible heritage into the district territory (Belussi, 1999) through identity energizing and collective envisioning (Visconti, 2002). Meta-managers should also communicate the district identity externally through promotional activities and collective trademarks (Fortis, Quadrio Curzio, & Miceli, 2006; Visconti, 2002).

### **3.1.2 Criticisms of the collective meso-level identity**

Empirical studies on industrial districts flourished in the 1980s and 1990s, and different definitions and approaches were developed, alternatively taking inspiration from and distancing themselves from Becattini’s neo-Marshallian view. Despite the success of the neo-Marshallian view of IDs and the great number of empirical studies that it has produced in the last 20 years, since the mid-1990s, it has also faced theoretical and methodological criticism.

In terms of the focus on the current work, critics of the neo-Marshallian model have also questioned the concept of district identity, concentrating on two main points: The role of individual firms is underestimated (Lazerson & Lorenzoni, 1999) and the neo-Marshallian model loses its explanatory power with respect to districts’ evolutionary trends toward globalization (Paniccia, 2002). Lazerson and Lorenzoni (1999, p. 361) criticized the view of neo-Marshallian districts as “functionalistic forms of social and economic cooperation,” highlighting the risk of an overemphasis on social embeddedness at the expenses of other economic or organizational dimensions. They focus particularly on the underestimation of the role of individual firms, pointing out that organizational structures are not homogeneous in IDs and that the role of the entrepreneur himself is minimized in favor of the role of local institutions in fostering a

general entrepreneurial culture. In addition, they noted that large firms are increasingly part of IDs, bringing external investments, skills, and knowledge in the local community. Focal firms—particularly those that have a central role in the ID due to the intensity of relationships with both customers and suppliers—are those that more than others also have links outside the district proceeding to vertical integration and creating solid relationships with distribution in foreign markets. They concluded that “the more dynamic the industrial district, the less likely it conforms to the traditional community of homogeneous values and rules described by Becattini” (1999, p. 373). Other researchers acknowledged that the ID model distinguished by a systemic competitive advantage is rapidly transforming toward a structure in which individual firms’ strategies are more and more influential (Guelpa & Micelli, 2007). For instance, Markusen (1996) suggested that local culture, cooperation, trust, and affiliation are characteristics of Marshallian industrial districts, but other typologies exist in which the local socio-cultural influence is far less important. Studying successful regional business clusters in the US economy, Markusen identified three types, where the role of multinationals, the state, and external resources is relevant in the dynamics of evolution and performance. In addition, according to Belussi (1999, p. 731), leader firms, which are often different from the average population of small and medium-sized district firms, are increasingly relevant in evolutionary models of regional clusters.

In terms of evolutionary patterns, Belussi addressed the second main point of criticism of the neo-Marshallian model: the evolution of ID structures due to globalization processes. In fact, the evolution pattern that sees the entrance of districts into the global value chain (Belussi & Sammarra, 2010), implies strong relationships beyond the district’s boundaries (Camuffo & Grandinetti, 2011) and the blurring of the homogeneous socio-cultural background. According to Foresti, Guelpa, and Trenti (2007), the model of IDs is objectively changing, due to some internationalization of production, regarding the average growth of firms’ size and the emergence of ID leaders. Research on 648 firms in 41 districts typical in Italy industries shows that, according to the dimensions investigated, only 48.8% of the sample resembles the local traditional model. The other half of the sample shows a commercial opening toward distribution (27.9%), opening to

extra ID strategic suppliers (11.3%), and finally an open network with both external suppliers and customers (12.4%). The last model comprises those firms that are best performing and district leaders and that show consistent strategies of research for innovation, communication, and ICT. At first sight, it looks like the local intangible resources given by being part of a district are no more relevant for this kind of firm. However, the comparative analysis of different IDs in the same industries and facing the same market challenges shows that, where the local community is able to adapt and attend the district by offering knowledge, social capital, and advanced services, firms find a fertile ground to evolve with success. On the contrary, where the territory is not able to offer support, firms act individually, but successful cases are isolated and the overall ID performance is poor. Considering this picture, Corò and Micelli (2007) commented that, even if the ID model is changing and Marshallian territorial logics have lost part of their interpretive strength, the ID model *per se* should not be abandoned. In fact, the opening to international cooperation does not exclude cooperation in the territory, although there is probably a reduction of partners that in turn are more strategic and selected. However, unlike the neo-Marshallian view, the researchers remarked that this value is not the heritage of a given local milieu, but it is the result of conscious institutional efforts in the ID territory and voluntary strategic efforts of individual successful firms (Camuffo & Grandinetti, 2011; Corò & Micelli, 2007).

### **3.2 THE SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO COLLECTIVE IDENTITY**

A renewed focus on collective cluster identities has emerged in recent years, superseding these critiques by analyzing identity not at the meso level (i.e., the district/cluster), as has been traditionally done, but at the micro level (i.e., the firm). This shift has enabled researchers to consider the dynamics that link individual firms to collective cluster identity; in fact, cluster identity is not a given due to agglomeration, but rather it is shaped and sustained by individual firms' behavior and identification with the cluster (Biggiero & Sammarra, 2003a), thereby assuming the co-existence of multiple identities within regional business clusters and the opening of district firms to the global environment.

This perspective draws from the literature on organizational identity and strategic group identity, trying to reach a more fine-grained understanding of how collective identities emerge and the processes by which firms identify with the regional cluster (Staber, 2010). This section provides a brief review of the conceptualizations of strategic group identity, focusing on the translation of this concept to the specific object of the regional business cluster.

### **3.2.1 The strategic approach to collective cluster identity**

The importance of the interplay between firm-level and industry-level beliefs in formulating strategies was initially discussed by Huff in 1982. She suggested that, like individual characters jointly form an organization's character, so too can organizations' characters strictly in contact within a competitive group develop a cohesive industry character. Firms competing with each other find it more convenient to "borrow and modify ways to frame circumstances" (Huff, 1982, p. 126) provided by their common environment. They thus develop shared metaphors and worldviews that lead them to choose similar strategic behaviors.

A consistent stream of cognitive studies on strategic groups followed Huff's work. Among others, Porac et al. (1989), analyzing the Scottish knitwear industry as a cognitive community, specifically addressed questions concerning consensual identity in competitive groups. In their view, cultural and historical homogeneity leads to the formation of a shared identity that contributes to the development of common mental models among the top managers of different organizations, which in turn influences the formulation of competitive strategies and the perception of the boundaries of the competitive group. It proceeds that the development of a consensual identity among competing organizations not only influences individual firms' actions, but also fosters the construction of the competitive group itself, creating and maintaining a stable set of transactions in the marketplace. In this way, the shared "mental models of strategists form a critical link between group-level and firm-level dynamics" (Porac et al., 1989, p. 412). An explicit assumption of this study contributes to the concept of a supra-organizational identity built upon micro-processes: Here, the group of competitors is defined in socio-psychological terms. Macro environmental forces affect the cognitive

processes that give birth to the consensual identity of the group, but they are not its principal antecedent.

Based on similar assumptions, Peteraf and Shanley (1997) proposed a theory of strategic group identity also based on micro foundations, but not denying the influence on this process of macro-level factors, such as economic, historical, and institutional forces. Drawing upon the organizational identity definition given by Albert and Whetten (1985), Peteraf and Shanley defined strategic group identity as “a set of mutual understandings, among members of a cognitive intra-industry group, regarding the central, enduring and distinctive characteristics of the group” (1997, p. 166). In the classical definition, strategic groups are seen as groups of firms isolated by common mobility barriers and pursuing similar strategies (Porter, 1979), but here the strategic group is meant as a substructure of firms within an industry, which is cognitively acknowledged by its participants. It is the concept of identity that gives evidence of the very existence of strategic groups; in fact, they emerge from the coalescence of the managers’ cognitive partitioning of reality, but they are not the only product of categorization processes. Managers categorize their environments through processes of observational learning (Bandura, 1986) that imply reciprocal interactions and the establishment of routines influencing decision making. Successful routines lead to a collective understanding of the interactive group’ attributes by its members, who consequently come to categorize the inter-firm group and identify with it (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Such processes make the emergent structures (strategic groups) more than the sum of single categorizations and support the development of their identity. Historical, economic, and institutional forces operating in the macro environment that embeds strategic groups influence the entire dynamics of identity creation by providing the conditions upon which the micro processes take place. However, the strength of the strategic group identity depends more on the degree of social identification of individual group members than on the external forces. The most recent works on regional business cluster identity have drawn heavily on Peteraf and Shanley’s work and are presented in the second part of this section.

### **3.2.2 The socio-psychological view on regional business cluster identity**

As Staber (2010, p. 153) explicated:

It is difficult to find a study of clusters that does not in some way refer to identity and related concepts such as shared mindset, social milieu, and sense of belonging as a central feature of such communities. A core premise in this literature is that identity has mutualistic effects, by reducing transaction costs, supporting collective learning, enhancing accountability, and providing continuity over time and space.

However, Staber noted that there are still limited studies on identity and identification processes in regional clusters and thus encouraged taking inspiration from the refined concepts and tools that the broader literature on organizational identity makes available. Sammarra and Biggiero (2001, p. 63) defined district identity as the “missing link” between the neo-Marshallian view and more recent studies. They were the first ones to adopt a micro socio-psychological view to identity in industrial districts drawing upon literature dealing with individual, organizational, and inter-organizational identity. In particular, they borrowed from social identity theory (Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), organizational identity theory (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dutton et al., 1994), and strategic group identity theory (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997). Rephrasing Albert and Whetten’s definition of organizational identity, Sammarra and Biggiero defined district identity as “the set of central, distinctive, and enduring characteristics of the district” (2001, p. 69). Central characteristics include formal and structural aspects, but also relational and informal/symbolic features like social habits and historical background. Distinctive characteristics refer to those elements that make district participants similar to each other and distinct from organizations that are outside the district (e.g., geographical proximity and belongingness to the same industrial sector). Enduringness refers to all those features characterizing a district and showing temporal continuity and stability. This set of characteristics allows members to categorize the district group and recognize their belongingness to it. From this perspective, the role of individual firms is not underestimated insofar as they have different interpretations of the collective identity and different degrees of identification with it (Biggiero & Sammarra, 2003a; Staber, 2010). Paralleling individual

identification processes described by social identity theory, district firms identify with the group through cognitive perceived similarities between organizational identity and district identity. They also identify with the district pursuing self-enhancement through the exploitation of the market reputation of the district. Biggiero and Sammarra (2003b) empirically tested their model of district identity and identification on the biomedical district of Mirandola (Bologna, Italy), investigating mental categorizations and perceptions of managers and entrepreneurs; their approach followed the cognitive tradition used in strategic studies on organizational identity as well as industry and strategic group identity (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997; Porac et al., 1989).

Unlike Biggiero and Sammarra, Staber (2010) measured identification with the cluster among a representative sample of firms located in mature textile clusters in Germany. Staber (2010) focused exclusively on identification antecedents, whereas Biggiero and Sammarra also tested some consequences of identification, such as trustfulness, cooperative attitudes, situated learning, and attachment to the district, drawing again from the wide repertory of studies on organizational identification (see Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008). In addition to the differences in the two studies, it is interesting to note that, among the wide range of antecedents and consequences considered, the role of identity claims, communication, and symbolic management has not been taken into consideration. The literature on organizational identification considers communication as an antecedent of organizational identification in both a static (Smidts, Pruyin, & van Riel, 2001) and a dynamic way (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991; Pratt, 2000). In other contributions, the communication of the identity of the entity with which one identifies is considered a consequence of identification as people enact their identities (Weick, 1995) in behaviors, but also in communication to satisfy their expressive needs (Ashforth & Mael, 1996; Emler & Hopkins, 1990; Shamir, 1990) and for impression management activities (Schlenker, 1985). This reasonably suggests that firms that are identified with the cluster could project an organizational identity that expresses the collective cluster identity. However, the issue of identity claims and communication by regional cluster firms has been quite



overruled by scholars studying regional business clusters as well as those interested in identity dynamics within industrial districts. The next section further addresses this issue.

### **3.3 COMMUNICATING THE REGIONAL CLUSTER IDENTITY**

#### **3.3.1 Identity communication in regional business clusters**

Although Becattini (1991) already identified the importance of communicating the collective cluster identity, this stream of research has not focused on identity communication by meta-managers or by individual firms (Alberti & Sciascia, 2007). Furthermore, despite the debate on the strategic role of collective intangible resources, such as territorial culture and identity, a specific focus on how these resources are used in strategic firms' projections (Rindova & Fombrun, 1999) is missing. The economic literature has started to focus on the different behaviors of district firms (Belussi & Sammarra, 2010; Camuffo & Grandinetti, 2011; Lazerson & Lorenzoni, 1999), yet less attention has been focused on how firms differently use the intangible resources of the territory despite the claim and the evidence that territorial resources still play a relevant role in some cases (Foresti & Trenti, 2007). This lack of focus is particularly relevant for what concerns firms' corporate communication (Alberti & Sciascia, 2007).

The absence of studies on cluster firms' communication is somewhat surprising because, in practice, the interplay between the communication of collective and individual identities has become a relevant issue. The fact that regional business clusters have a collective reputation—which is a common resource—has been widely recognized (Caves & Porter, 1977; Zyglidopoulos, De Martino, & McHardy Reid, 2006). Furthermore, individual firms invest in collective actions to build an external image for the entire cluster (Ferguson, Deephouse, & Ferguson, 2000), and their projections are relevant for building a wider regional industrial identity (Romanelli & Khessina, 2005). However, at the same time, it is necessary for them to maintain their individual reputations to be competitive (Caves & Porter, 1977).

Some research within the marketing literature on brand origin and country of origin addresses the strategic concern that firms have in deciding whether or not to deploy

some regional cues in their branding strategies (Thakor & Kholi, 1996). However, the focus is not on regional business cluster identities, but on more generic geographical cues of origin.

If at the organizational level brands are recognized as a key node in the communication of identities, both internally (Hatch & Schultz, 2008) and externally (Aaker, 1991; de Chernatony, 2001; Kapferer, 2002), the literature on industrial clusters cites brands only marginally. Collective brands are traditionally considered the product of meta-management activities and collective market advantages (Brown, McNaughton, & Bell, 2010; Porter, 1998; Saxenian, 1990). Practices of inter-firm cooperation for what concerns joint communication activities have been addressed in the literature (Brown et al., 2010; Kao & Johnson, 2010). However, how these activities communicate the regional cluster identity and how they relate to individual firm communication activities remain generally unexplored.

Local meta-managers, like public administrations and private consortia, are increasingly investing in the promotion of collective brands, causing a social debate on their role and usefulness; at the same time, many leading cluster firms are successfully communicating their own individual brands (Alberti & Sciascia, 2007; Roberts & Enright, 2004; Visconti, 2002). This occurs according to different dynamics and success depending on the industry, but it is evident that the practice is evolving. Examples of this in Italy include Seri.co (Como), Biella the Art of Excellence (Biella), and Etichetta Toscana (Prato) in the textile industry as well as Motor Valley (Modena) (Alberti & Sciascia, 2007). The agro-food regions also have a long tradition of promoting the collective brand. Examples include cheese, ham, and wool (Beverland & Lindgreen, 2002; Christy & Norris, 1999; Pike, 2009) as well as the wine sector, in which territorial origin and culture—in addition to the protection of legal denominations—have always had great relevance (Brunori & Rossi, 2007; Sharp & Smith, 1990).

### **3.3.2 Collective and individual identity communication in regional wine clusters**

Traditionally, the majority of studies on industrial clusters and Italian industrial districts have focused on the manufacturing sector. However, the debate on collective cluster

identity is particularly relevant in regional wine clusters because the very nature of their product is strongly connected to a local identity and culture (Carlsen et al., 1997), and the local origin is often legally protected by geographical indication trademarks. “A wine’s mystique (or romance if you will)—that capacity to elevate the most common of experiences to a moment of pure hedonistic pleasure—is largely acquired from a single factor: the land from which the grapes were harvested” (Thode & Maskulka, 1998, p. 381). Nonetheless, a common terroir is not the only reason why collective identity is relevant in these contexts. Often regional wine clusters are “discovery markets” (Christy & Norris 1999, p. 806), where small firms have the product characteristics needed to be interesting to consumers but do not have the resources to communicate it; therefore, they rely on regional collective identities. The Spanish region of LaRioja is a clear example of where the creation and communication of the collective regional identity have made it possible for individual firms to develop their own individual brands exploiting the halo of the regional brand’s reputation (Gil & Sánchez, 1997). Furthermore, regional wine clusters are more often populated by specialist wineries, rather than generalist mass producers, that together have the possibility to build a strong collective identity that generalists could never imitate, despite their greater technological and financial resources (Swaminathan, 2001).

In the economic literature studying the agro-food industry, the term *rural district* has been used to describe regional clusters that are not industrial, but resemble the features of the Marshallian district. In Italy, rural districts have also been legally defined by the Agricultural Act of 2006 as “local production systems characterized by an homogeneous historical and territorial identity due to the integration among agriculture and other local activities and to the production of very specific goods or services, coherent with natural and territorial traditions and vocations” (Brunori & Rossi, 2007, p. 185). In addition to the definition of rural district, there is a wealth of studies that approach regional wine clusters (mainly Italian and South American) with the same conceptual tools used by the industrial district tradition. However, these studies are mainly interested in topics like knowledge flows, network relations (Giuliani, 2007; Giuliani & Arza, 2009; Morrison & Rabellotti, 2009), and competitive/collaborative dynamics (De Oliveira, Wilk, &

Fensterseifer, 2003). Typically, scholars conceptualizing regional wine clusters as rural or industrial districts do not address the topic of collective cluster identity, which is more often considered by research on wine branding and reputation, especially concerning the effect of regional identity cues on consumers and wine critics (Bruwer & Johnson, 2010; Castriota & Delmastro, 2010; Rasmussen & Lockshin, 1999; Thomas & Pickering, 2005). The topic of regional identity communication is particularly relevant considering that globalization has affected the wine industry in recent years, with the emergence of two main paradigms: the Old World (mainly France and Italy) with highly fragmented production, organized in regional clusters and building regional identities around the concept of *terroir*, and the New World (especially Australia), with a few big corporations representing the biggest share of national productions (Cox & Bridwell, 2007; Guibert, 2006). Old European regional identities have been considered a bulwark against the global homogenization of production and the “Myth of McWine” (Cox & Bridwell, 2007, p. 211). Hence, “the differentiation of the product on the basis of a territorial identity through an effective communication activity” and “the management of the territory and of its symbolic capital” (Brunori & Rossi, 2007, p. 196) seemed to be the only possibility for fighting the giant standardized producers as a niche.

However, regional European wines ended up fighting against giant corporate brands, trying to compete at the level of super-premium sophisticated wines, and not as generic McWines, comparable to equally generic European *vins de table* (Cox & Bridwell, 2007). Thus, some authors stress the relevance of investing in the communication of individual wineries’ identities and in the building and positioning of individual winery brands in the market (Bernetti et al., 2006; Gil & Sánchez, 2007; Pike & Melewar, 2006). At the same time, an opposite trend emerged: small specialist New World producers aggregating under regional wine brands and designations to exploit their typicality versus mass wine producers. This is the case, for instance, of the establishment of the American Viticultural Areas (e.g., Napa Valley) or of some regional Australian wines (Bruwer & Johnson, 2010; Johnson & Bruwer, 2007) that, missing a system of appellations, associate with coordinating marketing strategies and creating awareness of

the regional brand, especially in export markets (Phillips, 1992; Rasmussen & Lockshin, 1999).

Wine territories see the formation of local networks “around a shared and coherent set of values, codes, goals, routines, rules and norms related to local wine production (i.e., the informal and formal institutions characterizing each wine territory), which contribute to the construction and strengthening of the specificity and, therefore, of the territorially based market differentiation of viticultural regions” (Brunori & Rossi, 2007, p. 186)—that is, the regional wine cluster identity. These identities, more than the institutional legal appellation, are determinants of wineries’ national and international reputations (Castriota & Delmastro, 2010) as they are “powerful tools to signal quality” (Winfrey & McCluskey, 2005, p. 206). Often regional identities are communicated through collective brands, as Zamparini, Lurati and Illia (2010, p. 388) illustrate:

In some cases, regional wine brands are built and communicated with the support of governmental strategies that are often linked to state tourism promotional plans, such as occurred in Australia (Carlsen and Dowling, 1998). In other cases the communication of the regional brand is made by associations of producers that coordinate marketing strategies (Campbell and Guibert, 2006), a strategy especially common in Europe, where associations are in charge of the preservation and promotion of legal appellations of origin and quality. Exemplar cases are the Chianti Classico Consortium, a private association of producers, and the Comité Interprofessionnel du Vin de Champagne, a semi-public organization, both of which have been able to attach a symbolic capital to their brands through external communication, promotion, public relations, lobbying, and commercial protection of their regional appellation (Brunori and Rossi, 2007; Sharp and Smith, 1990).

In the case of Chianti, the consortium has been split into two: one part oriented to technical production and the other one to collective promotional activities, in which large wineries do not participate (Brunori & Rossi, 2007). This happened because often the collective promotional activities of consortia are considered “a constraint for large companies that already possess strong structures, considerable resources and established brand names that can be independently exploited” (Bernetti et al., 2006, p. 3131).

To conclude, the theme of regional identity communication and winery identity communication is quite relevant in the academic debate, although under different perspectives. In general the debate on collective identities in wine clusters is richer than in typical manufacturing clusters. Wine clusters are indeed an interesting form of

regional business clusters; for instance, in Italy, which is typically populated by regional business clusters, the agro-food regional clusters are the only ones who kept a positive turnover compared to pre-2008 data (Osservatorio nazionale distretti italiani—rapporto, 2012).

Existing research on wine marketing has acknowledged that communicating regional identities is a good strategy to be recognized and positively evaluated by consumers and critics. Notwithstanding, wineries are advised of the necessity to invest in the development of distinctive individual brands, especially if they have the capabilities to do so, in order to stand out in a competition that is becoming increasingly global and populated by multinationals. Hence, these considerations in wine marketing and branding implicitly resonate with the broader debate in organization studies on the need to be as different as legitimately possible (Deephouse, 1999), and according to Bernetti et al. (2006, p. 314), the balance between communicating a collective local identity and a distinctive individual one is an issue of major concern for young wine managers:

The competitive strengths of traditional, varied and rich European wine culture is far from being exhausted. There is a strong tendency among the new, young wine managers with an eye on both tradition and the new market possibilities offered by innovation to give products the right “local” content.

## CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH DESIGN

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### 4.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The interdependence between collective supra-organizational identities and organizational identities has increasingly attracted attention in both organization studies (Fiol & Romanelli, 2011; Lamert et al., 2005; Navis & Glynn 2010) and organizational communication research (Lammers, 2011; van Halderen et al., 2011). The understanding of how micro organizational sense-making interacts with macro isomorphic forces (Glynn, 2008; Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008; Weber & Glynn 2006) has become a necessity to overcome the paradoxes of uniqueness and embedded agencies (Martin et al., 1983; Seo & Creed, 2002). Based on these ideas, the role of organizational identity claims, and the specific identity projections embedded in communicated identity stories and corporate messages, are extremely relevant to observe how the macro-social environment gives form to organizational identities (Lamertz et al., 2005; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001) and, to the contrary, how the organizational identities influence the macro-social categories they are members of (Fiol & Romanelli, 2011; Navis & Glynn, 2010; Rao et al., 2003, 2005; Wry et al., 2011).

Combinations of collective (i.e., supra-organizational) and individual (i.e., organizational) identity elements in organizational communication have rarely been addressed empirically (Lamertz et al., 2005; Navis & Glynn, 2010). These studies primarily investigate how organizational identity projections contribute to the configuration and legitimacy of industries' identities and secondly how organizations claim distinctiveness within their industries. However, some authors (Marquis, Davis, & Glynn, 2011) have started questioning the traditional empirical objects, investigating the dynamics between social actors and macro institutional processes. In fact, they call on the seminal definition of organizational field given by DiMaggio and Powell in 1983 and emphasize that this broad conceptualization has been actually interpreted through the years in a narrow sense, especially as a unit of analysis, leaving out interesting types of organizational fields, such as geographic communities.

The object of this analysis is a specific kind of geographic community—namely, the regional business cluster. Regional business clusters are “geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field” (Porter, 1998); hence, regional business clusters resemble the characteristics of an organizational field as an aggregation of organizations that “constitute a recognized area of institutional life” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148) and are “meaningful to participants” (Davis & Marquis, 2005, p. 337). If we take the neo-Marshallian definition of regional business cluster as a “socioterritorial entity which is characterized by the active presence of both a community of people and a population of firms in one naturally and historically bounded area,” the resemblance of this entity to communities as institutional orders as defined by Marquis et al. (2011, p. xvi) is evident: In these communities, not only is social proximity relevant, but it is also the “interest in a common goal, and a common identity,” that shapes firms’ actions. Regional business clusters are not industries; rather, they are locally concentrated parts of broader industries in which they are embedded. A regional business cluster could be, but is not necessarily, a strategic group (Porac et al., 1989); it is indeed a network (Burt, 1992), but whose boundaries are not always overlapping the geographic boundaries of the cluster (Camuffo & Grandinetti, 2011). Regional business clusters are often invoked as inspiring objects of analysis to deepen the understanding of the relationship between macro collective identities and organizational identities (Glynn, 2008; Swaminathan, 2001), and they are considered contexts in which collective identities are generally highly institutionalized and visible, given the presence of trade associations and local cultural institutions (Fiol & Romanelli, 2011; Wry et al., 2011).

Despite this, and despite the longstanding debate on the relevance of socio-cultural territorial identity versus individual firm identities in regional cluster studies (cf. Section 3.1), to my knowledge there is a scarcity of empirical attention on identity dynamics at the level of regional business clusters. In addition, no empirical evidence illustrates how the collective cluster identity and the individual firms’ identities are communicated by companies working in these contexts. The absence of studies on communication by clusters’ firms is somewhat surprising because, in practice, the interplay between the communication of collective and individual identities has become a relevant issue. Local



public administrations and private associations are increasingly investing in the promotion of cooperative brands (Alberti & Sciascia, 2007; Gehlhar et al., 2009; Ishida & Fukushige, 2010), and many leading cluster firms are successfully communicating their own brand (Alberti & Sciascia, 2007; Gil & Sánchez, 1997).

Therefore, the present study—drawing upon organizational theory and organizational communication theory—aims to understand how regional cluster firms integrate collective and individual identity elements into their external communication.

*RQ1: How do regional cluster firms combine collective and individual identity elements into their external communication?*

External communication is meant to be part of the organizational formal profile—that is, the set of signs “manufactured to portray and promote the organization and its products” (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001, p. 305). As described by Christensen and Askegaard (2001), organizations produce signs (i.e., narratives, pictures, symbols, artifacts) about their identity. These signs are principally crafted to external audiences, who create a mental image stimulated by the sign—namely, “an image that links the sign to its object or referent, just as the word ‘IBM’ creates a mental image that links the three letters I, B and M with a large corporation that produces computers” (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001, p. 303).

A great interest in organization studies is how firms strive for optimal distinctiveness, maintaining and communicating an identity that is similar enough to referent collective identities to ensure legitimacy while being different enough to emerge from the group (Lamertz et al., 2005; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; Navis & Glynn 2010; van Halderen et al., 2011). Organizations that clearly communicate conforming identity elements, showing the prototypical identity elements of the group of which they are members, are more legitimate in the eyes of peers (Lamertz et al., 2005) and more recognizable by external audiences, making it more likely for them to achieve cognitive legitimacy (Suchman, 1995). Furthermore, overtly communicating an identity conforming to the collective group can provide advantages to an organization in terms of categorical status,

which influences the evaluation of an organization's products in the marketplace (Zhao & Zhou, 2011). On the other hand, firms need to communicate distinctive individual identities in order to distinguish themselves in global markets that are increasingly competitive and homogeneous (D'Aveni, 2010) and in order to stand out from the crowd of their peers in the same group (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). In other words, organizations need to communicate an identity that is understandable and appropriate as members of a group or category, but then need to claim peculiar characteristics that specify what is unique and distinctive about them (Albert & Whetten, 1985) in order to be actually selected by external audiences among the range of possible alternatives (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). The second research question of the present study aims at understanding:

*RQ2 How do regional business cluster firms claim collective and individual identity elements in external communication to seek legitimacy and/or distinctiveness?*

Previous research discusses that the strategies that firms use to reach their appropriate level of strategic balance between legitimacy and distinctiveness may vary according to different variables. More specifically, different conditions lead to the adoption of different strategies of identity claiming to be oriented toward emphasizing conformity and distinctiveness to different degrees (cf. Section 2.3.2).

Scholars adopting a self-categorization theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985) perspective focus on the degree of centrality to explain differences among firms' identity claims. Centrality here is meant in terms of prototypicality; therefore, the more a firm is prototypical of a group, the more it claims identity elements that conform to the group and make the firm an exemplar group member (Mervis & Rosch, 1981; Peteraf & Shanley, 1997; Pólos et al., 2000). According to social identity theory, prototypical members are those who have a high degree of overlap between their individual identity and social identity as a group member. Ashforth and Mael (1996, p. 45) specifically affirmed that

the more a member identifies with the organization—that is, internalizes its identity and possibly strategy as a valid statement of self—the more he or she will think, act, and feel in ways consistent with that identity and strategy. As

noted, one enacts the identity and strategy not only for instrumental reasons, but for expressive reasons, to affirm a desired sense of self both to oneself and to others, regardless of any instrumental contribution to organizational goals (Emler & Hopkins, 1990; Shamir, 1990).

Therefore, considering that firms project their identity in their communication, the more this identity overlaps with the cluster's identity the more they will project cluster identity elements together with their individual identity, while peripheral members communicate the collective identity less (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997). By claiming conforming identities, central actors “establish and sustain an institutional logic favorable to their interest” and “as their centrality increases, actors increasingly treat institutional logics and the social behaviors encoded within them as taken for granted and hegemonic” (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006, p. 28).

Other studies have emphasized the various degrees of conforming versus differentiating identity claims, correlating this to different levels of organizational status. Phillips and Zuckerman (2001) proposed an inverted U shaped curve to explain the relationship between status and conformity. High status firms exploit an already high legitimacy and engage in differentiation to stand out among competitors. Low status firms, according to the authors, are not recognized as members of a category; therefore, they do not fall within the choice range of the audiences of that category. This is why these organizations put less effort into conforming. Middle status firms are those conforming more in their “identity announcements” because they are in between—namely, they are recognized as members of a category, but cannot take their legitimacy for granted. Thus, they “work feverishly to solidify their social standing by demonstrating their conformity with accepted practice” (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001, p. 382). The fact that high status firms can more freely claim distinctive identities has been confirmed by many other studies (Deephouse & Carter, 2005; Lamertz et al., 2005; van Halderen et al., 2011).

Although prototypicality and status have been investigated more, other variables have been proposed as possible influencers of conformity versus distinctiveness claiming. Addressing conformity in broader terms, Di Maggio and Powell (1983, p. 155) suggested that “the greater the participation of organizational managers in trade and professional associations, the more likely the organization will be, or will become, like

other organizations in its fields.” Considering organizational communication more specifically, van Halderen et al. (2011) recently proposed that prototypicality and status alone cannot always explain the communication strategies adopted by an organization to seek optimal distinctiveness. They specifically proposed looking at “previous experience” and “historically developed identity” to explain different patterns in corporate messages, especially in terms of over-conforming claims and under-conforming claims (van Halderen et al., 2011, p. 292).

Evidence exists to suggest that the population of firms in a regional business cluster is generally not homogeneous in terms of production, distribution, investments in research, and communication (Foresti et al., 2007). The most successful firms are those that, among other things, afford substantial investments in individual brand development. More traditional firms tend to be smaller and less able to make investments, especially in communication; these firms are usually more dependent on meta-organizers for marketing- and communication-related issues. Yet this evidence only shows that regional business cluster firms can have different strategies for what concerns identity communication; it does not suggest anything about the actual contents of identity communication. Therefore, the final exploratory question of the present research is as follows:

*RQ3 What influences the different ways in which firms combine collective and individual identity elements in external communication?*

Taking inspiration from the previously discussed organizational literature, the exploration of the influencing variables will take into consideration the concepts of centrality/prototypicality (Mervis & Rosch, 1981; Peteraf & Shanley, 1997), identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1996; Peteraf & Shanley, 1997), status (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001), and historically developed organizational identity (van Halderen et al., 2011).

## 4.2 METHODOLOGY<sup>2</sup>

### 4.2.1 Case Study Design

Considering the exploratory nature of research questions and the aim of the study to describe patterns and understand relationships, I opted for a case study design (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2003). Identity communication in a regional business cluster is a little known phenomenon, and research is needed to elicit relevant variables for further investigation (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The intent of this study was to investigate the phenomenon of organizational identity communication within the real-life context of a regional business cluster, a situation in which researchers have no control and where “there are more variables of interest than data points” (Yin, 2003, pp. 13-14). The research adopted a single case with a nested design comprising embedded units of analysis. In fact, it was relevant to obtain insights regarding the collective identity of the regional business cluster (i.e., the case) and individual organizations’ identity projections (i.e., embedded units of analysis). This design allowed for a comparison of organizations that communicate their individual identities, combining it with a common collective identity (i.e., different individual identities and the same collective identity). I approached the field with a transcendental realist view (Miles & Huberman, 1994), with a theoretical background providing some working definitions and guidelines as well as with inductive observations from the field patterns, regularities, and relationships. This approach enabled me to elaborate findings based “both on the researcher’s and the participants’ worldviews” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 93).

Franciacorta, Italy, was selected as an extreme revelatory case (Eisenhardt, 1989), providing both relevance and visibility of the processes to be investigated (see Section 4.3). After extensive readings on the case and two non-structured interviews with the key informant from the Franciacorta trade association (henceforth, the *Consorzio*), I decided to start (see Figure 1) with an exploratory quantitative content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004) of the identity projected by the *Consorzio* and by wineries through their websites

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<sup>2</sup> All the parts of this chapter regarding the preliminary content analysis have already been reported in the published paper Zamparini and Lurati (2012) and in the conference paper Zamparini and Lurati (2011).

(May 2011). The rationale for this choice was twofold: to have an extensive picture of identity projections produced by the entire population of cluster firms (N=104; N=84 available websites) and to get in an unobtrusive way data to elaborate a theoretical sample (Eisenhardt, 1989) based on actual identity projections. The original theoretical sample comprised nine wineries selected on the basis of preliminary results (more details on preliminary results and subsequent sampling are provided in Chapter 5). Four wineries were then added to the sample during qualitative data collection, using the snowballing technique, in order to include wineries that represented emerging cases different from the previously selected ones, until data saturation was achieved (Gibbert, Ruigrok, & Wicki, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

The preliminary content analysis was not only useful for generating a theoretical sample, but also providing a provisional answer to RQ1 to be further deepened and supported through the qualitative in-depth phase.

In the qualitative phase, I addressed wineries' written and oral communication. The Franciacorta wine cluster comprises small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), mostly lacking extensive and articulated communication materials (Abimbola & Kocak, 2007). Oral communication is deemed to be as relevant as other media to convey small wineries' identity projections (Mowle & Merrilees, 2005; Zamparini, Lurati, & Illia, 2010). Therefore, I decided to collect data about identity projections from different data sources: promotional corporate materials (document analysis), oral communication (semi-structured interviews, observation of cellar tours), and physical artifacts in the estate, the cellar, and winery offices (observation of cellar tours, document analysis). The following sections provide further details on data collection methods and data analyses.

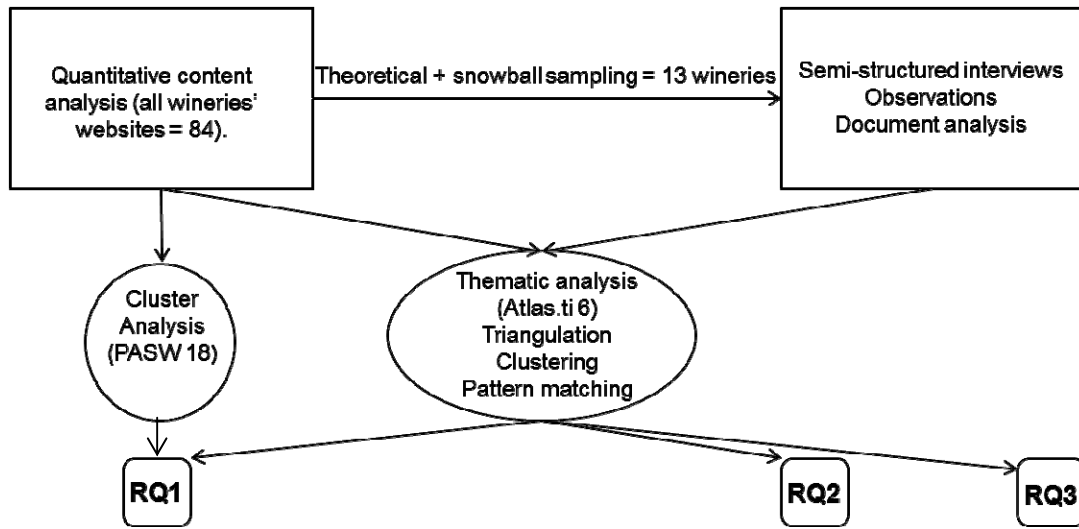


Figure 1. Overview of research methods and analyses.

#### 4.2.2 Data Collection

##### *Quantitative data collection*

As reported in Zamparini and Lurati (2012), for the preliminary phase I collected and coded the website contents of the wineries operating in the Franciacorta wine cluster. Diagnostic content analysis is commonly used in communication studies to describe the source of communication and analyze the message in a systematic, inter-subjectively, and replicable way; it is deemed to be an appropriate method for giving a preliminary answer to research question 1, as it is an unobtrusive method that overcomes the problem of responses' social desirability (Riffe et al., 1998). Content analysis is often used for exploratory studies on websites' contents (Lamertz et al., 2005; Zhang, 2010). For SMEs, the website is the principal medium through which organizational identities are communicated (Opoku, Abratt, Bendixen, & Pitt, 2007). The pilot study comprised the complete population of wineries having a website (N=84), that is 81% of the total population of winery members of the *Consorzio* (N=104). At this stage, I relied on the list of members of the *Consorzio*, considering that they represent the 97% of all

Franciacorta wineries.<sup>3</sup> To minimize differences in websites' sizes and facilitate comparisons, the pages to be coded were limited (Halliburton & Ziegfeld, 2009) to the homepage, the first available pages on products' general descriptions (excluding technical feature cards), firm description, and territory description. The codebook (see Annex 1) comprises three sections: logos and names, values, and a final section including a set of variables relative to website implementation and firms' expressed international scope (see Table 1). The first section of the codebook addresses the projection of collective and individual visual identity markers (Balmer, 2006; Elsbach, 2003; Olins & Selame, 2000). In addition to the presence of collective and individual logos, this section aims to evaluate how cluster firms make use of the name Franciacorta (co-occurrences) as well as its prominence on labels compared to firm and wine proprietary names. The second section explores identity projections through values embedded in textual descriptions. To this end, I define values as "self-expressive cultural statements" (Lamertz et al., 2005, p. 825). Variables coding collective values were created using those values emerging from the analysis of the *Consorzio*'s website and press kit. Individual firms' values were coded inductively (the three main emerging individual values were coded for each website). Finally, the third section includes variables describing the quality of website implementation and firms' orientation to international audiences that, according to the sectorial literature on wine marketing, are prerequisites for international competitiveness (Begalli et al., 2009; Guibert, 2006; Maizza & Iazzi, 2010; Remaud & Couderc, 2006). This section was included to check possible correlations between differences in wineries' identity projections and the elaboration of websites and organizational propensity to international competition. In fact, according to the literature in regional business cluster, these are relevant variables for discriminating among various types of regional cluster firms (Foresti et al., 2007). In particular, the variables address website implementation, local versus international orientation, and references to innovation, research, and environmentally friendly activities. Website implementation served as a proxy for the importance the firm

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<sup>3</sup> Later, during the qualitative phase, one winery that was not a member of the *Consorzio* was included in the sample.



gave to communication and ICT—two parameters distinguishing more and less successful cluster firms according to Foresti et al. (2007). Furthermore, the efficient implementation of web communication and web 2.0 relational tools is considered a good foundation for achieving international competitiveness (Begalli et al., 2009; Maizza & Iazzi, 2010). Being internationally oriented is considered to be a success factor in the wine marketing literature, especially for long-term survival in a landscape of increasing global competition (Maizza & Iazzi, 2010; Remaud & Couderc, 2006). R&D activities and attention to the environment are also considered success factors for district firms (Foresti et al., 2007) and agro-food SMEs (Guibert, 2006; Maizza & Iazzi, 2010).

The codebook's reliability was tested using a random sample of 10 websites (12% of the total). The reliability testing was conducted by two independent coders (Krippendorff, 2004), achieving an inter-coder reliability where Krippendorff's  $\alpha$  was 0.89 (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007). Website contents were coded in April and May 2011.

Table 1: *The Codebook Structure*

Sections	Items	Recording unit
<b>Visual identity markers</b>	Collective logo and tagline; firm logo.	Logo/tagline
	Name Franciacorta; prominence of name Franciacorta on wine labels compared to firm and product names.	Word
	Associations with the name Franciacorta	Sentence
<b>Values</b>	Collective values (deductive); individual firm values (inductive).	Sentence
<b>Prerequisites of international competitiveness</b>	Website evaluation features; press pages in English; events abroad; innovation and research activities; pro-environment activities.	Web pages

### *Qualitative data collection*

After the preliminary analysis and subsequent theoretical sampling, I collected data (October 2011 through September 2012) on the identity projections of selected wineries using a qualitative approach (see Table 2) comprising (a) semi-structured interviews with wineries' founders/entrepreneurs or communication managers, (b) observations of cellar

tours and wine industry national exhibitions, and (c) document analyses of wineries' promotional materials. At the collective level, I collected data on identity projections through (a) interviews with a key informant from the *Consorzio*, (b) observation of the collective participation in a national exhibition, and (c) document analysis of collective promotional materials. Overall, I conducted 16 formal interviews (lasting one to three hours each) plus several shorter informal interviews with representatives of the *Consorzio* and winery employees as well as 12 observations (lasting one to four hours each, plus one day for the Vinitaly exhibition in 2012). Documents comprised websites, brochures, press kits, and celebrative books (see Annex 2 for a detailed report of data-gathering activities).

Table 2: *Sources and Types of Qualitative Data.*

Data source	Type of data	Use in the analysis
Non-structured interviews	4 interviews with the key-informant of the <i>Consortio</i> (approx. 1-2 hours), 2 at the beginning of the research, 1 after the preliminary content analysis, and 1 at the end of qualitative data analysis. Autumn 2010 through spring 2012.	Beginning: get acquainted with the case, check its revelatory characteristics, check feasibility of content analysis on websites. After preliminary content analysis: discuss preliminary results and sampling. After data analysis: get insider feedback on findings.
Semi-structured interviews	12* interviews with selected firms' entrepreneurs or communication managers (all members of the entrepreneurial family, except one case). 1 to 3 hours. All transcribed. Autumn 2011 through spring 2012.  *two wineries have the same communication manager	Gather data on identity projections narrated by entrepreneurs. Gather data about strategic intents on legitimacy and distinctiveness seeking. Gather data about identification, role in the cluster, relationship with the <i>Consortio</i> , perceptions of the collective identity. Triangulate with content and document analyses and observations.
Observations	12* observations of winery visits (1 to 2 hours) + 1 day observation at the Vinitaly exhibition in 2012. Autumn 2011 through spring 2012.  * one winery seldom organizes cellar tours; therefore, it was not possible to observe one during the timeframe of data collection	Gather data on identity projections narrated to clients. Gather data on artifacts displayed in the wineries. Triangulate with content and document analyses and interview data.
Qualitative document analysis	Websites, brochures, press kits, flyers, posters, other promotional materials.	Gather data on identity projections (verbal and visual) communicated through written/printed materials. Triangulate with content analysis, interview data, and observations.

### Interviews

I conducted four interviews with a key-informant from the *Consortio*. These non-structured and conversational interviews (Patton, 2002) lasted 1.5 hours on average and were reiterated at different stages of the field research. At the beginning of the study, they were helpful for getting a first understanding of the case and checking its revelatory characteristics. Furthermore, the key informant provided support in gathering collective

promotional materials and gaining access to wineries. After the preliminary phase, results of the quantitative content analysis were discussed with the key informant, who provided comments that were useful for refining the selection of the wineries to include in the theoretical sampling and that contributed to the design of the guidelines of the semi-structured interviews to be conducted with wineries' representatives. Finally, the fourth interview with the key informant focused on the discussion of the emerging findings.

The semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1996) with wineries' representatives allowed for listening to oral identity projections narrated by interviewees, but also for understanding strategic intents behind communication choices, and finally for getting a deeper understanding of the identity of the winery and its embeddedness in the context of the regional cluster. Semi-structured interviews were used because they provide flexibility and leave space to interviewees to elaborate upon their answers, which also allows unexpected themes to emerge (Kvale, 1996). At the same time, they provide a minimum structure that allows for covering the same themes across different interviews, which is essential for providing a common ground for comparison between the embedded units (wineries) of the case (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Yin, 2003).

For each winery in the sample, I contacted the entrepreneur/owner/founder (generally overlapping roles). When this was not possible, I interviewed another member of the management (member of the owning family). In only two cases I interviewed people not pertaining to the owning family: one was a communication manager, and the second the managing director and oenologist of the winery. Overall, I conducted 12 semi-structured interviews, one for each winery in the sample.<sup>4</sup>

The semi-structured interviews started with broad open-ended questions (see complete interview guidelines in Annex 3), asking interviewees to describe first who the wineries are and second who the Franciacorta wine cluster is. Interviewees were given a considerable amount of time to tell their story about their winery and about the cluster, with few requests for clarification by the interviewer. After this introductory part, I asked

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<sup>4</sup>Two wineries are part of the same holding and have the same communication manager, whom I interviewed. However, I was able to observe the cellar tour, guided by different persons, for each of the two wineries as well as gather separate documents and websites.

interviewees what they communicate to external audiences about the winery in different situations and for what purposes. The interview then explored themes like the identification of the winery to the cluster, the relationship with the *Consorzio*, and opinions about the communication of other wineries within the cluster. All questions were broadly formulated, and probing questions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) were asked by the interviewer to deepen the interesting of emerging themes as well as achieve a better understanding of the concepts formulated by interviewees. The interview guidelines included just one structured question regarding identification. I used the visual diagram developed by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) to measure identification. The diagram (see interview guidelines in Annex 3) consisted of a couple of circles represented in different positions, starting from separate and going through different levels of overlap until complete overlap occurred. For every pair of circles one represents the identity of the individual and the other the identity of the organization for which he/she works. In this case, one circle represented the identity of the winery and the other the identity of the Franciacorta wine cluster. Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) developed the diagram for a quantitative measure of individuals' identification of their organization; however, I used it as a visual support to start talking about identification and go beyond checking the level of identity overlap, I left time for interviewees to elaborate on their choices, stimulating them with probing questions. I acknowledge that there is no agreement in the literature on how to consider and measure the identification of organizations to their supra-organizational groups. Some scholars adhere to the definition of identification as an individual level variable and do not consider it possible to measure the identification of organizations. They consider the possibility that individuals (e.g., entrepreneurs, managers) identify with supra-organizational identities (Fiol & Romanelli, 2012; Lepoutre & Valente, 2012). Other scholars instead consider it legitimate to measure the identification of an organization by considering entrepreneurs and managers as "the representative agents[s] of the firm" (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997, p. 168). The empirical context of this research is made by small and medium-sized family-managed organizations. Therefore, the assumption that cognitive identification and

affective commitment of managers could be transferred to the organization as a whole could be more easily acceptable than in other contexts.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted from November 2011 until June 2012 and lasted from one to three hours each. All interviewees signed an informed consent, instructing them about the general aim of the research and ensuring anonymity. Interviews were all recorded and transcribed,<sup>5</sup> and transcripts were sent back to interviewees for their approval and comment. All interviews were held, transcribed, and analyzed in Italian to stay as close to the language of the field as possible (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Direct quotes in this document have been translated by the author.

### Observations

I decided to collect data on identity projections through the observation of cellar tours because this allowed me to listen to winery representatives' oral identity projections to visitors in a real-life context. Furthermore, participating in the tours allowed me to observe the physical environment of the estates, cellars, and tasting rooms.

I observed 12 cellar tours from November 2011 to May 2012.<sup>6</sup> These tours usually lasted one to two hours and consisted of a visit to the cellar, in which the guide talked about the winery, their vineyards, and wine production; finally, visitors tasted the winery products. Visiting group sizes ranged from 2 to 60 people.

The researcher was an observer as a participant (Gold, 1958), meaning that although I was physically present and part of the visiting group, the main focus was on the observation of actions and settings that would otherwise be difficult to access. However, the researcher had almost no involvement in the interaction between guides and visitors. The researcher's participation in the tour was overtly negotiated with wineries and announced to visitors, who were asked by guides to agree to audio recording at the beginning of the tour.

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<sup>5</sup> To guarantee anonymity, interview transcripts are not included in the annexes. They are available with the complete case study database by contacting the author.

<sup>6</sup>For one winery it proved impossible to participate in a tour as it seldom opened its cellar to visitors and only upon very specific requests. Therefore, it was not possible to access one cellar tour during the time span of the research.

I participated in the tours, audio recorded the guides' presentations, and simultaneously took notes and pictures of the places visited. The first observations used a very basic observation grid, elaborated based on the preliminary quantitative content analysis. These grids comprised a set of visual identity markers and values (collective and individual) identified from websites. The grid then progressively evolved by including recurrent themes and artifacts that emerged during observations. Immediately after the tours, I took additional notes on the overall impressions generated during the observations.

In addition to cellar tours, I conducted a one-day observation of the Vinitaly exhibition (Verona, Italy, March 25, 2012), which is the largest wine industry exhibition in Italy for professionals, which attracts international visitors and exhibitors. Here wineries participate either in a collective exhibition area or in individual areas—or both. The aim of this additional observation was to gather additional material on identity projections through artifacts and settings (e.g., position of the stand, imagery displayed, artifacts used in the stand) outside of the winery environment.

All the pieces of information gathered in the field were subsequently condensed in comprehensive field note reports to be further analyzed. As with the interviews, I used the Italian language to take notes and draft field note reports to stay as close as possible to the field language (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Some direct quotes were taken from the recorded tours and translated by the author for inclusion in the findings chapter.

### Documents

The collection of documents covered the entire timespan between the start of the research until the end of the analysis (see Annex 2 for an overview of documents collected). The first phase of document collection (summer 2010) comprised documents available on the web and on specialized wine press and guides (e.g., the *Consorzio*'s website, newspaper wine pages, wine blogs). These documents were mainly used to gather prior information on the Franciacorta wine cluster before accessing the field.

During the preliminary interviews with the key informants, all the promotional materials of the *Consorzio* were collected, including an extended press kit and the celebratory book for the 50 years of Franciacorta. These documents were used to inform the

quantitative coding (i.e., to distinguish collective and individual elements) and then qualitatively analyzed through inductive coding, together with the *Consorzio*'s website and wineries' documents.

Finally during interviews and observations, I collected the promotional documents available for wineries in the sample. These usually comprised leaflets and brochures; occasionally they included press kits and, for bigger wineries, books. In addition, the websites of the wineries in the sample were reconsidered in the qualitative phase, although they had already been included in the quantitative phase. The rationale for this choice is that I wanted to approach web contents more broadly with an inductive thematic analysis, going beyond the coding scheme of the preliminary phase. Furthermore, in the qualitative phase, all the web pages were analyzed whereas the preliminary phase focused on a selection of pages (see *Quantitative data collection*). These documents were used to gather data about the *Consorzio*'s and the wineries' written identity projections to be triangulated with oral and physical (artifacts and settings) identity projections gathered during interviews and observations.

#### **4.2.3 Data Analysis**

##### ***Quantitative analysis***

As reported in Zamparini and Lurati (2012), from the original population of 104 firms, 20 had to be excluded because they either did not have a website (14) or their website was not functioning (6). Therefore, the content of 84 websites was analyzed, representing the totality of available websites and 81% of consortium member wineries. The majority of excluded firms (65%) were very small (average yearly production <50,000 bottles); the remaining 35% had no data on production available because they had been recently established and were still in the vine-planting phase (data provided by the *Consorzio*).

Data were analyzed using the statistical PASW Statistics 18 software package. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the communication of collective and individual identity projections. A two-step cluster analysis was used to identify different combinations of identity projections, which were further tested with the non-parametric Mann-Whitney test. Results were subsequently associated (cross-tabulations, bivariate



correlations) to firms' descriptive variables (third section of the codebook) and demographics (provided by the *Consortio*) in order to describe the profiles of the resulting groups.

### ***Qualitative analysis***

Collecting data about identity projections from different data sources allowed the application of a within-method triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Jick, 1979). The qualitative data analysis comprised identity projections communicated via “verbal accounts” (both written and oral) and via “physical markers” like logos, artifacts, buildings, and settings layout (Elsbach, 2003, p. 299). For website contents, I applied a between-method triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Jick, 1979), comparing the results from the pilot quantitative study and qualitative emerging themes.

Interview transcripts, field notes, document texts, and pictures were all inductively coded with the help of the software Atlas.ti 6. This software allows the inclusion of all the material to be coded into one hermeneutic unit, and it keeps track of all the codes assigned and their related quotations, which provides an opportunity to group primary codes into families and superfamilies. This proves to be extremely useful in conducting inductive thematic coding (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994). I started by coding all sentences and pictures that were self-expressive of the organization, or of the collective cluster, and I assigned a code label close to the transcripts' primary language for a total number of 285 primary codes. Then I proceeded with inferential coding and grouped the codes into 23 second-order themes, which were further grouped under 16 theoretical dimensions and finally distilled into 6 overarching theoretical dimensions (see Figures 15 to 20 in Chapter 7).

After this first phase of analytical induction (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), I worked on the analysis of each single winery in the sample. I used matrices displaying emerging codes and theoretical dimensions against sources of evidence to understand the pattern of collective/individual combinations in wineries' identity projections. Then I identified the co-occurrence of collective and individual identity projection codes with codes concerning the search for legitimacy and distinctiveness. This first step was mainly descriptive. As a further step, I identified relationships among emerging codes and

dimensions drafting network displays, based on explicit relationships emerging from data and pattern matching with extant theories (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For each winery, I could link identity projection codes to legitimacy and distinctiveness codes. Finally, I drafted concise profiles for each winery that put together the findings and considerations that emerged through the various steps of the analysis, including the emerging dimensions about social and socio-psychological characteristics of each winery. These profiles provided the basis for the cross-case analysis between embedded units (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2003).

I worked with comparative matrices and qualitative clustering to compare the single wineries' profiles (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This allowed me to first identify three different patterns of identity projection and related aims in seeking legitimacy and distinctiveness. Finally, the systematic comparison of each unit profile allowed for the establishment of relationships between organizational characteristics, and patterns of identity projections manifested. First, I adopted a systematic comparison between embedded cases as well as among the three emerging groups. This allowed me to draw some co-occurrence relationships between organizational variables and identity combination types, based on Hume's principle of "constant conjunction" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 146). After assessing the constant conjunction between organizational variables and types of identity combinations, I inferred causal relationships among them and the directions of causality using pattern matching with extant theories (Yin, 2003), temporal occurrence of variables, and specific emphasis on causality emerging directly from data, such as explicit interviewees' statements (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

For presentational purposes here, I described the steps of analysis as a linear process. However, the analytical process was incremental rather than linear. Data condensation into overarching dimensions started after the first interviews and observations and proceeded until all data were collected. Meanwhile, both within-case reports and cross-case analyses were continuously revised after the addition of new wineries' data. The incremental analysis processes enabled me to keep the design and emerging conclusions flexible. Thanks to the first round of analysis, I was able to add four embedded units to

the nested case design, subsequently following up on the surprising findings and considering cases that were different from those identified in the preliminary phase (Gibbert et al., 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Second, the incremental process of analysis allowed me to constantly compare emerging findings with extant theories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) at different steps of the elaboration, checking for competing explanations based on different theories (Denzin, 1978; Jick, 1979). To reduce possible biases of the main researcher, progressive findings were constantly discussed with two other researchers. Furthermore, provisional findings at different steps of the analysis were discussed with the key informant of the *Consorzio* and with peer colleagues.

#### **4.3 THE CASE**

The communication of a collective regional identity is relevant in the wine industry insofar as it discloses an essential feature of regional wineries—that is, the link between the product and its terroir (Carlsen et al., 1997)—and it provides cognitive legitimacy and categorical status (Benjamin & Podolny, 1999; Zhao & Zhou, 2011). Nonetheless, individual/differentiating identity communication is relevant for wineries because of increasing competition, especially in the premium wine segment, and globalization (Berneti et al., 2006; Gil & Sánchez, 2007; Pike & Melewar, 2006; see Section 3.3.2).

I selected the Franciacorta wine cluster as an extreme revelatory case in the wine industry because it is characterized by a clearly defined collective identity strongly promoted by the *Consorzio*, through a production disciplinary, a collective brand identity, and ceremonial events and publications. Furthermore, Franciacorta is a young wine cluster and is not located in a traditional wine-making area. Despite this, in 2009 it ranked fourth among Italian wine amateurs in a survey conducted by Winenews and Vinitaly ([www.beverfood.com](http://www.beverfood.com)). The region is also gaining attention at the international level, and according to Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book (2012, p. 121), Franciacorta is "Italy's major production zone for top-quality Champagne-style wines." At the same time, the Franciacorta wine cluster includes some renowned wineries that have strong individual identities and hold high individual status (stars and mentions in guides like

Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book, I Vini di Veronelli, and I vini d'Italia—L'Espresso).

Thus, this cluster provided the opportunity to observe a successful case where a strong collective and individual identities coexist, making it more interesting to explore how different wineries combine them into their external communication. Furthermore, the collective identity origin is not lost in ancient traditions, as it often happens in European wine regions, thereby providing an opportunity to observe the communication of both pioneer wineries and new entrants.

Franciacorta is situated in Lombardy, near Brescia, about 100 kilometers from Milan. It is a very small area, with 2483 hectares of vines. Lombardy is an industrial region. However, as one wine blogger said about Franciacorta, "Seen from above, you'll see breathtaking undulating hills, gorgeous lakes and vast green valleys spotted with olive trees" ([www.winebloggersconference.org](http://www.winebloggersconference.org)). Historically Franciacorta was the countryside of the city of Brescia, where noblemen had their country residences. Many of these estates still exist, and in some cases they became the location of contemporary wineries. Despite this country and agricultural tradition, after World War II, Franciacorta—like all the areas around Brescia—was mainly known for the iron and steel industry. There were farms and families producing red wine, as elsewhere in Italy, but mainly for personal nutritional purposes and local commerce. There is archaeological evidence of ancient wine-making in Franciacorta and also of experiments to create a sparkling white wine in the sixteenth century ("Libellus de vino mordaci," Gerolamo Conforti, 1570—[www.franciacorta.net](http://www.franciacorta.net)). However, wine-making was never a priority in the territory.

The turning point for Franciacorta wines was in 1961, when an oenologist recognized that Franciacorta had the perfect climate to produce white sparkling wines using the champenoise method. This oenologist, Franco Ziliani, with the financial support of a nobleman, Guido Berlucchi, produced the first *Pinot di Franciacorta*. This was the first time that the name Franciacorta appeared on a wine label. A group of local noblemen and entrepreneurs soon followed their example, reconverting their agricultural estates to wine-growing and wine-making or acquiring plots to produce wine

([www.franciacorta.net](http://www.franciacorta.net)). As the wine blogger Robert McIntosh reported ([www.thirstforwine.co.uk](http://www.thirstforwine.co.uk)):

In that year [1961], Franco Ziliani [...] created 3000 bottles of a sparkling wine for the Guido Berlucchi winery ... and it sold well. So well, that the local entrepreneurs didn't just decide that they liked the wine, they decided to MAKE it, and so the region of Franciacorta was born and the fabulous, well-equipped and architecturally varied wineries we know today sprang up virtually overnight to establish the region.

Some of them started as private producers, but given the quality of the wines produced, soon started to sell their wines. By 1967, this group of 11 producers managed to get the denomination of controlled origin (DOC) appellation, just one year after their creation, and in the same year as other wines with much longer tradition, such as the Chianti Classico (Ziliani 2011b).

Since then, there has been an exponential growth of producers and hectares cultivated (see Figure 2). By the 1970s, the number of producers had doubled, and the foundations of the regional rigor of production were set. Following the Italian oenological renaissance, which started to encourage quality wine productions against the industrial low cost wines characterizing the Italian market of the 1950s and 1960s, Franciacorta producers decided to pursue a philosophy of extreme quality. The challenge was to produce a high quality Italian champagne, and most producers were experimenting with bottle refermentation, although other methods were still allowed. During the 1980s, the number of producers doubled again, especially thanks to entrepreneurs operating in other industries who decided to invest in wine-growing and wine-making by acquiring old vineyards or planting new ones and hiring the best oenologists and agronomists available on the market. In 1983, more than one million bottles of *Pinot di Franciacorta* were sold ([www.franciacorta.net](http://www.franciacorta.net)).

Another milestone in the history of the Franciacorta cluster occurred in 1990, when producers voluntarily created a consortium for the protection of Franciacorta. With the birth of the *Consorzio*, Franciacorta became a protected trademark, and the production disciplinary that had existed since the awarding of the DOC was further refined and its application controlled. The Franciacorta method, regulated by the *Consorzio*, became the

rule for labeling a wine Franciacorta, and it was definitely restricted to wines produced using bottle refermentation. Some producers also consented to abandoning the production of sparkling wines using the Charmat method (i.e., by refermentation in autoclave) to allow for a sharper focus on Franciacorta and the Franciacorta method. Furthermore, the creation of a *Consorzio* exclusively for Franciacorta allowed producers to manage issues related to Franciacorta wines separately from other wines of the Brescia province falling under the *Ente Vini Bresciani* (Authority of Brescia's wines), to which Franciacorta had previously belonged (Ziliani, 2011b). Soon after the establishment of the *Consorzio*, in 1995 Franciacorta was awarded with the more prestigious denomination of controlled and guaranteed origin (DOCG). It was the fourteenth DOCG awarded in Italy and the first one for a sparkling wine by bottle refermentation (Ziliani, 2011a). In 1995, the *Consorzio* also registered the trademark Satèn, which is a specific category of Franciacorta, similar to the French *cremant*, but obtained with lower pressure into the bottle and 100% Chardonnay ([www.franciacorta.net](http://www.franciacorta.net)).

In 2002, the EU allowed Franciacorta wines to use the name Franciacorta as the sign of a wine, a specific method, and a territory, with no need to specify further appellations like DOCG. This has been allowed for only a few wines and only those in the same product category as French champagne and Spanish cava.

In 2010, the *Consorzio* included 206 members, of which 104 were bottled wine producers, corresponding to 97% of all producers. In 2010, the *Consorzio* was the first one in Italy to hire a CEO who was not a producer himself to back up the more traditional role of the president. As many recognize, the *Consorzio per la Tutela del Franciacorta* represents an unusual level of cooperation in Italy, as the wine blogger Robert McIntosh reported ([www.thirstforwine.co.uk](http://www.thirstforwine.co.uk)):

Because these wineries set up very much around the same time, and because they were backed by commercially savvy owners, it was also easier for them to club together to create a strong association the *Consorzio per la Tutela del Franciacorta*. The Franciacorta body is recognized as one of the most thorough and strict in Italy, which is easier to do when there are only around 110 producers in the whole region, and 104 are members of the association. This, let me tell you, is a highly unusual level of cooperation in Italy!

Today the Franciacorta region produces about 127,500 hectoliters of wine per year, remaining a quite small Italian wine region, considering that the largest denomination, Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, produces 944,000 hectoliters. At the international level, it is also a small producer, considering that in the same product category Champagne produces 330 million bottles per year. However, Franciacorta is not a micro denomination like the smallest ones existing in Italy, which produce fewer than 20 hectoliters per year (Ziliani, 2011a).

Franciacorta is populated by wineries producing from 5,000 to 1 million bottles per year (Franciacorta, un Vino, una Terra, 2010). The only exception is the Berlucchi winery, which produces 5 million bottles per year. Of these 5 million bottles, until 2012, only about 1 million were Franciacorta bottles ([www.italiaatavola.net](http://www.italiaatavola.net)). Despite being the winery starting the history of the Franciacorta wine, during the 1970s Berlucchi decided to pursue a growth strategy that led to the acquisition of grapes outside of the Franciacorta territory. However, about 10 years ago, the Berlucchi winery decided to reconvert all of its production to Franciacorta. Therefore, starting in 2013, all 5 million bottles produced will be on the market with the label Franciacorta.

Most organizations integrate grape growing, wine-making, bottling, and selling. There are no bulk wine producers, but many grape growers sell grapes to wine-makers who generally produce at least part of the grapes on their own.

In 2011, 11 million bottles of Franciacorta were sold, and the hectares cultivated grew from 2283 in 2008 to 2876 in 2011 ([www.franciacorta.net](http://www.franciacorta.net)). In Italy, Franciacorta is the most consumed classic method sparkling wine (8.95 million bottles in 2010; [www.faiinformazione.it](http://www.faiinformazione.it)). Abroad, Franciacorta is much less known, considering that it exports only the 8% of its production (2011 data, Cermes-Bocconi research; Scarci, 2011, *Il Sole 24Ore*).

Despite the small numbers, Franciacorta has been able to achieve a considerable oenological reputation in its short 50-year history. As the Italian association of sommeliers ([www.aislombardia.it](http://www.aislombardia.it)) reported:

Numbers are meaningful: of 103 award winning “classic method” from the 6 main Italian and international wine guides (Duemilavini, Gambero Rosso,

L'Espresso, Sparkle-Bere Spumante, Slow Wine, Veronelli), more than 50% are Franciacorta.

In addition, Franciacorta has developed an increasingly good reputation among international wine critics, and some have come to define it as “Lombardy’s sanctuary of sparkling wine” (Mallin, 2004).



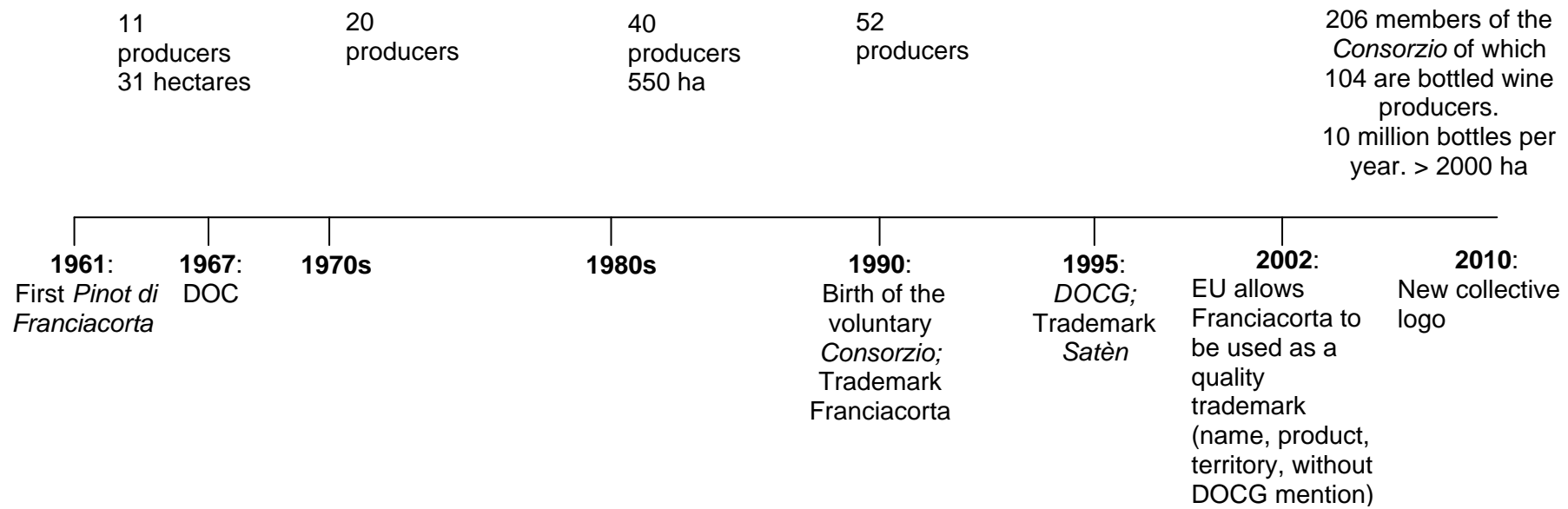


Figure 2. The development of the Franciacorta wine cluster



## CHAPTER 5. PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

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This chapter<sup>7</sup> provides a description of the findings resulting from the preliminary quantitative content analysis of Franciacorta wineries' websites, already reported in Zamparini and Lurati (2012). The first section starts with an overview of wineries' identity projections; then the two patterns of identity projections emerging from the two-step cluster analysis are described. The second section comprises a brief discussion of the preliminary findings, with a specific focus on those considerations that inspired the subsequent qualitative phase and provided relevant elements to select a theoretical sample of wineries.

### **5.1 COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY PROJECTIONS INTO FRANCIACORTA WINERIES' WEBSITES**

The preliminary content analysis aimed to provide an initial overview of how wineries in the Franciacorta wine cluster combine collective and individual identity elements into their website communication. As presented in the methodology section (see Section 4.2.3), the codebook comprised three sections. The first section focused on visual identity markers—specifically, logos, taglines, and names. I coded those identity markers created and regulated by the *Consorzio* (i.e., the collective logo and tagline), as well as the name and trademark Franciacorta, as “collective.” I coded the winery name, logo, and proprietary wine names (on labels) as “individual.” The second section focused instead on values, and during the coding I counted the number of sentences containing “self-expressive cultural statements” (Lamertz et al., 2005, p. 825). I coded those values conforming to the values communicated by the *Consorzio* as “collective.” Before coding wineries' data, I inductively identified a list of values emerging from the *Consorzio*'s website and press kit and I included them as variables in the codebook (see Annex 1). I coded other values emerging from

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<sup>7</sup> The chapter reproduces almost literally the findings and discussion sections of the paper Zamparini and Lurati (2012). Some stylistic changes have been made, and some considerations in Section 5.2 have been added that link the content analysis results to the qualitative part of this research.

wineries' websites that were not included in the list of collective values as "individual" (see Section 4.2.3 and Annex 1).

### 5.1.1 Visual identity markers and values

The Franciacorta collective logo (see Figure 3) is used by only 29% of the sample, and the tagline "*Unione di passioni*" is hardly ever present in firms' websites (11%). The *Consorzio* redesigned the logo and launched the tagline in July 2010; therefore, the high rate of absence might be partly explained by the newness of the tagline. This conclusion is also supported by data on the logo: The newly designed logo is used by only 13% of the sample, while others still display the old one (see Figure 4). The collective logo is used on the homepage by only 25% of the sample, and the tagline "*Unione di passioni*" is hardly ever present (3.5%).

As might be expected, the visual identity markers that wineries display more often on their websites include the individual winery name and logo, together with a consistent presence of the name Franciacorta (see Table 3). The name Franciacorta is widely used, which is not surprising as it represents the territory, the method of production, and the generic name of the DOCG wine. What is more interesting is how the name is used: Franciacorta is used to refer to the territory (44.7%) and to the product (36.5%), but it is worth noting that it is also used in association with organizational values (47%); it is often appended to the winery's name (55%) as well. The name Franciacorta tends to be less prominent on wine labels than firm names (66%), but it is often more prominent than individual product names (46%). Franciacorta is the most prominent word on wine labels for only approximately 13% of the sample.



Figure 3 Collective logo and tagline (since 2010).



Figure 4 Old collective logo

The majority of wineries project collective values through their websites (see Tables 4 and 5). However, those values that are most prominent in the *Consorzio*'s communication are not necessarily the most relevant in firms' communication (see Table 4), which indicates a great variety in the relative weight of the values communicated (in terms of the average number of sentences expressing the value). Individual values are less often communicated by firms: 80% of the sample projects one individual value, 45% projects two, and 6% projects three. Only nine firms project more individual values than collective values. In total, 34 individual values emerged from the inductive codification. Moreover, these values were found to be similar and coherent with collective values. Four individual values are quite common on firms' websites: family (29.8%), land (21.4%), tradition (15.4%), and entrepreneurship (14.3%).

Moderate correlations were found regarding the tendency to communicate more collective than distinctive values. Concerning the name Franciacorta, the more it is mentioned, the more firms communicate collective values compared to distinctive values ( $r = .264, p < .05$ ). Interestingly, the more Franciacorta appears on the firm description page, the more firms communicate collective values, compared to distinctive ones ( $r = .270, p < .05$ ), whereas this is not true for the homepage, product, or territory pages. Finally, there is a significant association between firms communicating more collective values and the use of the collective logo ( $\chi^2(2) = 8.69, p < .05$ ).

### 5.1.2 Two patterns of identity projections

A two-step cluster analysis was used to examine data and determine if different groups of wineries emerged based on differences of identity projections. This clustering technique, provided by PASW 18, is particularly suitable when the aim of the research is exploratory and the number of clusters is neither known nor hypothesized in advance. After conducting the auto-clustering analysis, two groups of wineries emerged (Bayesian Information Criterion; silhouette measure of cohesion and separation .4).

Group 1 (N = 24) includes wineries that tend to communicate individual visual identity markers combined with collective values (see Figure 5). These firms do not use the collective logo and tagline very much, and they often rely completely on their individual corporate visual symbols. The name Franciacorta is actually communicated frequently, but not at the surface level (e.g., appended to the winery's name and prominently on labels). In fact, the name Franciacorta is often used on the winery's description page, and it is mainly associated with the organizational core values (see Table 3). The identity communicated by this group of wineries is imbued with collective values, which are significantly more present than in group 2 (see Table 5).

Meanwhile, group 2 (N = 60) includes wineries that tend to communicate more collective visual identity markers combined with individual values or with no values at all (see Figure 5). As in the first group, the collective logo and tagline are not communicated very much. However, the majority of wineries in group 2 append the word Franciacorta to their name, and the word Franciacorta is also more prominent on product labels<sup>8</sup> compared to group 1 (see Table 3). All wineries communicating more individual than collective values are in this group, and generally collective values are significantly less communicated compared to group 1 (see Table 5).

Firms in group 1 are more attentive to website implementation and international audiences: Their websites more often have a page showing a general description of their wines (not only technical feature cards), and they never lack a firm description page. They use web 2.0 more often and have press pages in English. A few firms communicate about their participation in events abroad, research activities, or pro-environment activities; of those communicating these activities, more are in group 1 than in group 2 (see Table 6). Finally, firms in group 1 are on average bigger in terms of production; they are more often owned by entrepreneurs coming from other industries and are more often not completely managed by family members. The majority of firms owned by non-local entrepreneurs fall in group 2 instead (see Table 7).

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<sup>8</sup> As shown on websites' pictures

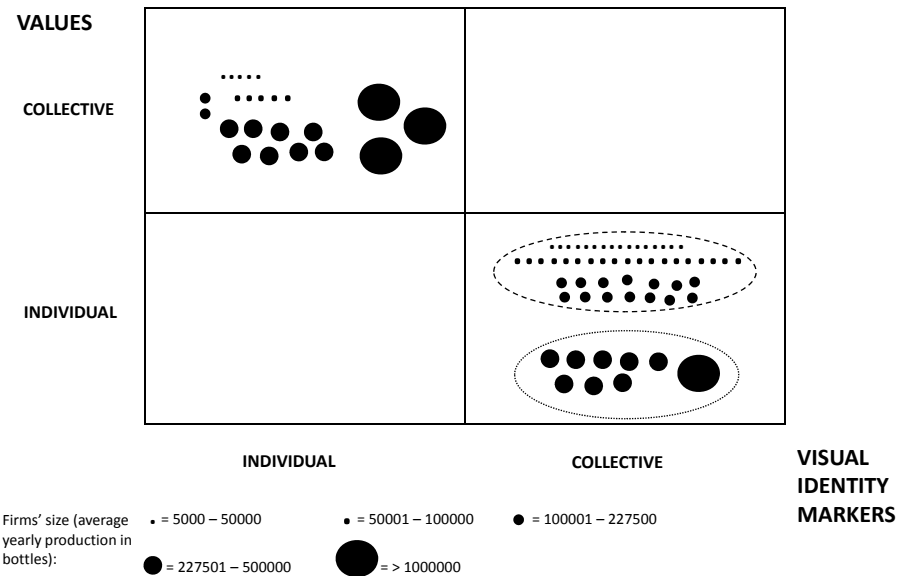


Figure 5 Two patterns of identity projections

Table 3: Logo and Name Franciacorta

	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Collective logo (homepage) (percent)	24.7	20.8	26.7
Collective tagline (homepage) (percent)	3.5	4.2	3.3
Individual logo (homepage) (percent)	100.0	100.0	100.0
Franciacorta frequencies (mean)			
Homepage	3.04	3.25	2.98
Product page	3.91	3.47	4.15
Firm page**	3.59	4.67	3.06
Territory page	6.81	8.46	5.92
Total**	11.51	15.25	10.13
Note: ** Means of each variable are significantly different between groups at $p < 0.05$ level using non-parametric Mann-Whitney test.			
Franciacorta association (percent)			
Product name	36.5	41.7	33.3
Method of production	1.2	4.2	0.0

Firm	15.3	12.5	16.7
Territory	44.7	41.7	46.7
Not applicable	0.0	0.00	3.3
<b>Franciacorta associated with firm values (percent)*</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	47.1	62.5	40.0
No	52.9	37.5	60.0
Note: *Differences between groups are moderately significant $\chi^2(1) = 3.48, p < .06$			
<b>Franciacorta part of firm name (percent)</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	55.3	45.8	58.3
No	44.7	54.2	41.7
<b>Franciacorta and labels (percent)</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Absent	8.2	8.3	8.3
Bigger than wine and firm name	12.9	8.3	15.0
Bigger than wine, smaller than firm name	27.1	20.8	28.3
Bigger than firm name, smaller than wine	4.7	4.2	5.0
Smaller than wine and firm name	21.2	29.2	18.3
Equal firm name, smaller product name	1.2	0.0	1.7
Equal firm name, bigger product name	5.9	8.3	5.0
Equal product name, smaller firm name	17.6	20.8	16.7
Equal product name, bigger firm name	1.2	0.0	1.7



Table 4: *Collective Values' Prominence*

Collective values	Percent of wineries communicating the value	Prominence in the <i>Consorzio's</i> materials <sup>a</sup>
Quality	78.5	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Passion	52.4	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Competence	42.9	7 <sup>th</sup>
Refinement	40.4	5 <sup>th</sup>
Uniqueness	36.9	6 <sup>th</sup>
Trustworthiness/guarantee	34.6	1 <sup>st</sup>
Environmental friendliness	34.5	8 <sup>th</sup>
Innovation	33.3	4 <sup>th</sup>

Note: <sup>a</sup> Based on number of sentences on the website and in the press kit

Table 5: *Collective Values Communicated by Wineries*

Values (mean)	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Quality <sup>***</sup>	2.64	4.63	1.85
Innovation <sup>***</sup>	0.65	1.63	0.27
Competence <sup>**</sup>	0.98	2.08	0.53
Uniqueness <sup>***</sup>	0.61	1.33	0.32
Trustworthiness/guarantee <sup>**</sup>	0.77	1.71	0.40
Passion <sup>**</sup>	1.17	2.08	0.80
Elegance/refinement <sup>**</sup>	0.92	1.83	0.55
Environmental friendliness <sup>**</sup>	1.05	2.46	0.48

Note: <sup>\*\*\*</sup> Means of variable are significantly different between groups at  $p < 0.001$  level using non-parametric Mann-Whitney test. <sup>\*\*</sup> Means of variable are significantly different between groups at  $p < 0.05$  level using non-parametric Mann-Whitney test.

Table 6: *Prerequisites of International Competitiveness*

Website update (percent)	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Yes	2.4	4.2	1.7
No	97.6	95.8	98.3
Graphic quality (percent)	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Graphics only	31.8	33.3	31.7
With sound	3.5	0.0	3.3
With animation	42.4	45.8	41.7
With sound and animation	22.4	20.8	23.3
English version (percent)	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Yes	57.6	66.7	55.0
No	42.4	33.3	45.0
e-commerce (percent)	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Yes	10.6	4.2	13.3

No	89.4	95.8	86.7
<b>Web 2.0 (percent)</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	21.4	29.2	18.3
No	78.6	70.8	81.7
<b>Press pages in English (percent)</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	11.8	25.0	6.7
No	88.2	75.0	93.3
<b>Product description page (percent) *</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	63.1	79.2	56.7
No	36.9	20.8	43.3
Note: * Differences between groups are moderately significant $\chi^2(1) = 3.72, p < .06$			
<b>Firm description page (percent) **</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	84.5	100.0	78.3
No	15.5	0.0	21.7
Note: ** Differences between groups are significant $\chi^2(1) = 6.15, p < .05$			
<b>Territory description page (percent)</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	45.2	54.2	41.7
No	54.8	45.8	58.3
<b>Events abroad (percent)</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	23.5	33.3	20.0
No	76.5	66.7	80.0
<b>Innovation and research (percent)</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes	15.3	20.8	13.3
No	84.7	79.2	86.7
<b>Pro-environment activities (percent)</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Yes, bio	14.1	20.8	11.7
Yes, other projects	1.2	4.2	0.0
No	84.7	75.0	88.3

Table 7: *Demographics*

Demographics	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Founded in (median)	1983	1978	1985
Average yearly production in bottles (median)**	100000	210000	90000
Note: ** Means of variable are significantly different between groups at $p < 0.05$ level using non-parametric Mann Whitney test.			
Property a (percent)*	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Entrepreneur wine sector	60.7	45.8	66.7
Entrepreneur other sectors	38.1	54.2	31.7
Note: * Differences between groups are moderately significant $\chi^2(1) = 3.47, p < .07$			
Property b (percent)	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Local	82.1	91.7	79.7
Non-local	16.7	8.3	20.3
Management (percent)*	Entire sample	Group 1	Group 2
Family	69.0	54.2	75.0
Non-family	31.0	45.8	25.0
Note: * Differences between groups are moderately significant $\chi^2(1) = 3.48, p < .07$			

## **5.2 DISCUSSION OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION**

The general picture emerging from the exploration of websites' contents is that Franciacorta wineries do not communicate strongly collective visual identity markers except the name Franciacorta, which is often prominent in the homepage, appended to the winery name, and more prominent than proprietary wine names on packaging. However, a more detailed examination indicates that the collective name is often used not only as a visual identity marker in labeling, but also enclosed in verbal accounts as a self-defining value.

Regarding values, the most relevant result is that—on average—wineries express their identities using the same values that the *Consorzio* uses to communicate the collective identity. However, they combine the collective values in an original way, choosing some of them while neglecting others and giving a different prominence to them compared to what can be found in the institutional communication of the *Consorzio*. This result concurs with recent research indicating that firms build their identity stories drawing originally from a cultural repertoire available in their institutional fields (Lamertz et al., 2005; Glynn, 2008). Furthermore, the two groups that emerged (see Figure 5) emphasize that wineries adopt different patterns of identity projections by differently combining collective and individual visual identity markers and values. This provides further support to the fact that wineries act like bricoleurs insofar as they make use of available collective visual symbols and values in different ways. These preliminary results only show two patterns of combinations emerging. However they suggest the worth of further exploring other possible combination patterns (see RQ1) through a deeper and more qualitative analysis of wineries' identity projections and, hence, including more identity elements than only logos, names, and values.

Preliminary findings emphasize that some wineries project the collective identity at a more visible level, whereas other wineries project the collective identity mostly through self-expressive statements. Corporate communication theories usually consider visual identity markers as a means for giving an immediately visible and recognizable signal of an organization's identity, while the communication of organizational values is usually

related to more elaborate expressions and categorical definitions of the organization's essence (Balmer, 2006; Elsbach, 2003; Kammerer, 1989; van Riel, 1995). Hence, the fact that wineries communicate the collective identity of the cluster (or their individual identity) more prominently through visual identity markers or values makes it even more interesting to understand the different strategic intents of their communication. The qualitative phase further investigates this preliminary finding to see if visual identity markers and more value-expressing projections are related to different strategies of legitimacy and distinctiveness search (see RQ2).

For what concerns the profile of the two groups adopting different patterns of identity projections, it is interesting to note that group 1—the one combining individual identity markers with collective values—includes wineries that have a profile similar to the winning cluster SME, as defined by Foresti et al. (2007) in their study of leadership emergence in Italian districts. These wineries are not too small, and they appear to be attentive to communication and to the international competitive landscape. Group 2, although representing a compound of firms that are smaller on average, presents a more heterogeneous composition. Two sub-groups can be drawn based on firms' size: one including 55 small firms and the other made of 9 bigger firms (pertaining to the biggest quartile of the sample), which are similar in size to group 1 firms. Therefore, surprisingly, demographic data like size, age, property, managerial style, and origin of the entrepreneur do not significantly correlate with wineries' membership in the two different groups. Most interestingly, the majority of prestigious wineries belong to group 1 and consistently communicate the collective values of the wine cluster. I considered this an unexpected result as previous theory on conformity (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001) predicted that high status firms have already obtained their legitimacy and therefore are less likely to claim conformity to the collective group to which they belong. These considerations emphasize the need to conduct a deeper investigation in the qualitative phase to determine what other organizational variables influence the combination of collective and individual identity elements in wineries' external projections (see RQ3).

Beyond giving a preliminary understanding of how wineries differently combine collective and individual identities in their communication and providing provisional considerations to be further investigated in the qualitative phase, these results provide the opportunity to select a theoretical sample of wineries based on their actual identity projections. I considered wineries of similar size, belonging to the two different groups that emerged from the cluster analysis. I decided to choose among the biggest wineries (more than 1 million bottles produced per year) and medium-sized wineries (300,000 to 500,000 bottles produced per year) because their identity communication is more elaborate compared to micro wineries. I left open the possibility to include smaller wineries during qualitative data collection. I then restricted the focus to eligible wineries belonging to group 2, checking for those wineries that also rated high in the variables of website implementation. The rationale for this choice was to have a sample of wineries that were similar in terms of size and the development of external communication, but different in terms of the combination of collective and individual identity projections. The original sample comprised 12 wineries: five belonging to group 1, and six to group 2. Following the logic of a flexible design, which is more concerned with data saturation than with statistical representativeness, the actual sample changed during the first stages of qualitative data collection (see Chapter 7).

## CHAPTER 6. THE COLLECTIVE IDENTITY COMMUNICATED BY THE *CONSORZIO*

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The *Consortio per la tutela del Franciacorta* is a voluntary association of wine-growers, wine-makers, and wine-bottlers operating in the Franciacorta territory. The *Consortio* was founded by a group of 29 wine entrepreneurs on March 5, 1990, in order to create an association in charge of protecting and strategically managing the development of the wines produced in Franciacorta. The DOC Franciacorta had existed since 1967; however, it was legally under the authority of the *Ente Vini Bresciani*, an association protecting all the wine territories in the province of Brescia (see Section 4.3).

Today the *Consortio* has the legal duty to control the respect of the production disciplinary and grant the state DOCG wrap to Franciacorta bottles. In addition to trademark protection activities, the *Consortio* coordinates collective research activities, education, and the promotion of Franciacorta wines. Given the aim of the study, the focus here is on the *Consortio*'s promotional activities, especially how its promotional materials project the collective identity of the Franciacorta wine cluster.

Since its founding, the *Consortio* has invested increasing time and resources for the communication of Franciacorta. After the focus on technical improvements and consistency that led to the establishment of the “Franciacorta method” in 1991, the *Consortio* increasingly focused on efforts to communicate Franciacorta as a name representing a specific wine from a specific territory produced using a specific method. The collective identity definition of the *Consortio* is communicated to external stakeholders mainly through the website, brochures and leaflets, press releases, and interviews with the president and other board members. Furthermore, events and media coverage opportunities are always used as leverage to emphasize what it means to be Franciacorta and what Franciacorta will likely become in the future (informant from the *Conosorzio*, personal communications). Since 2000, the *Consortio* has supported the Franciacorta wine route association (*Strada del Franciacorta*) and the Franciacorta Festival (*Festival del Franciacorta*) to create a collective image of Franciacorta

producers. Furthermore, in the last few years, with the aim of improving awareness of Franciacorta around Italy and abroad, the *Consorzio* has organized traveling festivals with groups of producers.

The rest of this section describes the collective identity projections of the *Consorzio* based on emerging trends identified by the qualitative analysis of the website, press kits, interviews provided by *Consorzio*'s representatives, documents such as books and brochures, and finally observations of the Vinitaly exhibition in Verona in 2012.


The inductive process of analysis (see Section 4.2) led to the identification of fourteen second-order themes grouped into four theoretical dimensions (see Figure 6). The categorization of impression management's symbolic actions provided by Elsbach (2003) distinguished among physical markers (including logos and signs), verbal accounts, symbolic behaviors, and categorizations. Comparing emerging second-order themes with Elsbach's categorization, it was clear that they could be usefully described by a categorization dividing visual identity markers and verbal accounts. The emerging verbal accounts needed to be further discriminated into three dimensions. I called all those themes that could be recognized as a verbal expression of what Wry et al. (2011, p. 450) called an authoritative "defining identity story" authoritative identity accounts; the authoritative defining identity story describes the legitimate practices to which wineries must conform to produce Franciacorta wines. Taking inspiration from Elsbach (2003), I called all those themes that the *Consorzio* uses to describe the collective identity in order to impress create a positive image of the Franciacorta wine cluster by emphasizing positive characteristics, events, and values as well as by evoking a positive imagery acclaiming verbal accounts. Finally, I merged Elsbach's definition (2003, p. 299) of verbal accounts and categorizations to a dimension which we called categorizing verbal accounts. This final dimension groups together all those themes that represent verbal statements clearly defining what Franciacorta is and what it is not by comparing it to other collective identities (Elsbach, 2003; Lerpold et al., 2007).

This chapter describes the visual identity markers and the verbal accounts that the *Consorzio* communicates to project the collective Franciacorta identity to external stakeholders. The next chapter will present the results emerging from the analysis of the



selected wineries, the embedded units of this case study design. In particular, the chapter will illustrate how different groups of wineries differently combine the collective identity themes projected by the *Consorzio*, with conforming or distinctive individual identity themes.

## First-order themes (examples)

 Franciacorta	
The Franciacorta glass	
Name of the wine, method, and territory	
Art. 4 disciplinary from website: "Wine-growing rules" Art. 5 disciplinary from website: "Wine-making and elaboration rules"	
Art. 3 disciplinary from website: "Grape growing area" [list of councils, geographical and administrative boundaries]	
Art. 6 disciplinary from website: "Characteristics of consumption" explaining in detail technical product features for the categories "Franciacorta," "Franciacorta rosé," and "Franciacorta Satèn".	
Art. 7 and 8 disciplinary from website: "Labeling, indications and presentation," detailing what is allowed and forbidden on labels, and "Packaging," including allowed bottle sizes and mandatory Franciacorta sign on the sugar cork	
The oenological rebirth of the 1960s and the DOC. The birth of the <i>Consorzio</i> in 1990, and the following successes (DOCG, Franciacorta as appellation).	
"We started a development policy in the US, Switzerland, Japan and Germany, with the ambition to succeed in making Franciacorta appreciated in these markets within the next 4-5 years" ( <a href="http://www.franciacorta.net/news">www.franciacorta.net/news</a> ).	
"Precious grapes harvested rigorously by hand [...] [In the cellar] nothing is left to chance" (homepage video).	
"Franciacorta is a gorgeous territory [...] a cultural and natural heritage full of charm and attractions, a territory to be discovered, enjoyed and breathed." (Brochure).	
"[We] interpret and spread the culture of excellence, of which Franciacorta is a natural ambassador" ( <a href="http://www.franciacorta.net">www.franciacorta.net</a> )	
"Franciacorta, Champagne and Cava: in Europe, only these 3 wines (produced by bottle refermentation) can use a unique word to identify a specific wine, territory, and method." (Press kit, 2012, p. 10)	
In 1990, Franciacorta producers decided to renounce the generic word <i>spumante</i> to better characterize their product (i.e., typology, territory, production rules, method) all in one word, Franciacorta, for clarity's sake to the advantage of consumers and markets. (brochure).	

## Second-order themes

Logo
Artifacts
Franciacorta
Method—rules
Territory— geomorphology and boundaries
Product categories and profiles
Labeling, packaging rules
Historical achievements
Future ambitions
Method praise
Territory praise
Positive values
Similarity to other collective identities
Distinctiveness from other collective identities

## Theoretical dimensions

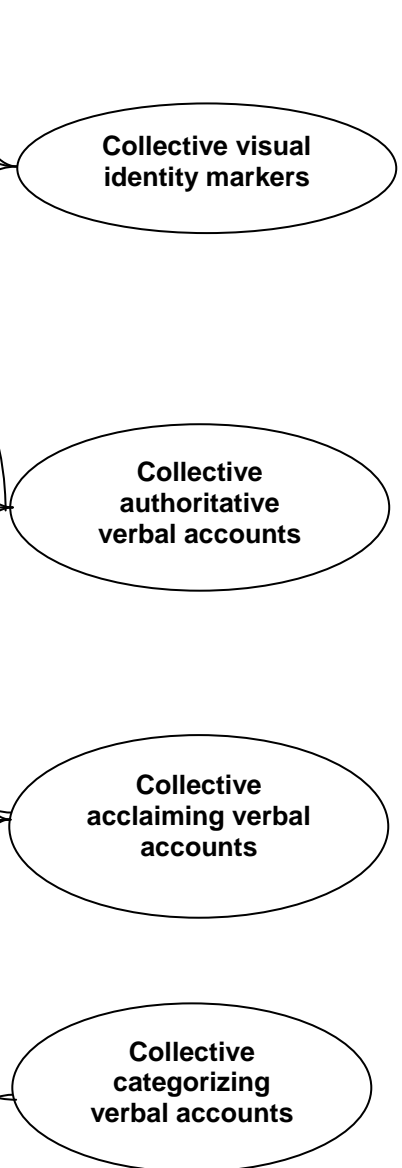


Figure 6. Emerging data structure from the analysis of the *Consorzio*'s communication.

## 6.1 VISUAL IDENTITY MARKERS

Three types of visual identity markers represent the collective identity of the Franciacorta wine cluster. The first and most important is the name Franciacorta itself, which is a legally regulated trademark. The second is the collective logo of the *Consorzio*. Finally, a number of physical artifacts are included in the representation.

The name Franciacorta was originally the name of the territory. It appeared on a bottle label for the first time with the first Pinot di Franciacorta produced by Berlucchi and Ziliani in 1961 (see Section 4.3). However, for years the name Franciacorta represented just a hint on wine labels about the origin of all the types of wines produced there. Franciacorta was not synonymous with a specific method, and the “classic method” was specified on bottle labels until 1993.

Since being established, the *Consorzio* has engaged in strategic efforts to sharpen the meaning of the name Franciacorta in order to build a highly recognizable and representative identity marker, distinguishing Franciacorta wines from other Italian and international white sparkling wines. To pursue this aim, in 1993 associated producers decided to abandon the production of other types of sparkling wines (i.e., produced using the Charmat method and not bottle refermentation) to focus the name Franciacorta on a specific method. To further increase the overlap of the territory, method, and specific wine into a single name, the *Consorzio* decided to change the name of the other minor denomination *Terre di Franciacorta DOC* (white and red still wines) to *Curtefranca DOC*, thereby projecting the name Franciacorta specifically for the territory or the specific wine and method.

Another relevant action to sharpen the meaning of the identity marker Franciacorta was the battle against the generic name *spumante*. In 1995, the new regulations for the Franciacorta DOCG were approved, officially forbidding “the use of the words ‘*vino spumante*’ in the designation of the wine and the citation of the method of production” ([www.franciacorta.net](http://www.franciacorta.net)). After European law CE 753/02 was enacted, the collective name could also be used alone on bottle labels, without the need to further specify the method of production or the DOCG. Such actions increased the strength of the collective name as an identity marker.

*Spumante*, which means white sparkling wine in Italian, could probably be translated into English as “fizzy wine.” The term is widely used in Italy and usually represents the Italian version of French champagne. However, *spumante* can be produced using different methods, including bottle refermentation or autoclave refermentation. Autoclave refermentation is the most widely used method in Italy and is also used for Prosecco wines. The name Prosecco, originally defining a specific DOC appellation (Prosecco di Valdobbiadene), has evolved to mean a generic wine, indicating a wine type, and is largely used by different Italian regions as well as by other countries. One example is the King’s Valley Prosecco Road near Melbourne, Australia ([www.visitvictoria.com](http://www.visitvictoria.com)).

The *Consorzio* emphasizes the strict definition of the name Franciacorta and has struggled to clearly communicate its meaning to avoid a generic interpretation of the wines that the Franciacorta name represents. To further avoid the dilution of the name Franciacorta as a specific identity marker, the *Consorzio* requested to be relieved of the use of the *Talento*, *Vsqprd*, and *Vsq*<sup>9</sup> label designations regulated by Italian law on denomination and appellation to indicate superior quality *spumante* wines. The *Consorzio* explained its choice to exclude the name *Talento* from the range of possible identity markers:

30<sup>th</sup> of December 2004: with the decree of 2004 on the Regulation for the use of the mention Talento by Italian Vsqprd and Vsq wines, and by precise request from the *Consorzio*, the DOCG Franciacorta is excluded by the faculty to use the above cited mention in the designation and presentation of its wines. The Ministry’s decision expressly recognizes the qualitative excellence and the peculiarity of Franciacorta. (Press kit, 2012, p. 4)

The name Franciacorta also appears in the *Consorzio*’s logo (see Figure 3). The smaller version, a red castellated F encircled by two curved lines, represents a glass of white

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<sup>9</sup> Talento is a national trademark that is the property of the Italian Ministry of Agriculture Food and Forestry. It can be used for white sparkling wines produced using the classic method. Vsqprd (*vini spumanti di qualità prodotti in regioni determinate*—quality *spumanti* produced in specific regions) and Vsq (*vini spumanti di qualità*—quality *spumanti*) were two legal designations for Italian sparkling wines that distinguished quality wines produced by refermentation from low quality wines produced by the addition of CO<sub>2</sub>. Their use was discontinued in 2009 ([www.talento.to](http://www.talento.to)).

wine. This logo was created in 2010 as part of what the *Consorzio* called its collective brand identity project, as described by the following press release from the *Consorzio*:

A new brand identity for Franciacorta.

Franciacorta changes face, new brand identity for the most famous bubbles in Italy. Erbusco July 2010—This year the Franciacorta has changed its image, and to do it after a tender, it appointed the RBA Group, a creative agency from Milan, who will redesign the Franciacorta brand identity. RBA's work started with the redesign of the logo of the *Consorzio per la tutela del Franciacorta*, and it chose the synthesis into the word *Franciacorta*, one word that identifies both the territory and the product. Franciacorta expresses an indissoluble link between the land situated between Brescia and Iseo Lake, the commitment of the men who cultivate it, and the quality of its leading product, which is now the emblem of a territory. Fabrizio Bernasconi, CEO of RBA Group said: "From a graphic point of view, the castellated F remains that symbol of the historical link between the wine and the culture of its land. We chose to value it with the embrace of two soft graphic signs reminiscent of a wine glass."

A collective logo already existed (see Figure 4); however, given the new design, the *Consorzio* developed a corporate design book to which associated wineries were expected to conform when using the collective logo. The use of the logo is allowed only by associated wineries, and it must be reproduced on the back label of Franciacorta wines. Furthermore it is reproduced on a legal wrapper certifying the DOCG, which is applied over bottle corks. The collective logo is prominent in all of the *Consorzio*'s promotional media, including Facebook, Twitter accounts, and mobile apps (Figures 7, 8, and 9).



Figure 7. Logo on iPhone app ([www.franciacorta.net](http://www.franciacorta.net))



Figure 8. Logo on Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/franciacorta](http://www.facebook.com/franciacorta))



Figure 9. Logo on Twitter profile (<https://twitter.com/FranciacortaUSA>)

Furthermore, the logo is used as a strong collective identifier in exhibition areas. Particularly impressive is the prominence of the collective logo Franciacorta at the Vinitaly exhibition. The exhibition covers an extensive area comprising 16 buildings, each one hosting a region and various DOCs and DOCGs. The building hosting Franciacorta, near the main entrance of the exhibition, was literally covered by the Franciacorta collective logo (Figure 10).



*Figure 10.* The Franciacorta building at Vinitaly 2012 ([www.franciacorta.net/news](http://www.franciacorta.net/news))

In addition, inside the building, the collective logo and name were pervasively projected, covering the ceiling and framing every single winery stand (Figure 11).



*Figure 11.* Franciacorta wineries' exhibition area, Vinitaly 2012 (picture taken during observations)

Beyond the projection of the trademark Franciacorta and its logo in promotional materials, the *Consorzio* created a series of artifacts to be associated with the collective identity of the wine cluster. The most significant and widespread artifact is probably the Franciacorta glass. The glass is produced by Rastal, a company producing professional wine degustation glasses, but it has a distinctive shape and the F logo is engraved at its basis (Figure 12).



Figure 12. The Franciacorta glass

Another typical artifact that the *Consorzio* produces is the poster map of the territory, with all the different Franciacorta areas highlighted based on collective zoning research. The most recent version is a three-dimensional map emphasizing the geomorphology of the territory and the morainic basin, which is deemed relevant to the Franciacorta terroir. Finally, another strong visual identity marker of the collective identity within the territory itself is the brown road signs that mark wineries associated with the Franciacorta wine trail; the signs prominently depict the collective logo followed by the name of the winery. When entering Franciacorta by car, these signs are pervasive even on major roads and complement a landscape of hills, vineyards, and rose bushes. The Franciacorta southern border is delimited by the highway running from Milan to Venice.



Also here, when entering the Franciacorta territory, a large brown sign displays the name Franciacorta encircled by grapes.

## **6.2 VERBAL ACCOUNTS**

### **6.2.1 Authoritative verbal accounts**

Through its oral and written projections, the *Consorzio* communicates—pervasively and consistently—all the characteristics that a wine needs to be a Franciacorta and that are regulated and controlled by the *Consorzio* itself. The major authoritative themes emerging from both the oral and written verbal accounts focus on specific descriptions of the Franciacorta method; the legally delimited boundaries of Franciacorta that guarantee the properties of a unique terroir; the allowed Franciacorta typologies and their peculiar sensory characteristics; and finally the labeling and packaging rules.

The Franciacorta method and its regulations are the most recurrent themes in the *Consorzio*'s identity projections. The regulations provide the main reference text defining what Franciacorta is, and its progressive refinements are narrated into promotional materials to describe how the collective identity of the Franciacorta wine cluster has progressively developed and what it makes recognizable and unique today. The following excerpts show this continuous reiteration of the progressive restrictions imposed on the Franciacorta wine through the regulations in order to sharpen its distinctive profile and increase the average qualitative level:

1993 – On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, after two years of self-discipline, the new regulations impose the natural bottle refermentation as the only allowed method: the designation of classic method is cancelled and the obligation to produce the wine in the allowed wine-growing areas is introduced.

[...]

1996 – On May 17<sup>th</sup> the wine-growing and wine-making code of Franciacorta is approved, new and complex regulations even more restrictive than the production regulations.

[...]

1997 – [...] On June 1<sup>st</sup> the work of the group of area wine-growers for the production control of each vineyard starts: the production sentinels.

[...]

2010 – [...] the new production regulations of Franciacorta are published. New limitations are imposed in order to increase the production rigor, with

the aim of further elevating the average qualitative level.  
([www.franciacorta.net/storia](http://www.franciacorta.net/storia))

Similar text is found throughout all the documents and also often reported in oral communication (especially interviews released by the president of the *Consorzio*).

The complete regulations are reproduced on the *Consorzio*'s website, but the Franciacorta method is described in a simpler way in all communication, both written and oral. If identity projections are often divided into “who we are” and “what we do” claims (Lamertz, Heugens, & Clamet, 2005; Navis & Glynn, 2010), the reiteration of the Franciacorta method is a clear and consistent projection of the collective identity's “what we do.”

It is the Franciacorta method that also guarantees today the quality of each single bottle. An ancient art combined in a perfect bond with the most modern technologies and the mastery of local wine-makers. Strict and meticulous norms to obtain wines of absolute quality: this is the *diktat* of the Franciacorta *Consorzio* and of its producers, who exclusively use noble varieties, handmade harvest, natural bottle refermentation, and subsequent slow aging on lees, not less than 18 months for the Brut, 30 for the Vintage and 60 for the Reserve. (Press kit, 2012, p. 6)

Typically, the narration of the method (see Table 8) starts with vineyards and wine-growing techniques. Then the soft squeezing technique is described, and the first high quality achievement must result from the first squeeze, the “*mosto fiore*,” which is used to produce the basis of Franciacorta wines. These bases are then mixed the following spring in the complex practice of the *cuvée* creation, where “each producer defines the distinctive characteristics of its own Franciacorta” (Press kit, 2010, p. 5). At this point the *cuvée* is bottled, and sugar and yeasts are added to start the natural bottle refermentation, after which lees' dross must be removed with the *remuage*:

Once finished aging on lees, bottles are put on specific wooden racks (also called *pupitres*), then they are turned 1/8 around daily, and progressively reclined to convey the lees' sediment toward the neck of the bottle within 3-4 weeks. This specific rotation is called *scuotitura* or *remuage* [riddling], and it is practiced by specialized staff (each one rotates up to 15,000 bottles a day). (Press kit, 2012, p. 7)

Finally, bottles are uncorked to let the dross out (*degorgement* or *sboccatura*), and a liqueur of sugar and wine in varying proportions is added to obtain different ranges of style. Together with the practices of the method, the *Consorzio* describes in detail what the allowed Franciacorta typologies are as well as the minimum common denominator of each typology in terms of technical features and taste, regardless of each single winery's production style (Table 9).

Table 8: *Themes of Franciacorta Method Communication*

First-order themes	Quotations (Press kit, 2010, pp. 5–7)	Documents
Wine-growing	"Franciacorta is produced with Chardonnay, Pinot noir and Pinot blanc. The last one is allowed up to 50%. In Franciacorta vineyards a maximum of 100 quintals of grapes per hectare is produced, of the Chardonnay, Pinot noir and Pinot blanc typologies. After the harvest, exclusively handmade, whole grapes are carried to wineries, where each vineyard is treated separately."	Website Press kits Video Brochure
Wine-making: the cuvée	"From soft grapes pressing, the <i>mosto fiore</i> [first pressing] is used for the production of the Franciacorta wine bases, which will be used at spring to create the <i>cuvée</i> : a mix of wine bases, also of different vintages, chosen after careful degustations. In this phase each producer may chose the distinctive notes that will characterize his Franciacorta."	Website Press kits Video Brochure
Wine-making: tirage	"[The] <i>tirage</i> , which means adding a syrup of sugar and yeasts to bottled wine. At this point a natural and slow refermentation starts that develops carbon dioxide in the bottle ( <i>presa di spuma</i> ), with a resulting increase of pressure up to 5-6 atm for all Franciacorta wines, except Satèn, which develops a pressure lower than 5 atm."	Website Press kits Video Brochure
Wine-making: aging on lees	"Bottles, closed by a crown cap, are stored horizontally in cellars and stay in this position for the time required to produce the different Franciacortas. It is during these months that Franciacorta acquires its peculiar sensory profile, becoming rich in aromatic complexity."	Website Press kits Video Brochure
Wine-making: riddling	"Once finished aging on lees, bottles are put on specific wooden racks (also called <i>pupitre</i> ), then they are turned 1/8 around daily, and progressively reclined to convey the lees' sediment toward the neck of the bottle within 3-4 weeks; at the end of this time bottles are almost in a vertical position; this specific rotation is called <i>scuotitura</i> or <i>remuage</i> [riddling], and it is practiced by specialized staff (each one rotates up to 15,000 bottles a day)."	Website Press kits Video Brochure

Wine-making: disgorging and dosage	<p>“At the end of the riddling, the sediment, made by yeasts’ dross, is deposited near the crown cap and will be removed through the <i>sboccatura</i> [disgorging]. During disgorging, bottles are put upside down with the neck in a freezing liquid that creates a plug of ice that encapsulates lees [...]. Pressure inside the bottle is so high that by removing the crown cap the frozen plug is violently expelled with a small loss of pressure and wine. For No Dosage Franciacorta only wine is introduced to restore the level, for the other typologies a dosage syrup is added, made of Franciacorta wine bases and sugar. The quantity of sugar in the syrup defines the taste typology of Franciacorta: No Dosage, Extra Brut, Brut, Extra Dry, Dry or Sec, Demisec.”</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Press kits</p> <p>Video</p> <p>Brochure</p>
Wine-making: aging times	<p>“The Franciacorta production process is quite long and starts seven months after the harvest when yeasts are added to the <i>cuvée</i> of wine bases. After the bottling, aging times must be finished before the disgorging. Aging times vary according to the product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Franciacorta: minimum 18 months</li> <li>- Satèn and Rosé non vintage: minimum 24 months</li> <li>- Franciacorta vintage: minimum 30 months</li> <li>- Franciacorta Reserve: minimum 60 months.”</li> </ul>	<p>Website</p> <p>Press kits</p> <p>Video</p> <p>Brochure</p>

Table 9: *Franciacorta Typologies: Elaborated from website*  
([www.franciacorta.net/en/Categories/](http://www.franciacorta.net/en/Categories/) - English version)

	"Grapes"	"Process"	"Sensory profile"	"Range of styles"
"Brut"	"Chardonnay and/or pinot noir, but up to 50% pinot bianco may be used as well."	"Refermentation in the bottle, with the wine maturing sur lie a minimum of 18 months, and reaching an internal pressure of 5-6 atmospheres. Franciacorta cannot be released earlier than 25 months from harvest."	"Straw yellow with greenish or golden highlights, and a delicate, long-lingering bead of bubbles. The bouquet boasts classic notes of refermentation in the bottle--the impressions of fresh-baked bread and yeastiness--, enlivened with subtle hints of citrus, dried white fig, and mixed roasted nuts, including almond and hazelnut. On the palate it is full-flavoured, refined, and remarkably well-balanced."	"No Dosage, Extra Brut, Brut, Extra Dry, Sec or Dry, Demi-sec."
"Satèn"	"Predominantly chardonnay, plus up to 50% pinot bianco; Satèn is therefore always a Blanc de blancs."	"This velvety quality is due to the fact that the internal pressure is less than 5 atmospheres."	"Straw yellow in appearance, sometimes deep in hue, and with greenish highlights at times. It releases a creamy, long-lasting bead of notably delicate bubbles. A soft-contoured bouquet offers emphatic notes of well-ripened fruit, enriched by delicate nuances of spring flowers and of mixed nuts, including roasted almond and hazelnut. In the mouth, lively flavours and a refreshing crispness are in admirable balance with a texture that gives the impression of luxurious silk."	"Satèn is produced only in the Brut style."
"Rosé"	"Chardonnay and pinot bianco, with a minimum of 25% pinot noir."	"The white and red grapes are vinified separately. Franciacorta Rosé is often made from just pinot noir grapes, with a rosé-method fermentation, but it is also made by blending pinot noir with base wines of chardonnay and/or pinot bianco. The pinot noir must ferment in contact with the skins to give the wine the desired pinkish hue."	"The pinot noir component provides impressive fragrances of wild red berry fruit as well as firm structure and distinctive energy."	"No Dosage, Extra brut, Brut, Extra Dry, Sec or Dry, Demi-sec."

<p>“Millesimato</p> <p>Vintage-dated”</p>	<p>“Millesimato, or vintage-dated Franciacorta, is composed of base wines that are at least 85% from one single growing year. It may be released only after a minimum of 37 months from harvest.”</p>	<p>“The bouquet and palate of Franciacorta Millesimato reflects in a striking fashion the weather conditions of its growing year and the sensory expressiveness of the grapes from that particular vintage.”</p>	<p>“No Dosage, Extra Brut, Brut, Extra Dry. In the case of Satèn, only Brut. Both Satèn and Rosé can be Millesimato, which increases their complexity, body, cellarability, and elegance.”</p>
<p>“Riserva”</p>	<p>“Riserva is a Franciacorta Millesimato, which can include Satèn and Rosé, that has matured sur lie a minimum of 60 months. A Riserva is released, therefore, a full 67 months (5 and a half years) after harvest. Since many Franciacorta Millesimatos rest sur lie far longer than the required minimum of 30 months, this designation was created to highlight this unique type of wine.”</p>		<p>“No Dosage, Extra Brut, Brut. In the case of Satèn, only Brut style.”</p>

Special attention is given to the description of the Satèn typology. In fact the Satèn is a patented trademark and can be used only by Franciacorta producers for a specific typology. The *Consorzio* considers this typology to be extremely relevant for having a product identifying specifically the Franciacorta wine cluster (informant from the *Consorzio*, personal communications). The Franciacorta Satèn deserves a dedicated description in promotional media:

Satèn is a trademark registered by the *Consorzio*. It is different from all other Franciacorta thanks to a lower bottle pressure, which confers to it unique and unmistakable characteristics. (Brochure: *Franciacorta...chiamalo per nome*)

Another theme consistently emerging from the *Consorzio*'s identity projections is the authoritative definition of the Franciacorta territory, its boundaries, and geomorphological characteristics. As previously discussed, the regulations are published in their integral version on the *Consorzio*'s website. Article 3 provides a specific description of the “the production area allocated to the production of the DOCG wine ‘Franciacorta’” ([www.franciacorta.net/disciplinare](http://www.franciacorta.net/disciplinare)). In addition to this legal definition, the boundaries and the specific characteristics of the Franciacorta territory are highly emphasized in all documents, also with references to the zoning research, which specifically identifies the geopedological characteristics of six vocational units within the territory (Figure 13). This is demonstrated in the following excerpts from the press kit and website:

The *Consorzio* has always considered geological, geomorphological and pedological research fundamental for a productive and effective high quality agricultural work. For this reason research on the territory has been promoted to study the different zones of Franciacorta and to identify their specific characteristics to develop a precision farming. (Press kit, 2010, p. 3)

The pedological characteristics of the territory can be grouped into six vocational units, with different soils [...] that lead to different vegeto-productive behaviors, different grape maturation dynamics, and different sensory characters of the wine bases. ([www.franciacorta.net/zonazione](http://www.franciacorta.net/zonazione))

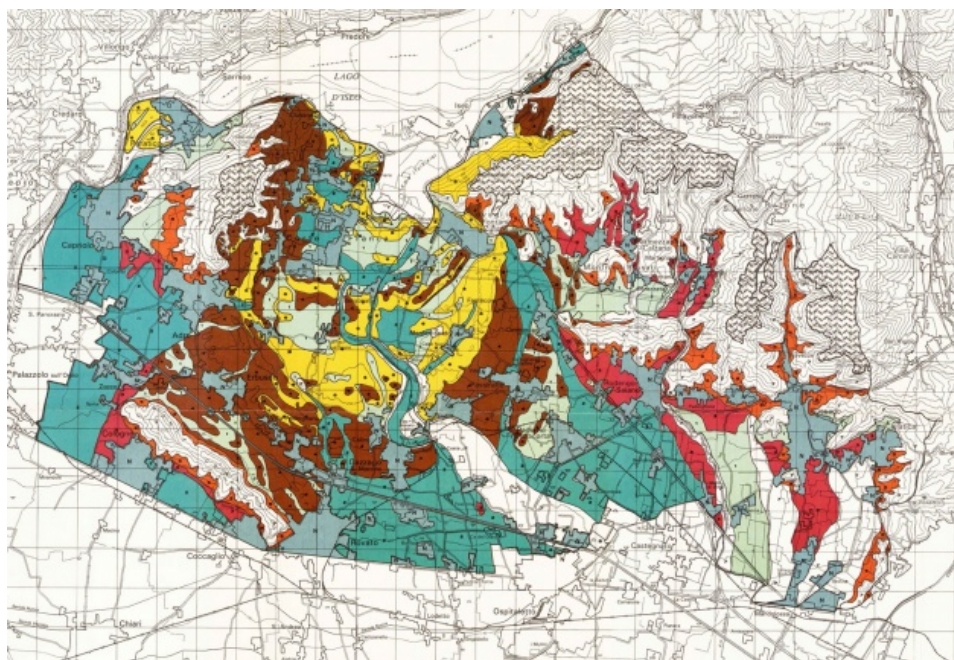


Figure 13. The Franciacorta territory and its zones (the *Consorzio*'s press kit and website)

Finally, authoritative verbal accounts go into the detail of labeling and packaging rules. The forbidden method designation and the mandatory presence of the name Franciacorta to represent the wine, the territory, and the method are continuously reiterated (see Section 6.1). The *Consorzio* also often emphasizes the packaging rules, which allow only certain types of bottle capacity, specific corks, and finally the Italian state wrap, guaranteeing certification and control:

[...] bottles are closed with the typical mushroom cork, secured by the wirehood. After the packaging, before commercialization, the Italian State sign—or wrapper—must be applied on every bottle, to complete the control procedure over all the Franciacorta *filière*. (Press kit, 2010, p. 8)

On the cork is always present the name Franciacorta.  
([www.franciacorta.net/glossario](http://www.franciacorta.net/glossario))

What is interesting is that these authoritative accounts are not specifically projected to internal stakeholders (e.g., wine-growers, wine-makers), but are an integrating part of documents and interviews directed to external stakeholders. In this way, the *Consorzio* pursues the twofold strategy to make the collective identity easily recognizable, creating



the image of an authentic and guaranteed product, but also emphasizes what makes Franciacorta unique per se, beyond each winery's production style (informant from the Consorzio, personal communications)

### **6.2.2 Acclaiming verbal accounts**

Beyond the technical characteristics of the production regulations and the protection and control activities performed, the *Consorzio* consistently describes the collective identity of the Franciacorta wine cluster through acclaiming verbal accounts. These focus on the historical achievements of the wine cluster; praise for those characteristics of the method that make Franciacorta a premium wine; praise for Franciacorta as a territory not only in terms of the terroir, but also as a beautiful destination; imagery created by positive values; and declared ambition for future achievements.

#### ***Historical achievements***

The narration of the history of the cluster developed around the milestones that characterized the growing success of Franciacorta, which was legally ratified by the increasingly prestigious denominations DOC, DOCG, and European law CE753/02. Given the short history and rapid development of the cluster, two other recurring themes about the history of the cluster are the “Franciacorta miracle” and the courage of the pioneering “enlightened entrepreneurs,” as exemplified by the following excerpt from an interview released by Maurizio Zanella, president of the *Consorzio*:

The even greater credit of the Guido Berlucchi [winery], when they produced the *Pinot di Franciacorta*, consisted in realizing a miracle not achieved by firms that had more history, tradition, resources and years, and that produced in Piedmont and Trentino, and that did not succeed in making their wines get off the ground in terms of distribution, image, and sales [Berlucchi succeeded] in proposing its wine as a recognizable and elitist product, in a time when a narrow Italian middle class refused to drink national quality products. They succeeded in breaking the spell of the French product, perceived as “the must,” the reference wine for knowledgeable and wealthy consumers. [...] Then even greater credit had many producers, [...] who were the first presidents, they had the merit to create the *Consorzio* and let it grow, to fight to establish it and to make this territory independent, and that having invested in this land and believing in it, gave their best with dedication and tenacity, [...] to create the first denomination of controlled and guaranteed origin for a classic method wine, suppressing the word *spumante*, and establishing severe production rules that nobody else in the world had, and

that created the prerequisites to elaborate an important product. Without these sacrifices and without those twenty producers that had the courage to set the basis for the development of Franciacorta, we would not be at the point we are today. (Sommelier.it, 2011)

The “few brave men” and their forward-looking investments are also emphasized on the *Consorzio*’s website. They founded Franciacorta and gave the imprinting for a brand new wine cluster collective identity:

The stages, beginning a very strenuous, were then burned in a few years, with the birth and rise of Franciacorta dizzying. One of the success of the "formula" of Franciacorta, paradoxically, was to have no tradition of ancient wine with which to relate. This allowed to operate only to achieve the best result without going through a historical influences that would have only delayed the growth process. In the late seventies the Italian wine was in turmoil, was born the era of production and consumption of different quality and entrepreneurs in Franciacorta already sensitive to this new demand, invested and pointed on the cultivation of the vine from which wine to obtain a soon to cross the territorial limits "of Franzacorta". And so from the interweaving of random situations and personal passion, study, business experience and investment of a few brave men and emulation which led him to do things better than others have done (in fact, to overcome them), has originated the current "phenomenon" called Franciacorta. (www.franciacorta.net/modern viticulture – English version)

The success of the cluster not only stemmed from the early phases of Franciacorta, but also the continuous achievements as emphasized through interviews and press kits, especially commenting on the collective’s yearly sales and events:

2011 has been a year of great satisfaction for the *Consorzio*. The appeal of Franciacorta succeeded to achieve increasingly eminent approvals. Over 11 million bottles sold, with a double-digit growth compared to the previous year, that confirms the appreciation of a wine which is by now defined as one of the best expressions of the made-in-Italy excellence. Considering the growing success in international markets as well, especially Japan and the US, now more than ever Franciacorta is ready for a brilliant international competition. (Press kit, 2012, p. 3)

### ***Ambition for future achievements***

The *Consorzio* often engages in statements acclaiming future strategies and objectives of the wine cluster. Future ambitions are of various types. First, there is the vision that depicts Franciacorta as an internationally renowned premium wine within the next 10 to 20 years:

When 15-year-old vines are 30 years old [...] we'll do great things. [Being young] Franciacorta misses a relevant number of harvests with the right vineyards to give an appropriate measure of its capabilities. The quality of Franciacorta in twenty years will be extraordinary, because we already have today important wines. We'll do an extraordinary step up in class, and therefore I'm very optimistic about our qualitative future. (Sommelier.it, 2011)

This vision is pursued through the technical commitment of the *Consorzio* to increase the average quality of Franciacorta wines:

Our intention is to experiment for the next 4 harvests with a reduction of Franciacorta production, decreasing bottles from the current 8600 units per hectare to 8000, going from the current rate of 65hl/ha to 60hl/ha. In order to achieve this result, beyond a softer pressing, we foresee dedicated actions like the reduction of grape production.[...] Grape decrease is useful to take the vineyard to maturity, preserving its physiological equilibrium to obtain a higher grape quality and consequently a higher wine quality. Exceeding grapes will be used to produce Curtefranca, or destined for other uses. (Press kit, 2012, p. 10)

The *Consorzio* also clearly communicates the objective to monitor collective performances in order to develop its strategies based on research as well as improve growth:

[The aim] is to set the basis to start a coherent and shared business strategy that allows us to keep growing, not only in size, but also in quality. In this perspective an economic observatory of Franciacorta has been created. The Franciacorta *Consorzio* is the first in the Italian wine-making industry to have access to data collected from its associates. ([www.Franciacorta.net/news](http://www.Franciacorta.net/news))

Finally, the *Consorzio* explicitly highlights the ambition of the wine cluster to support the sustainable development of the territory to maintain and possibly increase the match between the identity of the wine cluster and that of the territory, contributing to preserving its beauty and quality:

Also the new board [of the *Consorzio*] will commit to the preservation of the territory, to think of a Franciacorta that is able to protect and “export” its beauty, together with all local administrative bodies. The will to study and realize modern and efficient shared forms of protection of our territory gives the message that speaks of foresight, awareness, coherence, and quality. It is possible to improve the quality of our wine, but without the territory we go

nowhere. For this reason, we invested 250,000 euros to finance a study that investigates Franciacorta history, as a support to plan a possible and sustainable future. (Press kit, 2012, p. 10)

The *Consortorio* further projects the identity of an environmentally friendly group of firms, highlighting future achievements regarding the lowering of wineries' impact on the environment:

2012 – Given the attention always dedicated to the territory and to the environment, the *Consortorio* Franciacorta, first in Italy, started a voluntary programme for the autocontrol of gas carbon emissions. The calculator, shared at the international level, is called Ita.Ca©, it measures the dioxide track, and simultaneously provides the resulting indications to make production more sustainable. To date, more than 50% of the Franciacorta area has joined the project, and the aim of the *Consortorio* is to obtain a reduction of 1,200 tons of emissions within the next 5 years. (Press kit, 2012, p. 3)

### ***Praise of the method***

The positive traits of the collective identity are also highlighted by the *Consortorio*'s praise for all those technical characteristics that make Franciacorta a high quality premium or ultra-premium wine. These characteristics are not only specified within the production regulations, which are characterized by a very technical language, but also translated into plain descriptions that narrate how the wine is made and specify the costly and slow practices that make Franciacorta an exceptional wine, as shown in the following excerpts:

Like it happens for all quality wines, time and elaborations are long, meticulous and accurate. (Brochure: *Franciacorta...chiamalo per nome*)

Hectares allocated to Franciacorta DOCG production are 2800, and bottles sold in 2011 are about 11 millions: very small numbers, a niche of absolute quality, and increasingly searched by a growing number of renowned experts. A strength on which we constantly invest with commitment and passion. (Press kit, 2012, p. 10)

An oral narration on the website's homepage provides long, non-technical praise of the Franciacorta method:

Precious grapes harvested rigorously by hand [...] Every lot of this land has its history to tell [...] [In the cellar] nothing is left to chance [...] bottles seemingly anonymous are stacked [...] to let life within them make its course [...] and then everything is left to time, the only warrantor of the metamorphosis. Time is the absolute monarch in the cellar [...] with no discounts [...] In the silent cellars, enveloped in darkness, yeasts consume their bacchanal [acting like] a soundbox that transforms sound into music. (www.franciacorta.net – homepage video)

### ***Praise of the territory***

One of the pay offs of *Consorzio*'s communication is "Franciacorta, the Wine, the Land." In fact, the territory is not only described for its characteristics related to wine-growing. "The Land" is also depicted as a beautiful destination, with traits that are coherent to the described wine identity. Therefore, the *Consorzio* consistently projects acclaiming verbal accounts on the territory, which contribute to further defining the collective identity of the wine cluster.

The landscape is elegant and intense, like the bubbles of Franciacorta wine:

Small and sensual bubbles are shaped as if by magic [...] when touching the air their dance slows down [and they] carry [you] away over elegant landscapes, in a generous and trim nature across seasons, the rhythm of life and the intensity of history...in Franciacorta. (www.franciacorta.net/homepage video)

Audiences are invited to "taste" the Franciacorta land, together with its wines:

Franciacorta is a territory with a highly fascinating and attractive cultural and natural heritage, a territory to be discovered, tasted and breathed. (Brochure: Franciacorta...*chiamalo per nome*)

The *Consorzio* recently merged with the Association Strada del Franciacorta and strongly projects the identity of the territory as a wine tourist destination, drawing on its medieval and monastic heritage:

Franciacorta's intriguing name takes us back through history to the Corti Franche when, following the arrival of Cluniac monks, it was an area of free trade (curtes francae). (Brochure: *Franciacorta...chiamalo per nome*)

Franciacorta is a splendid region of Lombardy, a stone's throw from Brescia and within easy reach of the rest of Europe. Nature has over thousands of years sculpted this ancient land, creating a breathtakingly varied landscape

awash with color that yields its most prized treasure, the wine. Yet its history has been molded by man, who has toiled for centuries to create an impressive cultural heritage. The Associazione Strada del Franciacorta was set up to promote and preserve this heritage. ([www.franciacorta.net/countryside](http://www.franciacorta.net/countryside) and weather)

### ***Positive values***

Acclaiming verbal accounts not only include achievements and praise, but also a considerable expression of values (see Table 10). The dominant value in the communication of the *Consorzio* is trustworthiness or guarantees. This value emerges especially in all those parts of the documents where the *Consorzio* describes its certification activities and where it emphasizes all the characteristics that consumers could expect by a Franciacorta wine, given the tight control of the whole filière:

Franciacorta is produced according to a series of rules that constitute the basis upon which both the *Consorzio*, for what concerns its institutional duties, and the organization Valoritalia, appointed to the certification of the product, operate. These rules are set by the production regulations. Bottles produced violating these rules cannot be labeled Franciacorta, and therefore cannot use the state certification wrapper. [...] It is possible to identify each single bottle of Franciacorta by simply accessing the *Consorzio*'s website, [www.franciacorta.net](http://www.franciacorta.net), and introducing the code from the wrapper. In this way it is possible to know producers' names, the Franciacorta typology, how many bottles were produced in the same lot, and its specific characteristics. (Press kit, 2010, p. 9)

In addition to this value, which is more focused on the identity of the *Consorzio* than on the identity of the wine cluster, the *Consorzio* describes the collective identity of the group of wineries by projecting a set of values that depict Franciacorta as an innovative, excellent, and elegant wine. The role of technology is emphasized as something that helps and improves humanity's traditional competence.

Again man is the protagonist, it's he [...] that makes concrete the synthesis between territory and technique [...] Rituals narrate what men and technology together can achieve. (Homepage video)

Yet technology is not a substitute for human actions, especially in delicate phases like the grape harvest by hand and the mastery of "careful tastings" that lead to the "cuvée art" (Press kit, 2010, p. 5). Rather, technology offers innovative solutions to better support nature. Since their beginnings, Franciacorta entrepreneurs have relied on

research to investigate the properties of their territory (e.g., geopedological zoning) and on renowned consultants to increasingly improve their experimental wine-making. Hence private estates where wines were produced for friends were soon transformed into “oenological laboratories” ([www.franciacorta.net/storia](http://www.franciacorta.net/storia)). The *Consorzio* progressively added mandatory technological improvements to wineries, now defined as the “modern cathedral of oenological technology” (Press kit, 2010, p. 4).

Research is at the heart of innovative technologies, and collective research projects and academic partnerships are highly emphasized in the *Consorzio*’s communication:

The *Consorzio* is in constant dialogue with academic researchers to be able to consistently propose to its associates the most innovative technical solutions, responding to the needs of the very dynamic industry of wine-growing. (Press kit, 2010, p. 3)

Technology, together with competence, passion, and a unique terroir, contributes to the achievement of excellence. “Blend of passions” is the tagline chosen to support the new collective logo since 2010, and the passionate commitment of entrepreneurs and wine-makers is often emphasized in the description of associated wineries:

Many wineries are run by women who are passionate about wine. (Press kit: Franciacorta *in rosa*, p. 1).

[...] thanks to the love and commitment of old and new wine-makers, the characteristics of this wine are appreciated and renowned all over the world. (Brochure: Franciacorta...*chiamalo per nome*)

Extreme quality is strenuously highlighted in all texts, especially related to the Franciacorta method. Quality is also equated with “excellence,” which is not only a property of the wine and of the territory, but also is the culture of the whole wine cluster: “[we] interpret and spread the culture of excellence, of which Franciacorta is a natural ambassador” ([www.franciacorta.net/news](http://www.franciacorta.net/news)). The culture of excellence leads to a product which is unique, refined and prestigious, with a “peculiar sensory profile” (Press kit, 2010, p. 6).

The elegant Franciacorta is best consumed with a “traditional but refined cuisine” (Press kit: Franciacorta. *La Gastronomia del territorio si ritrova nelle cantine*, p. 1). The suggested pairings are sophisticated and including “sea bass and tuna tartare,” “liver

pâté,” “aragosta catalan lobster,” and “Tarte-tatin” (Press kit, 2010, pp. 11–12). Franciacorta wineries are often said to welcome wine lovers in “delicate tasting rooms,” or on verandas with “charming atmosphere,” immersed “in a striking scenery among vineyards surrounded by roses and roads flanked by poplar and olive trees” (Press kit: Franciacorta. *La Gastronomia del territorio si ritrova nelle cantine*, pp. 1–2). According to the *Consorzio*, wineries are trim and elegant places imprinting the product to be—that is, “it is better to grow up in a beautiful place than in a shoddy place” (Press kit: Franciacorta. *L’architettura delle cantine*, p. 1). The wine-makers are themselves lovers of refined tastes:

In Franciacorta wineries, precious treasures hide. Wines rest on *pupitres* for months and years. But not only wines. Sometimes wineries’ owners are real taste lovers. And not only for oenological taste. (Press kit: Franciacorta. *I tesori artistici delle cantine*, p. 1)

The *Consorzio* not only describes Franciacorta wineries as refined and stylish places, but also emphasizes their attention to technological improvement and innovation, while remaining in close contact with nature. Nature is at the basis of wine-making, and thus it is fully respected by estates’ innovative architecture as well:

[Wineries are built according to the] rules of environmentally sustainable architecture [...] [and they are] fabricated with the main aim of guaranteeing a resulting perfect mimesis with the surrounding environment, thus preserving the gorgeous sight on the wineries surrounding the building. (Press kit: Franciacorta. *L’architettura delle cantine*, p. 1)

Table 10: *Positive Values Communicated by the Consorzio (number of sentences)*

VALUES	WEBSITE (2010)	PRESS KIT 2010	TOTAL
TRUSTWORTHINESS/GUARANTEE	154	23	<b>177</b>
PASSION	77	7	<b>84</b>
QUALITY/EXCELLENCE	16	13	<b>29</b>
INNOVATION/TECHNOLOGY	18	9	<b>27</b>
ELEGANCE/REFINEMENT	9	14	<b>23</b>
COMPETENCE	6	8	<b>14</b>
UNIQUENESS	2	10	<b>12</b>
ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLINESS	-	11	<b>11</b>



### 6.2.3 Categorizing verbal accounts

Categorizing verbal accounts involves all those emergent themes related to the comparative definitions of the Franciacorta collective identity. Specifically, I identified two recurrent themes emerging from the *Consorzio*'s verbal accounts. The first one comprises statements defining who Franciacorta is based on the similarities to other collective identities. Meanwhile, the second theme includes statements defining who Franciacorta is not by negatively comparing it with other extant collective identities. The *Consorzio* implicitly emphasizes the similarity of Franciacorta to other prestigious Italian wines, like Barolo and Brunello di Montalcino, by strongly communicating the early achievement of the legal denominations DOC just one year later than those prestigious wines. The emphasis on the DOCG in 1995 focuses on the fact that Franciacorta was the first Italian sparkling wine to achieve it:

Associate wineries [...] sell mainly the principal product of this wine-making area, the Franciacorta, the first and unique Italian brut produced exclusively by bottle refermentation to achieve the DOCG—Denomination of Controlled and Guaranteed Origin—from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1995. (Brochure: Franciacorta...*chiamalo per nome*)

Franciacorta is described as a different wine because of its restrictive regulations and long aging times:

Only for Franciacorta the season of yeasts is so long, at least 18 months, and for the Millesimati much much more...[...] no other wine is attended with such a great care [and no other bottles] are touched so many times, one by one. (Homepage video)

Figure 14, taken from the *Consorzio*'s website at the end of the method description, emphasizes the differences in regulations for various classic method sparkling wines:

Caratteristiche delle maggiori zone di produzione di Metodo Classico in Europa					
Vini con la rifermentazione in bottiglia	Varietà di vite	Rese ad ettaro		Irrigazione	Periodo minimo affinamento sul lieviti (mesi)
		Uva	Vino		
FRANCIACORTA	Chardonnay, Pinot Nero, Pinot Bianco (max 50%)	100 qli	65%	Solo di soccorso	Franciacorta: 18 Satèn e Rosé: 24 Millesimato: 30 Riserva: 60
Champagne	Pinot Nero, Pinot Meunier, Chardonnay	140 144 qli	65%	Assente	15 mesi Millesimato: 36
Trento	Chardonnay, Pinot Bianco, Pinot Nero, Pinot Meunier	150 qli	70%	Solo di soccorso	15 mesi Millesimato: 24 Riserva: 36
Oltrepò Pavese	Pinot Nero (min 70%), Chardonnay Pinot Grigio, Pinot Bianco	100 qli	60-65% Rosé	Solo di soccorso	15 mesi Millesimato: 24
Cava	Macabeo, Xarello, Parellada, Vitigni minori locali	120 qli	66%	Assente	9 mesi Riserva: 15 Gran riserva: 30

Figure 14. Comparative table of classic method wines (www.franciacorta.net/metodo)

European law CE 753/02 is often used to positively compare Franciacorta to champagne and cava and include it in the group of the 010 privileged products that obtained this European recognition:

[In 2002] Franciacorta is allowed to use only the word Franciacorta, with no other mention (as the specific traditional mention DOCG). There are only 10 denominations enjoying this privilege in Europe, and among them only 3 products obtained by bottle refermentation: cava, champagne, and Franciacorta. (www.franciacorta.net/storia)

The Franciacorta case is described as unique in Italy because the excellent result is not the heritage of past traditions and merits:

A unique case in Italy, Franciacorta producers have been able to introduce and match the technical updates, development, and experimentation with tradition, territory valorization, and dynamic marketing laws, never looking over their shoulders, never believing that history, typicality, and accomplished quality could be essential characteristics, like protection, origin, and the continuous search for product quality are. (www.franciacorta.net/viticultura moderna)

The uniqueness of Franciacorta is strenuously emphasized by the *Consorzio* and exemplified by the attempts to distance it from generic labels like *spumante*, *Talento* (see Section 6.1), and even bubbles:

[DOCG denominations] represent a minority in the huge melting pot called “*spumante*,” on which I already expressed my opinion by explaining that its commercial success [...] is given by an anonymous product, with a few exceptions, that owes its performance only to very low unitary production costs. [...] I would like to reaffirm that the word “*spumante*” is dead, and it makes no sense to use it in this occasion [annual Italian sales] and in many others. (letter from Maurizio Zanella to *Civiltà del bere.com* 21/01/2011)

The *Consorzio* also clearly communicates who Franciacorta is not, emphasizing for instance that Franciacorta will always correspond to a specific territory and will not grow much quantitatively, as happened to other Italian white sparkling wines:

I’m talking of Prosecco, where an area that could be managed and grow very well, the area of Conegliano Valdobbiadene DOCG, has now a DOC cousin five times its size, and with the same name. And a name that functioned, that was among the most dynamic on the global market, is now transferred to producers of other provinces in Veneto and Friuli, who will use the name to make products of very different quality. (Interview released by Maurizio Zanella, President of the *Consorzio* to *Sommelier.it*, April 3rd 2011)

Finally, the *Consorzio* projects categorizing verbal accounts by building on events and partnerships that emphasize both the inclusion of Franciacorta in elegant, exclusive groups and membership in recognized quality associations. For instance, the first Festivals Franciacorta around Italy were held in glamorous places like Capri and Forte dei Marmi, and Franciacorta recently became the official wine of Milan Fashion Weeks:

After the success of Milano Moda Uomo last January, Franciacorta models were again on Milan runways, for the Women Collections Autumn/Winter 2013–2014. For the second year partnership with the National Chamber of Italian Fashion, Franciacorta is back with renewed enthusiasm to make each toast exclusive and to accompany, with elegance and refinement, one of the most waited for glamorous moments of the year. From February 20 to February 26, at the VIP Lounge of Palazzo Giureconsulti, the guests of the Chamber of Fashion and of the pret-à-porter Maisons will have the opportunity to meet and taste the different Franciacorta typologies, Brut,

Extra Brut, Rosé, Satèn, Pas Dosé, and to appreciate some prestigious *millesimati*. ([www.franciacorta.net/news](http://www.franciacorta.net/news))

At the same time, the *Consorzio* proudly announces its membership in the Alliance of Cooks and Producers of the Slow Food Presidia:

The alliance between Franciacorta and Slow Food Italy starts with a first great success. The excellence of Made in Italy finds a new confirmation and expression in the agreement signed by the two actors for 2012, that found us together in the first meeting of the Alliance of Cooks and Producers of the Slow Food Presidia, and that will take us through the year to the most significant events dedicated to quality food and agri-food. ([www.franciacorta.net/news](http://www.franciacorta.net/news))

These partnerships support the projection of the identity of Franciacorta as a glamorous wine, built on sound and ratified quality.

## CHAPTER 7. WINERIES' IDENTITY PROJECTIONS: THREE EMERGING COMBINATION STRATEGIES

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This chapter illustrates the findings emerging from the qualitative analysis of interviews, documents, and observations collected from the embedded units of analysis—that is, the sample of wineries selected after the preliminary quantitative content analysis. From the original theoretical sample selection, three wineries were eventually dropped, two because of non-availability to participate on their part and one because of data saturation. Therefore, nine wineries from the original selection remained in the sample, and four additional ones were added during data collection, according to the qualitative logic of following up on unexpected emerging findings (see Table 11).

Table 11: *Final Sample*

Winery	Group	Size (bottles produced per year)
1	2	250,000/500,000
2	2	250,000/500,000
3	2	250,000/500,000
4	2	250,000/500,000
5	2	150,000/250,000
6	2	250,000/500,000
7	2	150,000/250,000
8	2	> 1 million
9	1	> 1 million
10	1	250,000/500,000
11	1	> 1 million
12	1	> 1 million
13	n/a	250,000/500,000

This chapter first provides a description of the emergent data structure, and then proceeds with a description of the three identity combination strategies that emerge from the cross-case analysis of the sampled wineries (within-case profiles are available in Annex 4).

## 7.1 THE EMERGING DATA STRUCTURE

The qualitative analysis of wineries' identity projections comprised an inductive thematic analysis of written documents, interview transcripts, and observation notes. Chapter 4 provided a detailed description of the empirical data collection and analytical process; however, this first section provides an overview of the final data structures that emerged from the inductive and iterative processes of analysis.

I grouped the emerging second-order themes under the theoretical dimensions visual identity markers and verbal accounts, taking inspiration from Elsbach's (2003) categorization of impression management symbolic actions, as I did for the collective identity projections of the *Consorzio*. Both visual identity markers and verbal accounts were further grouped under the overarching theoretical dimensions collective identity projections and individual identity projections, based on the comparison with the themes that emerged from the written and oral communication of the *Consorzio* (see Chapter 6). More specifically I grouped all those themes that wineries use to describe the wine cluster identity as well as their identity and those that corresponded to the themes that emerged from the analysis of the communication of the *Consorzio* under the overarching dimension collective identity projections (Figure 15). Meanwhile, under the overarching dimension individual identity projections (Figure 16), I grouped all those themes that wineries use to describe their identity and that do not correspond to the themes emerging from the identity projections of the *Consorzio*.

It is worth specifying that individual identity projections are not distinctive by definition. In fact, some emerging individual themes are coherent with the themes communicated by the *Consorzio*, but they are not overlapping (i.e., they are not the same themes, but they are indeed coherent with the collective identity reservoir). For instance, when a winery describes its leading products, not only referring to the Franciacorta typology, but adding details on the specific wine, I coded it as individual identity projection. Yet this description can be conforming to the collective Franciacorta identity when it supports the collective authoritative and acclaiming accounts or it can be distinctive when it emphasizes differences from the collective authoritative and acclaiming verbal accounts.

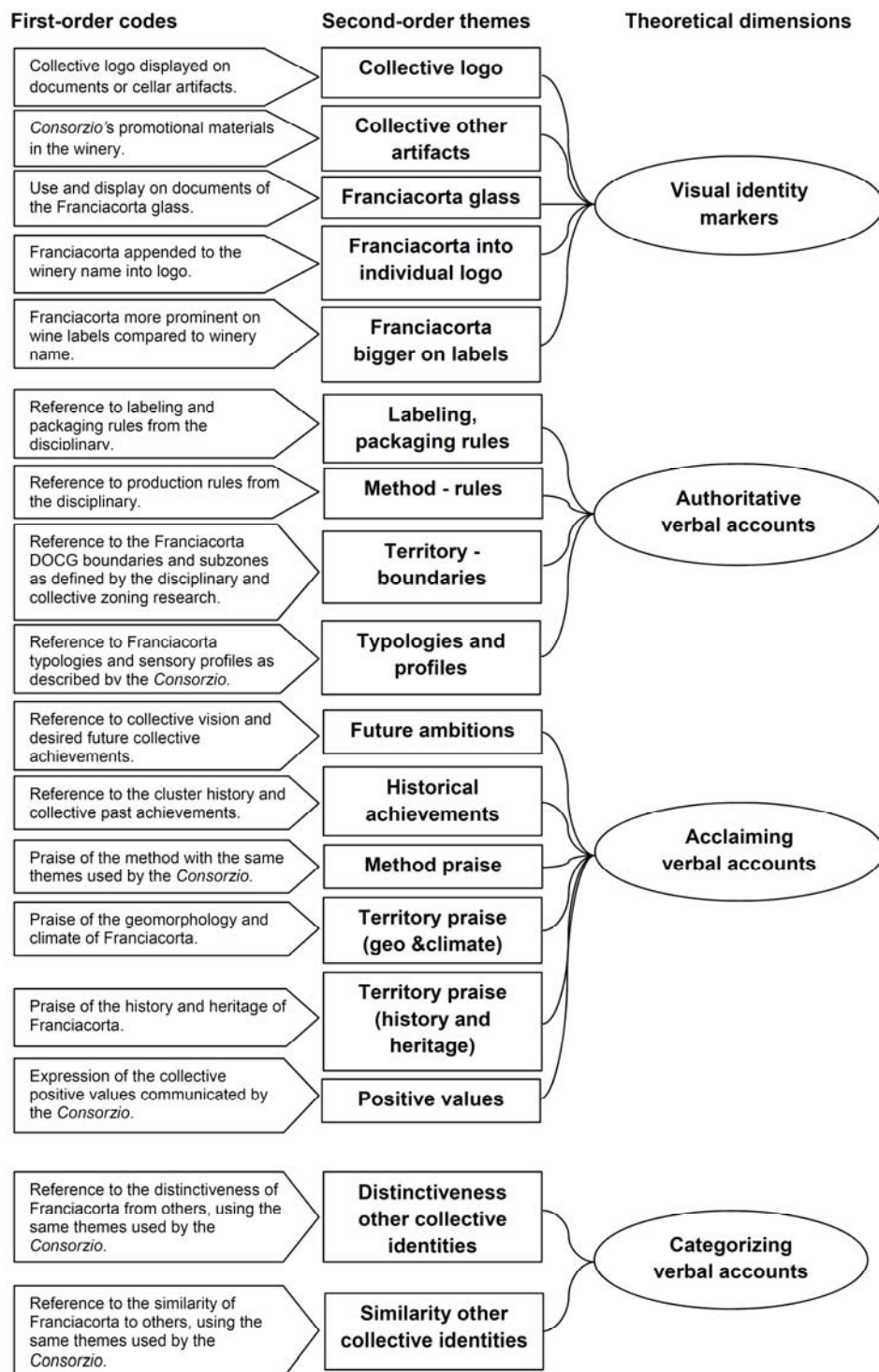


Figure 15. Data structure overarching theoretical dimension: Collective identity projections

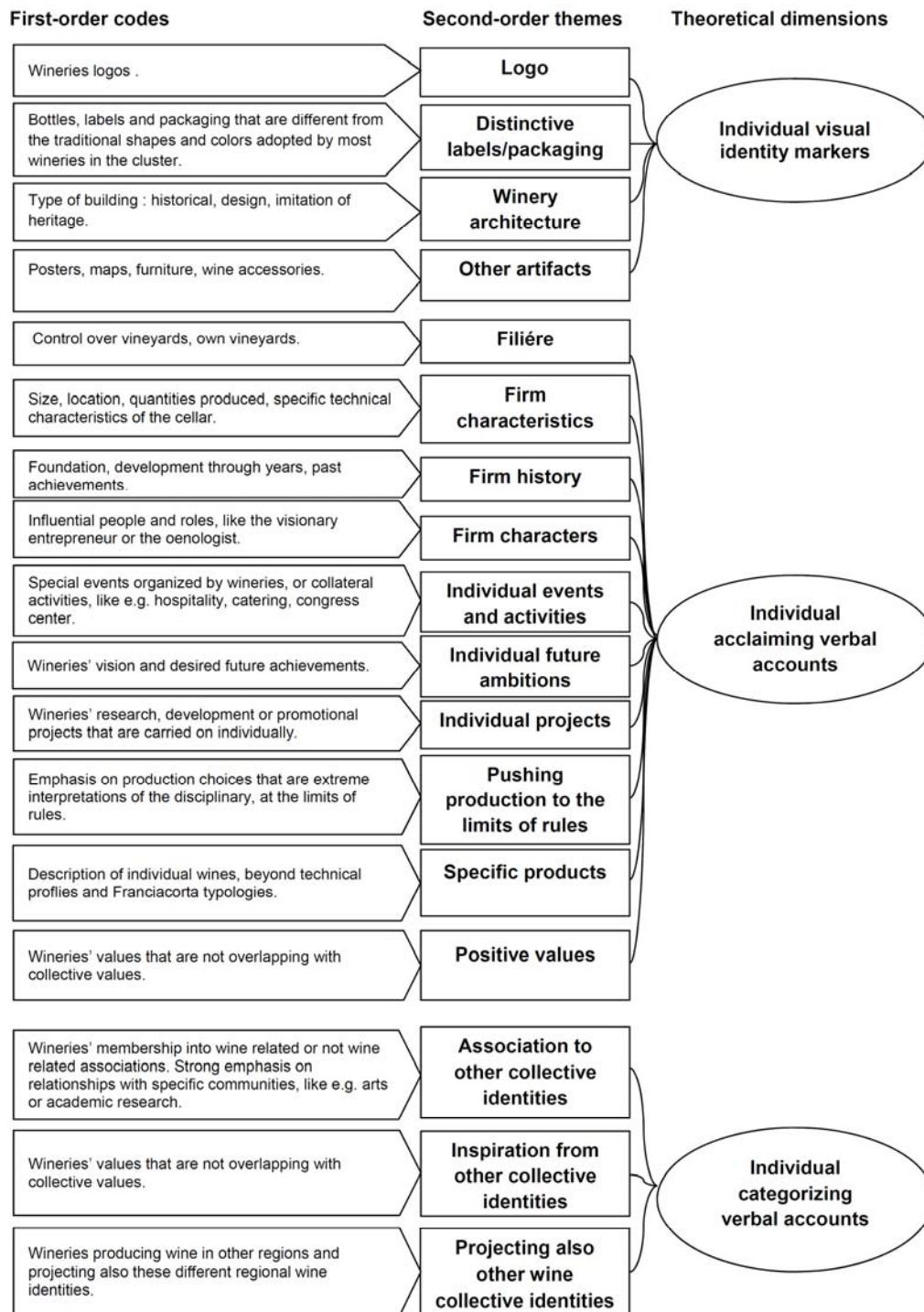


Figure 16. Data structure overarching theoretical dimension: Individual identity projections



As in the analysis of the *Consorzio*'s documents, I grouped verbal accounts under three separate dimensions. I called all those themes that refer to the authoritative "defining identity story" (Wry, Lounsbury, & Glynn 2011, p. 450) communicated by the *Consorzio* authoritative verbal accounts, which comprise method rules, labeling rules, description of the territory legitimate boundaries and zones, and the institutionalized Franciacorta typologies and sensory profiles. The authoritative verbal accounts dimension appears only under the collective identity projections dimension because, by definition, they label verbal accounts that authoritatively define the Franciacorta collective identity. I then called all those themes that create a positive image of the Franciacorta wine cluster or of individual wineries by emphasizing positive characteristics, achievements, and values and by generally evoking a positive imagery acclaiming verbal accounts. Finally, I merged Elsbach's (2003, p. 299) definition of "verbal accounts" and "categorizations" into a dimension called categorizing verbal accounts. This final dimension groups together all those themes that represent verbal statements defining who the Franciacorta wine cluster is and who individual wineries are by comparing them positively or negatively to other collective identities.

In addition to identifying themes that describe wineries' identities, I explored data looking for different intents of identity projections, focusing on legitimacy and distinctiveness claiming (Figures 17 and 18). It is worth noting here again that the aim of the analysis was to identify the intention to acquire legitimacy or distinctiveness as emerging from organizational texts, and not the actual evaluation given by stakeholders. I could identify the intent of identity projections in two ways: from explicit intents declared by interviewees and tour guides and from the emphasis on conforming or differentiating themes into wineries' identity projections. Concerning legitimacy seeking, two main intents emerged: (a) maintain and/or increase the legitimacy of the whole regional cluster and (b) foster an easy categorical recognition of the organization through clear affiliation with the regional cluster (categorical status). I grouped all those themes relating to the importance of emphasizing Franciacorta before wineries' identities and to the relevance of keeping coherent collective identity projections among wineries under the theoretical dimension maintain and increase collective legitimacy.

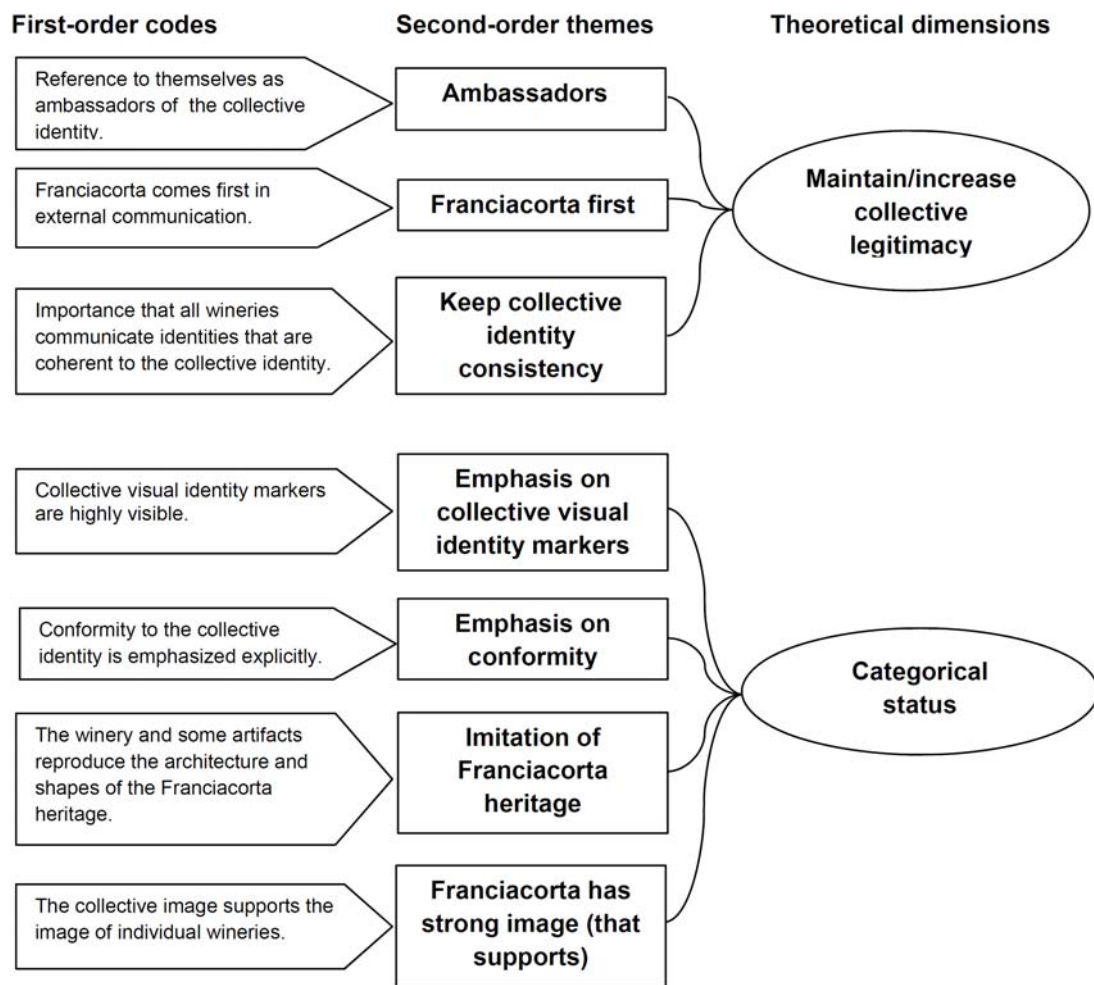


Figure 17. Data structure overarching theoretical dimension: Legitimacy claiming

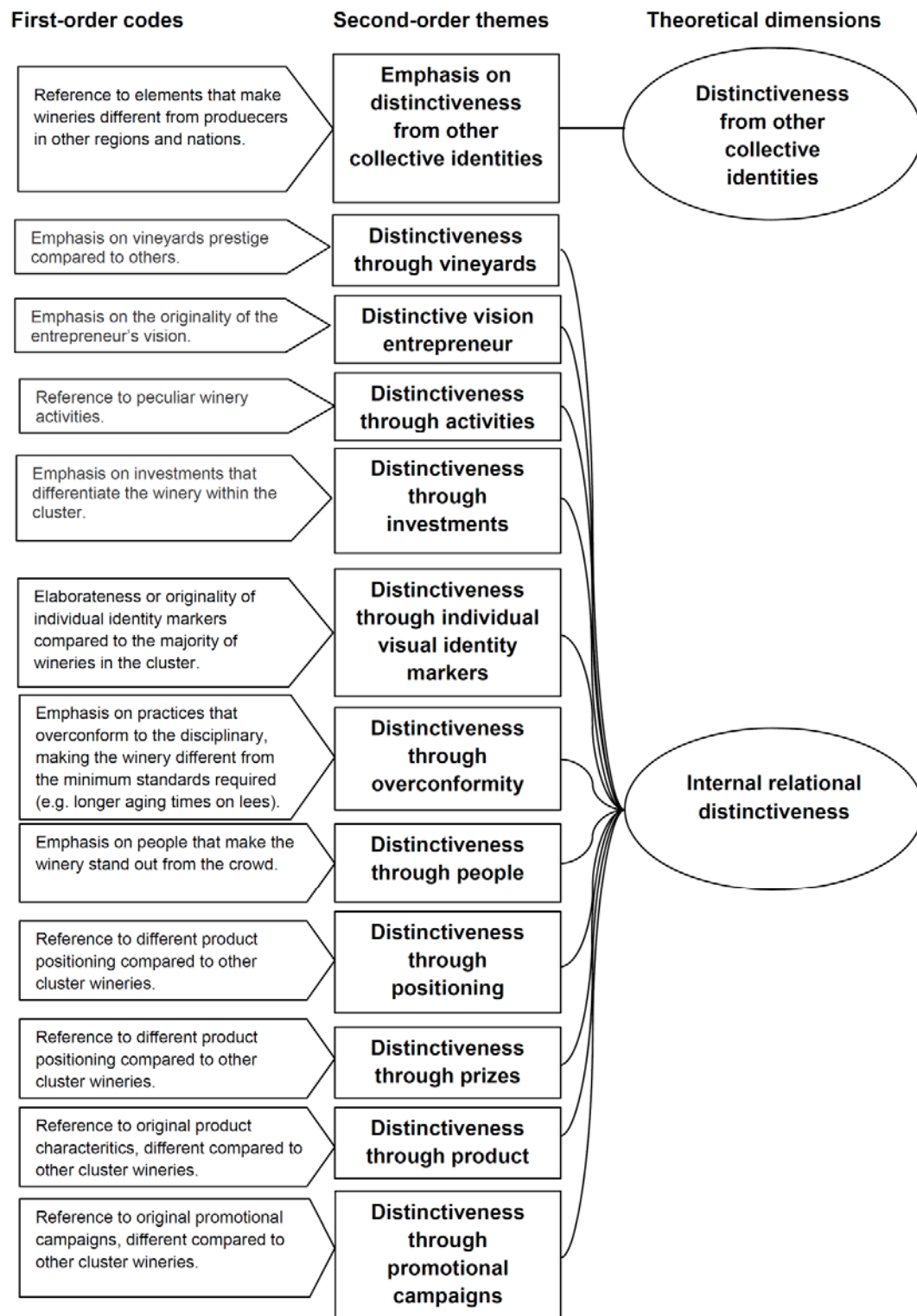


Figure 18. Data structure overarching theoretical dimension: Distinctiveness claiming

In fact they can be recognized as cues that wineries communicate to increase the cognitive recognition of their collective identity from external audiences (Navis & Glynn, 2010; Suchman, 1995). I then added under this dimension the theme of ambassadors, which refers to those themes emphasizing the role of leading firms in acting as ambassadors for the collective identity.

Under the theoretical dimension categorical status, I grouped all those themes that refer to wineries' identity projections that explicitly emphasize the conformity to the collective identity or the membership to the wine cluster, allowing wineries to benefit from the status recognized by external audiences, given by the belongingness to a regional wine group (Zhao & Zhou, 2011). I also added under this theoretical dimension all those themes that refer to the relevance given by wineries to categorical status.

As organizations need to claim peculiar characteristics that specify what is unique and distinctive about them (Albert & Whetten, 1985) in order to be actually selected by external audiences among the range of possible alternatives (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001), I coded all those themes that emphasized wineries' differences from others under two theoretical dimensions: (a) distinctiveness from other collective identities, grouping themes that emphasize the collective identity differences from other regional clusters, and (b) internal relational distinctiveness, grouping themes that emphasize the winery identity differences from other firms in the same cluster. These two theoretical dimensions reflect distinctiveness as it is described in social identity theory, whereby individuals use group affiliations to both enhance self-esteem by inter-group comparison and simultaneously satisfy their need for individuation by seeking within-group comparisons (Brewer, 1993).

The preliminary analysis indicated that demographic data alone could not explain the different emphases that wineries put on collective and individual identity themes in their identity projections (see Chapter 5). Therefore, I constantly compared data with existing theories on antecedents of legitimacy and conformity (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001; van Halderen et al., 2011, see Section 4.1) to categorize emerging wineries' characteristics that I could subsequently link to their identity communication behavior. I identified 15 second-order themes, which I grouped into five theoretical

dimensions and then into the two overarching theoretical dimensions “social role” and “identification” (Figures 19 and 20). Social role refers to the role that a winery has in the socio-cultural regional cluster context; it comprises the theme’s status (self-definitions into wineries’ identity projections), historical and strategic role in the wine cluster, and friendship and family ties among wineries.

Identification includes the dimensions’ cognitive identification and affective commitment. Cognitive identification groups all those themes that refer to the self-categorization as group members (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Tajfel, 1978), including wineries’ self-descriptions as being similar to their perception of Franciacorta prototypes, claimed membership to the wine cluster, description of their role as Franciacorta members, and degree of identity overlap between the winery identity and the Franciacorta collective identity. Affective commitment groups included all those themes that refer to emotional involvement (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Tajfel, 1978) toward the Franciacorta wine cluster, such as enthusiasm of being part of the group, love for the group and for the territory, pride of being part of the group, and finally personal involvement when the group is praised or criticized (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

Furthermore, I triangulated the themes’ status and cognitive identification with additional measures obtained during field data collection. The auto-definition of status was triangulated with mentions of the status of specific wineries occurring in other interviews, and with wineries’ ratings in wine guides (Hugh Johnson’s Pocket Wine Book; I Vini d’Italia - L’Espresso). Emerging themes of cognitive identification were triangulated with an assessment of the practices, strategies, and values actually overlapping between the content of wineries’ communication and the *Consorzio*’s communication, taking inspiration from Peteraf and Shanley (1997), who suggested measuring firms’ identification with a strategic cluster by checking for managers’ value overlap and actual similarity to the cluster prototypes.

After the first round of analysis was completed, the final emerging data structure was used as a guideline to refine the thematic coding of all the materials during a second round of analysis.

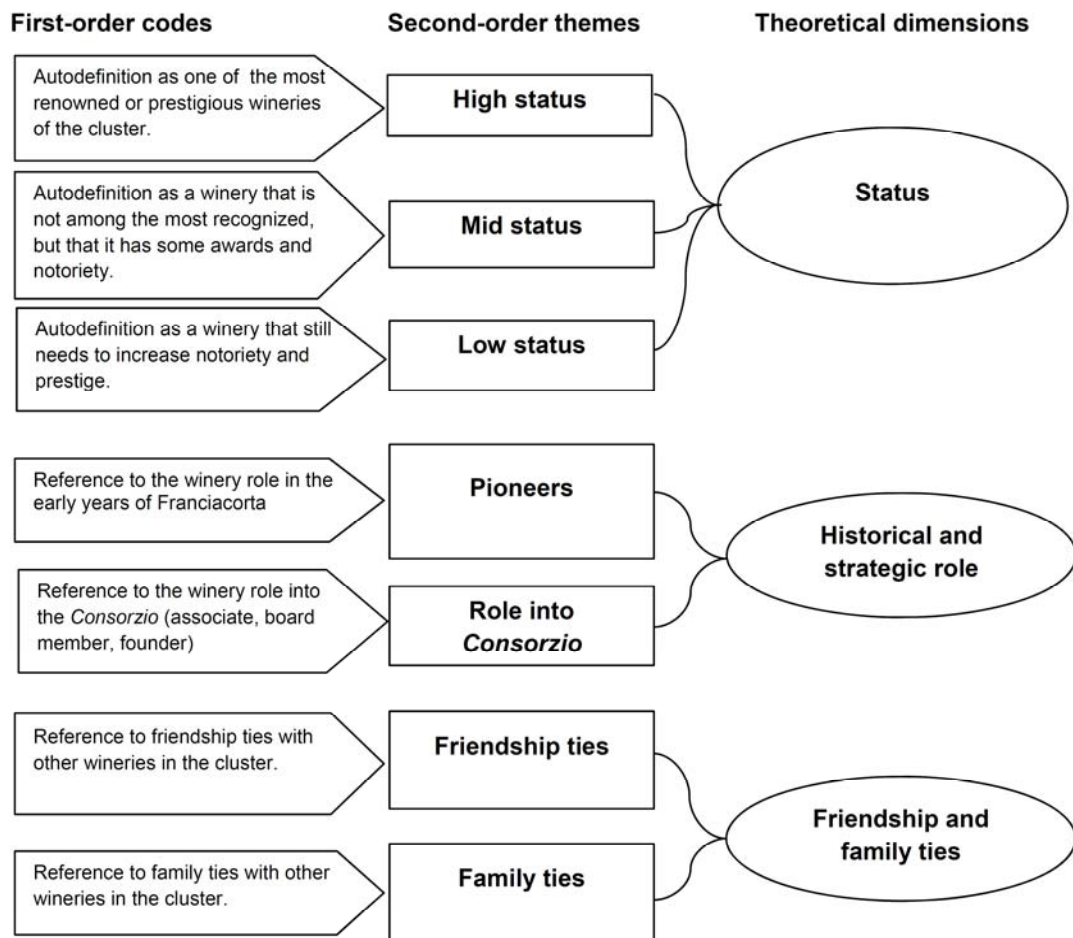


Figure 19. Data structure overarching theoretical dimension: Social role

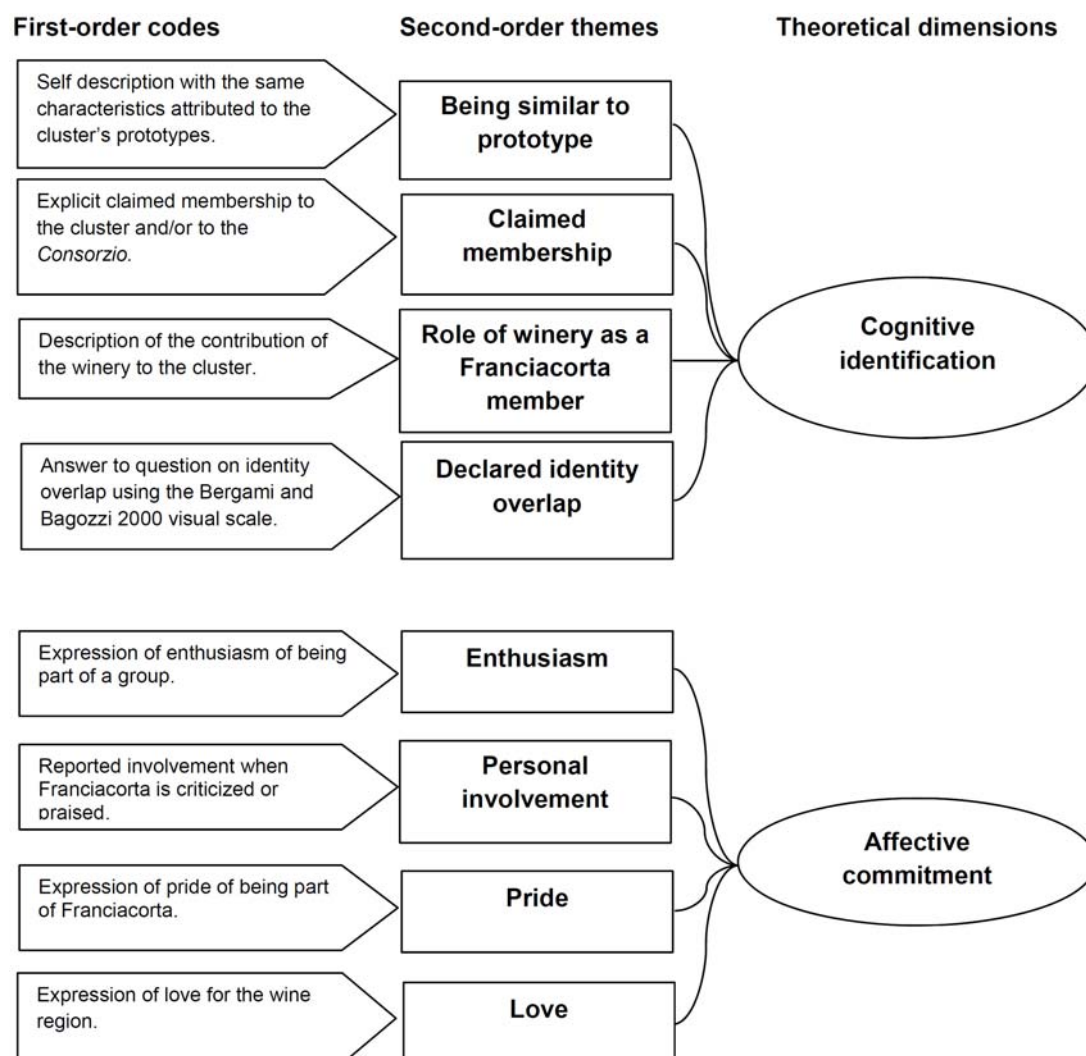


Figure 20. Data structure overarching theoretical dimension: identification

## **7.2 THREE EMERGING STRATEGIES OF IDENTITY COMBINATION**

The data structure presented in the previous section emerged from the incremental analysis of the communication of the *Consorzio* and of the 13 wineries included in the sample. In a first phase of the analysis, I focused on each winery to determine which collective identity themes were used into their identity projections and to let individual identity themes, intents, and other themes emerge. For each individual winery, I compiled a short descriptive text of edited notes and considerations based on post-data collection notes and within-case analysis findings (see Annex 4). For each winery, I identified the most prominent identity themes projected and how collective and individual identity themes were combined into their communication, triangulating data from interviews, observations, and documents. I then linked the identity themes to the intents for legitimacy and distinctiveness on the basis of co-occurrence in data. Finally I drew a profile of the winery based on the demographic data available from the preliminary analysis, data on identification emerging from interviews, and finally the emerging themes concerning the winery's social role in the wine cluster context.

Although the overlap of progressive data collection and incremental analysis favored continuous comparisons among wineries and between emerging considerations and extant theory, I added a systematic comparison of wineries' identity projections after compiling single wineries' profiles (short summaries are available in Annex 4).

As the first research question concerned how regional cluster firms combine collective and individual identity elements into their external communication, I started the comparison with each winery's combination of collective and individual identity projected themes. I clustered wineries with similar identity projections and I was able to identify three groups showing three different patterns of the combination of collective and individual identity themes.

The first group of wineries shows a pattern of identity projections characterized by a predominance of collective identity themes, both for what concerns visual identity markers and verbal accounts. They also project individual identity themes, although these are specifications in line with the rules and the imagery projected through collective identity themes. Furthermore, collective and individual identity themes are



highly interpenetrated into communication, making it difficult at times to distinguish when these wineries are talking about themselves or when they are talking about the wine cluster. I labeled this type of identity combination “blending.” Webster’s Third New International Dictionary (Gove, 1961, p. 233) defines *to blend* as “to mingle, combine, or associate so that the separate constituents or the line of demarcation cannot be distinguished.” This definition matches perfectly the way the first group of wineries combine collective and individual organizational identity themes in their external communication.

The second group of wineries shows a pattern of identity projections characterized by a predominance of individual visual identity markers combined with a predominance of collective verbal accounts. These wineries project their identity considerably through their individual brands, especially through visual identity markers. In their verbal accounts, individual identity themes are more projected compared to the first group, but they are also coherent with collective identity themes. I decided to name this type of combination “personalizing.” Webster’s Third New International Dictionary (Gove, 1961, p. 1687) defines *to personalize* as “to mark as to identify as the property of a particular person.” In this sense, I defined these wineries’ combination of collective and individual identity themes as personalizing because the collective identity themes are made personal and mainly embodied in the individual wineries’ identities, like it happens in politics, where the term *personalization* is used to describe the emphasis on politicians that embody the identity of the party they are representing.

The third group of wineries shows a pattern of identity projections characterized by a predominance of individual identity themes, both visual identity markers and verbal accounts. These wineries emphasize their unique interpretation of the territory and the product. Although respecting the regulations, their individual identity themes often do not support the collective identity imagery projected by both the *Consorzio* and the other two groups of wineries. Beyond the wine name, the collective identity themes projected by these wineries comprise mainly the name Franciacorta as an identity marker in wineries’ logos and the core practices prescribed by the regulations. Considering that these wineries project together collective identity elements that make their membership

in the Franciacorta wine cluster evident as well as individually distinctive identity themes, I labeled this third type of combination “shifting.” According to Webster’s Third New International Dictionary (Gove, 1961, p. 2094), *to shift* means “to change the form or condition of: TRANSFORM.” This definition applies to the third identity combination strategy inasmuch as the distinctive individual meanings that these wineries add to the label Franciacorta could contribute to shifting the meanings of the collective identity.

The rest of this section presents the three identity combination strategies and links them to their intents for legitimacy and distinctiveness as well as wineries’ characteristics in terms of demographic data, social role, and identification.

### **7.2.1 Blending**

Wineries adopting a blending identity combination strategy communicate their identity by consistently projecting collective identity themes and intertwining them with some individual identity theme that is coherent with the collective identity communication of the *Consorzio*. This group comprises six wineries, of which five were included in the theoretical sampling and one added during the course of data collection.

#### ***Visual identity markers***

In general this group of wineries does not put great emphasis on visual identity markers, neither collective nor individual (Table 12). The collective Franciacorta logo is usually displayed at least once in their documents or in winery rooms. The individual logo is obviously projected in documents and displayed at the entrance of wineries, but it is worth noting that all these wineries have the Franciacorta name included in their individual logos, following the winery name. Therefore, although the collective logo is not projected much, the individual logo itself combines the individual and collective identity markers. The name Franciacorta is always evident on labels, being the name of the product itself, but in some wine labels the name Franciacorta is even more prominent than the individual winery name. The same is true of boxes and other packaging materials. The bottles used have the classical features of standard champagne bottles, except in one case, where colors are more prominent than usual.

The Franciacorta glass is used by almost all these wineries and often represented in photographic documents as well. Other collective artifacts, like the *Consorzio*'s posters and maps, are sometimes shown in the cellar environment.

Finally, it is interesting to note that other individual physical artifacts, like the winery architecture and surrounding vineyards, become visual identity markers that project both the collective cluster identity and the individual winery identity. In fact, most of these wineries are located in historical buildings that were typical Franciacorta farmsteads in the 19<sup>th</sup> century or even in ancient buildings of the regional heritage (Figure 21). Some of them kept ancient art pieces in the cellar. As narrated by the *Consorzio*, these wineries are finely restructured and their vineyards are like gardens, often surrounded by red rose bushes (Figure 22).



*Figure 21.* Typical winery architecture (Winery 3 press kit)



*Figure 22.* Roses surrounding vineyards (Winery 6 website)

Table 12: *Blending: Visual Identity Markers (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 6	W 10	W 13
COLLECTIVE VISUAL IDENTITY MARKERS	<b>collective logo</b>	Yes in documents	Yes in documents	Yes in documents and observation		Yes in tasting room	
	<b>collective other artifacts</b>	Roses	Roses	Roses	Roses, posters. Franciacorta prominent on packaging.	Book, posters, maps	
	<b>Franciacorta glass</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<b>Franciacorta in logo</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (bigger)	Yes	Yes
	Franciacorta bigger on labels	Yes top bottles	Yes (not top bottles)		Yes		
INDIVIDUAL VISUAL IDENTITY MARKERS	<b>individual logo and name</b>	Franciacorta included	Franciacorta included	Franciacorta included	Franciacorta included	Franciacorta included	Franciacorta included
	distinctive labels and packaging			Partially shape		Yes (labels)	
	individual other artifacts			Artifacts reminiscent of the 1960s. Art gallery.	Arts. Marketing campaign picture.	Arts. Distinctive wine labels and packaging.	
	<b>winery architecture</b>	Typical Franciacorta farmstead	Small industrial building	Restructured historical building	Typical Franciacorta farmstead	Restructured historical building	Typical Franciacorta farmstead

### ***Verbal accounts***

These wineries consistently project collective identity themes through their verbal communication (Table 13). They tell a story that is almost only collective, and they also often use the pronoun “we,” referring to the whole group of regional wineries.

They all emphasize in their communication the strict rules that characterize the regional production, through both dedicated educational sections in their documents and their individual production description, especially during cellar tours. Here are two examples taken from two different wineries' website and cellar tour:

The Franciacorta method. It considers the use of noble grape varieties, the Chardonnay, the Pinot Blanc and the Pinot noir, and the second fermentation in bottles. The entire grapes, harvested by hand, are softly pressed. The separation of musts coming from different vineyards and an attentive degustation allow for defining the *cuvée* at spring. [It goes on with all the steps of the method]. (Winery 10 website)

We put [the *cuvée*] in bottles with lees and sugar for the second fermentation in bottle. It is important to notice that the bottle where the wine referments is the same one that will go on the table [...] Once the fermentation is over in almost three months, it starts the most fascinating phase of the classic method. Lees die and cells disintegrate releasing their molecules into wine, those are the ones that create flavors. Therefore the more the wine stays in contact with lees, the more this influence will be. The Franciacorta disciplinary considers the minimum required aging times on lees. (Winery 2 cellar tour)

In the same way they describe the boundaries of the Franciacorta territory and locate themselves within these boundaries.

Beyond projecting the collective authoritative identity themes, these wineries emphasize even more the collective acclaiming identity themes, which are absolutely overlapping with the acclaiming themes communicated by the *Consorzio*, especially in terms of collective historical achievements, praise for the method, and positive collective values. These wineries engage in long tales of how the cluster was born, with descriptions of the legendary people and events that marked the fast growth of the region from an unknown area principally dedicated to the iron and steel industry, to being considered one of the top wine-making regions in Italy. For example, one wine-maker narrated the following at the very beginning of a cellar tour:

I believe that [Franciacorta] made giant steps through the last 20, 25 years, things that other districts in Italy haven't done, despite having greater historicity compared to us, because if you talk about Brescia 20 years ago the iron rod, iron, weapons, cutlery came to your mind. When you talk about Brescia today, Franciacorta comes to your mind, hence we overturned a

concept of territoriality and therefore I believe that today this district talks about wine and passion. (Winery 3 cellar tour)

Furthermore, they proudly claim their cultural roots, the mentality of a territory created by a strong entrepreneurial propensity, and serious and competent hard workers who have created a renowned wine cluster starting from a previously unknown *terroir*:

Here comes the Lombard entrepreneurship, never hit-or-miss, and thus not with the naive and repetitive mentality of the farmer, who doesn't want to innovate, but with an entrepreneurial mentality [Franciacorta developed]. (Winery 6 Entrepreneur, personal communication, November 30, 2011)

Some of these wineries, especially in their oral communication (interviews and cellar tours), emphasize the collective's future ambitions, almost expressing a vision for a desired collective identity, as these examples show:

One of the objectives of the *Consorzio* and ours is to achieve 25 million bottles. We have to place them in foreign markets and create a Franciacorta taste. (Winery 3 cellar tour, October 31, 2011)

A new era has just started, that is to work for the correspondence of what we and the *Consorzio* call, *il* Franciacorta and *la* Franciacorta. The territory is called Franciacorta and the wine is called Franciacorta; therefore, it is necessary and mandatory that these two elements, the wine and the territory, become one and that they communicate and work together. (Winery 10 Entrepreneur, personal communication, December 7, 2011)

The method is not only described, but continuously praised using the same arguments and sometimes almost the same words found in the *Consorzio* promotional documents.

Here are two examples taken from two cellar tour presentations:

A bottle before entering the pack is touched about 60 to 70 times. This makes you aware of the work that stands behind a Franciacorta. (Winery 3 cellar tour, October 31, 2011)

Consider that three years pass between the harvest and the sale, and this also explains the higher cost, the capital investments...it is not a continuous production that immediately goes on the market. (Winery 6 cellar tour, June 4, 2012)

Great emphasis is given to the Franciacorta soil, which is described in detail and praised for its unique characteristics, as in this nice description given by an entrepreneur:

Moraine hills are an absolutely horrible soil for nutrition, but the grapevine is like a beautiful girl, she wants to be on diet, this is how the grapevine is. She is very chic, very snobby, and so she plunges her roots into these moraine ground down to three meters, because even if snobbish, something she must absorb. And she assumes the few nutritional elements she finds, carbonates, mineral salts...and going back to the grape, we find under the same international name, Chardonnay, Pinot blanc and Pinot noir [...] something very different from the Chardonnay of Veneto, from the Chardonnay of Sicily or from the Chardonnay of New Zealand. (Winery 6 Entrepreneur, personal communication, November 30, 2011)

These wineries project a positive imagery about Franciacorta and about themselves by expressing the same positive values emerging by the documents of the *Consorzio*, especially regarding excellence, passion, and innovation and technology. For instance, one communication manager described his winery philosophy:

We focus on the development of new technologies to improve quality. Therefore, our aim is not to grow in size but in quality; this is our philosophy. (Winery 2 Communication Manager, personal communication, October 30, 2011)

This was a surprising result as most of these wineries in the preliminary phase were included in the group communicating the collective values less often. This result could be explained by the fact that, in many cases, oral verbal accounts expressed values much more often than written documents.

Individual identity themes are much less projected in these wineries' verbal accounts (Table 14). They mainly refer to the history of the winery, telling stories about their foundation, the cellar, and how they started to produce Franciacorta wine, often recounting their activity in transforming from general farmers to wine producers. However, their individual stories are generally narrated in the context of the development of the regional wine cluster. One entrepreneur described her firm as follows:

It's an historical winery in Franciacorta, because it was properly founded in 1968, the year after the DOC was awarded to Franciacorta. It was born thanks to my mother's will, [name of the mother], who was in the group of the



pioneers of this territory. [She was a] close friend of Guido Berlucchi, it was really the beginning, the birth of Franciacorta as we now know it, and this friendship with Guido Berlucchi convinced my mother that it was time to focus on wine-making. This was a traditional Lombard farmhouse, specialized in grains, cattle, and also partially in wine, but since 1968 we focused only on wine-making. (Winery 1 Entrepreneur, personal communication, October 30, 2011)

Other individual identity themes principally focus on describing the specific winery characteristics, like size, yearly production, *filière*, and products. Individual positive values are not much projected by these wineries, and they basically affirm the identity of small wineries, where family, tradition, and craftsmanship are considered part of the collective values.

We want to be a [small] firm...not becoming a factory, [...] maybe if possible also produce something more but always aiming at maximum quality [...] staying a family business [...] where everybody has a voice. (Winery 2 Communication Manager, personal communication, October 30, 2011)

In some cases, the territory itself—the word *terra* comprising the specific soil and the heritage of a land—becomes a self-expressing value, as these examples from two different wineries' websites show:

We are vintners, our idea of excellence starts from the terra [soil]. (Winery 13 website)

The care, the passion and the culture for this terra [land], a refined encounter between men and vines. (Winery 10 website)

These values, together with the collective ones, are also supported by the self-categorization of these wineries into other collective identities, mainly wine-related national associations, which are coherently projecting the same values and reinforcing the identity projections of small, excellence-oriented wineries.

Table 13: *Blending: Collective Verbal Accounts (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 6	W 10	W 13
COLLECTIVE AUTHORITATIVE VERBAL ACCOUNTS	labeling and packaging rules	Yes	Yes		Yes		
	method rules	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	territory boundaries and zones	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	typologies and profiles	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COLLECTIVE ACCLAIMING VERBAL ACCOUNTS	future ambitions	Yes		<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	
	historical achievements	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	method praise	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	territory praise (geo & climate)	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
	territory praise (history & heritage)	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
	positive values	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
COLLECTIVE CATEGORIZING VERBAL ACCOUNTS	distinctiveness other collective identities	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	similarity other collective identities	Yes	Yes		<b>Yes</b>		

Table 14: *Blending: Individual Verbal Accounts (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 6	W 10	W 13
INDIVIDUAL ACCLAIMING VERBAL ACCOUNTS	<b>filière</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	firm characteristics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	<b>firm history</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	firm characters	Yes			Yes	Yes	
	<b>individual events activities</b>	Yes		Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	
	individual future ambitions	Yes	Yes				
	individual projects				<b>Yes</b>		
	<b>specific products</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes		<b>Yes</b>		Yes
	value authenticity			Yes			
	value craftsmanship	Yes			Yes		Yes
	value culture				Yes		
	value entrepreneurship				<b>Yes</b>		
	<b>value family</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<b>value territory/terroir/heritage</b>				<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	value time	Yes					
	<b>value tradition</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIZING VERBAL ACCOUNTS	<b>association with other collective identities (not regional wines)</b>			<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	inspiration other collective identities					Yes	

### ***Intent***

The main intent of these wineries' identity projections is to support and increase the legitimacy of the Franciacorta collective identity, whereas distinctiveness is mainly pursued through the comparison with other wine collective identities while internal relational distinctiveness is not much emphasized (Table 15).

Winery tours and presentations always start with talks on Franciacorta; only after that comes the winery. This is confirmed by interviewees, who emphasized that this is how they want to present themselves:

...first of all we talk about Franciacorta, and then it comes [winery name].  
(Winery 10 Entrepreneur, personal communication, December 7, 2011)

The emphasis on collective visual identity markers is related to both the achievement of categorical status and the increase of consumers' recognition of Franciacorta as a brand. These wineries want to be recognized as Franciacorta wineries because they conform to the rules, which require efforts and investments, and because they know that these efforts and this membership allow them to be easily legitimated as premium wine producers. Thus, they want even more to maintain and increase the strong recognition and legitimation of the collective identity, as one communication manager indicated:

The very fact that you identify Franciacorta is relevant, because at first sight sometimes you chose one thing and not the other. (Winery 2 Communication Manager, personal communication, October 30, 2011)

Most interviewees stated that it is extremely important for all producers in the cluster to continue talking about Franciacorta first and narrating the story of the exceptional *terroir*, the cutting-edge technical research together with the maniacal attention on selection and quality, and the exclusivity of the small quantities produced. Many entrepreneurs also expressed concern for some messages communicated by other wineries that, in their opinion, risk weakening the imagery of Franciacorta that most wineries are communicating and that built the success of the region.

The interviews also demonstrated that being different from other wineries of the cluster is not the priority. Of course, entrepreneurs deem it relevant to invest in the recognition of their own individual brand, but this is usually postponed to the relevance of getting

Franciacorta recognized and appreciated. Coherently with what emerges from interviews, these wineries do not significantly emphasize identity themes that could make them stand out from the group of Franciacorta wineries; sometimes they claim their specificity for what concerns the location of vineyards or some specific choices in production and machinery investments. They mention prizes and sometimes also the superior quality achieved by over-interpreting the regulations; especially common is the extension of aging times on lees. However, these details are still coherent both with the collective rules and the imagery of the cluster. Instead, they emphasize distinctiveness by remarking on all those elements that make them distinctive from wineries of other regions, and to do so they use the same themes the *Consorzio* projects to claim Franciacorta distinctiveness. Especially recurring is the theme of the difference between being Franciacorta and being Prosecco:

[...] because Prosecco is produced in a way, and Franciacorta another way, therefore a minimum of explanation is needed also with those clients [who are not experts], to let them appreciate the difference. (Winery 3 Communication Manager, personal communication, October 31, 2011)

They are particularly concerned with explaining the differences in “what we do”—that is, the characteristics of the method of production and the related regulations, which are “the most restrictive in the world” for their product category. This is evident, for instance, in the starting point of a cellar tour:

Half an hour to let you understand the difference between Franciacorta and other wines produced with different methods. (Winery 2 cellar tour, November 27, 2011)

Table 15: *Blending: Legitimacy and Distinctiveness (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 6	W 10	W 13
MAINTAIN/INCREASE COLLECTIVE LEGITIMACY	Franciacorta first	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	keep collective identity consistency	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>		<b>Yes</b>	
	emphasis on collective visual identity markers	Yes	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	
CATEGORICAL STATUS	emphasis on collective visual identity markers	Yes	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	
	emphasis on conformity	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	Franciacorta has strong image		<b>Yes</b>	Yes			
DISTINCTIVENESS FROM OTHER COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES	distinctiveness from other collective identities	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
INTERNAL RELATIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS	distinctiveness through vineyards						<b>Yes</b>
	distinctiveness through activities						Yes
	distinctiveness through investments			Yes			
	<b>distinctiveness through over-conformity</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	
	distinctiveness through people					Yes	
	distinctiveness through prizes		Yes	Yes			<b>Yes</b>
	distinctiveness through production details		Yes		Yes	Yes	
	distinctiveness through promotional campaigns				<b>Yes</b>		

### ***Demographics, social role, and identification with the cluster***

Wineries in this group are small and medium sized (from 250,000 to 500,000 bottles produced per year); they are all family owned and local properties. They were all founded before the birth of the *Consorzio*, and they were active during the first years of Franciacorta (1960s and 1970s) or during the years of exponential growth (1980s). All of them have, or had until recently, strategic positions in the *Consorzio* as members of the board or presidents. They self-define themselves as mid-status wineries within the cluster, and this self-definition is further confirmed by citations by other interviewees and ratings in wine guides (Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book; I Vini d'Italia L'Espresso). During interviews, representatives from the wineries often referred to friendship ties with other wineries in the cluster, especially to other historical wineries. Some of them are also connected by family ties to other wineries.

Interviewees declared a big or a complete identity overlap between the winery and the regional identity. These high levels of cognitive identification were further confirmed by themes emerging from both oral and written communication. For instance, all these wineries explicitly declare their membership to the cluster or to the *Consorzio*, emphasize conformity to collective rules (see Table 16), and describe the role of the winery in the regional cluster context. Some wineries also give a description of cluster prototypes that consistently resemble their self-description. Finally, all identity projections show a consistent overlap of practices, strategies, and values between these wineries and the collective practices as described by the *Consorzio*.

Entrepreneurs and other winery members also show a considerable affective commitment toward the regional cluster and the territory. They feel personally involved when someone criticizes or praises Franciacorta, such as when other regional producers and critical journalists question their authenticity, attributing the success of the cluster to sly marketing investments. Entrepreneurs take these accusations personally and become quite passionate about the issue, stressing how it is authentic to make a strong investment in an industry where results come years later, how it is hard to throw away grapes to respect the regulations and the collective philosophy of excellence, and how it is bad to be perceived as non-authentic when your family, your firm, and your territory

completely overlap. The following passionate apology of authenticity demonstrates the identification and affective commitment of one entrepreneur:

The original drive that made me start talking about Franciacorta is that I live here, I was born here, I was here as a kid, I saw it changing, I saw the birth of the *Consorzio*...that is, my life has all been here, thus this is a very strong identity, which is both organizational and personal, you see, I'm not somebody coming from Milan to become the manager here. I was born here, I spent all my summers here in this farmhouse, and I remember when my daughters were born because I remember the grape harvest dates.... (Winery 13 Entrepreneur, personal communication, June 8, 2012)

The enthusiasm of being a cohesive passionate group, the pride of being Franciacorta wineries, and the love for the territory are other recurring themes in these wineries' identity projections, further showing the affective commitment of entrepreneurs and wine-makers.

It is the Franciacorta pride, as we producers call it; first of all there is the Franciacorta pride, the pride of being in Franciacorta and of producing Franciacorta. (Winery 2 Communication Manager, personal communication, October 30, 2011)



Table 16: *Blending: Social Role and Identification*

OVERARCHING DIMENSION	DIMENSION	SECOND- ORDER THEMES	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 6	W 10	W 13
SOCIAL ROLE	STATUS	mid status	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	HISTORICAL/ STRATEGIC ROLE	pioneers	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes
		role in <i>Consorzio</i>	Founder Board	Board	Board	Founder Board	Founder Board	Founder Board
	FRIENDSHIP AND FAMILY TIES	friendship ties	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
		family ties			Yes	Yes		
IDENTIFICATION	COGNITIVE	being similar to prototype	Yes	Yes				
		claimed member- ship	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		role of winery as a Franciacor ta member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		declared identity overlap (scale from Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000)	H, com- plete	G, very big	F, big	G, very big	G, very big	F, big
		practices overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		strategy overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial
		value overlap	Partial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	AFFECTIVE	enthu- siasm		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		personal involve- ment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		pride	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		love						Yes

### 7.2.2 Personalizing

Wineries adopting the personalizing identity combination strategy project noticeably individual visual identity markers. In fact their visual winery brand identity is well developed and incorporated into all documents and physical artifacts. This strongly

individual visual communication is combined with a considerable projection of verbal collective identity themes and with individual identity themes that clearly conform to the collective ones. This group comprises four wineries, all coming from the theoretical sample developed after the preliminary phase.

### ***Visual identity markers***

The visual identity communication of these wineries is much more professional and sophisticated compared to all the other wineries in the collective. It is immediately visible that these wineries have made consistent investments in the development of their corporate visual identity systems and that each document and artifact is coherently branded. This makes their individual visual identity much more salient than the collective Franciacorta identity (Table 17). Collective visual identity markers are not actually absent at all; however, they practically disappear before the grandeur and pervasiveness of individual markers.

Winery logos are pervasive and highly visible in documents, but also within estates and cellars. They are depicted or carved in spectacular places of the cellar or of the estate, such as on a big heliport in front of the cellar entrance or on church-like wooden doors that separate the tasting room from the wine-making room.

Beyond the logo, there is an extreme emphasis on other visual artifacts that characterize each individual winery (Figures 23, 24, and 25). Wineries are magnificent places; some are located in historical buildings, but most are newly designed, with contemporary architecture. Sculptures created ad hoc for wineries by famous contemporary artists, glowing packaging lines are some of the artifacts that visually project the identity of these wineries to visitors, that emphasize the contrast between traditional pieces and barriques and technological and design artifacts, which are also reproduced in most corporate documents.

In addition, the features of bottle packaging become a visual identity marker for most of these wineries; in fact, they adopt different interpretations of the champagne bottle or label shape to characterize their production and make them highly recognizable according to other wineries' interviewees.



*Figure 23.* Contemporary art in cellars (Winery 9, picture taken during observation)



*Figure 24.* Design of cellar interiors (Winery 9, picture taken during observation)



*Figure 25.* Tradition and technology within cellars (Winery 8, picture taken during observation)

Table 17: *Personalizing: Visual Identity Markers (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 8	W 9	W 11	W 12
<b>COLLECTIVE VISUAL IDENTITY MARKERS</b>	collective logo	Yes	Yes, in the winery		Yes, only website
	collective other artifacts	Yes, posters	Yes, books in the winery		
	Franciacorta glass			Yes (with firm name)	Yes (with firm name)
	Franciacorta in logo			Yes (not always)	Yes
	Franciacorta bigger on labels				
<b>INDIVIDUAL VISUAL IDENTITY MARKERS</b>	<b>individual logo and name</b>	Yes, pervasive	Yes, pervasive	Yes, pervasive	Yes, pervasive
	<b>distinctive labels and packaging</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	<b>individual other artifacts</b>	Yes, posters, books, pictures, cellar furniture	Yes, especially artifacts	Yes, especially artifacts	Yes, especially promotional materials
	<b>winery architecture</b>	Historical building	Design winery	Design winery	Design winery

### *Verbal accounts*

Despite the highly individual orientation of visual projections, the actual content of most verbal accounts is highly conforming to the collective identity (Tables 18 and 19).

Great emphasis is put on the method practices and rules, especially in oral communication during cellar tours, but also in dedicated educational sections of websites. These wineries describe the extreme rigor of the regulations and the exceptional terroir in all their promotional material, especially in terms of what concerns wine-growing and wine-making practices that highly resemble the *Consorzio's* publications:

In the winter following harvest, we begin the “*cuvée* trials”: over 200 base wines are tasted, to determine the character of the future Franciacortas. After the *cuvée* is bottled, the historic cellars will host the bottles for 18 to 60 months, while the wine is re-fermenting and then maturing in the bottle. (Winery 8 website, English version)

In addition, collective acclaiming themes are effectively communicated, praising the method and the uniqueness of the Franciacorta territory:

The term *terroir* evokes per se green landscapes, gentle hills sunny slopes, geometric layout designed by lengthy rows, people devoted to a passion for the places and traditions of their land. A *terroir* is therefore a concrete, tangible place defined by many factors: geography, soil, water and microclimate. A real and life-filled concept that also has a cultural dimension tied closely to its community. Franciacorta, a morainic basin south of Lake Iseo, an excellent *terroir*. With, from its origins, a viticultural vocation that expresses itself in grapes and hence in wines with special organoleptic properties, inimitable and easily identified. (Winery 9 website, English version).

Individual identity themes are much more present in these wineries’ verbal accounts compared to the ones projected by wineries adopting the blending combination strategy. However, in this group as well, individual identity themes are highly coherent with the collective Franciacorta rules and imagery. For some specific themes, like historical achievements, future ambitions, and positive values, the projection of collective and individual identity themes is almost overlapping. In fact, these wineries narrate in the first person the evolution of the territory, which parallels their same evolution. These wineries tell about the birth of the cluster and the “Franciacorta miracle,” as many call the rapid success of the territory.

Like many pioneers, taking their own roads with the clarity of their inner dreams and a burning desire to fulfill them, that young man, too, was following a personal intuition. In 1979 [name of entrepreneur] planted the first five rows of a vineyard having 10,000 vines per hectare (2.5 acres) and in Franciacorta initiated a type of grape-growing at the time considered rash and revolutionary: very dense, with minimal distance between the vines and extreme selectiveness. And this was only the beginning of a route that Franciacorta then ambitiously undertook: distinguishing itself with the severest production regulations in terms of selectivity and qualitative rules. (Winery 9 website, English version)

These wineries often use the word “destiny” to describe the evolution of the cluster from poor agriculture to excellent wine-making. These are exemplary excerpts taken from two different wineries’ websites:

Destiny. No one then could have imagined that these waves of rolling hills described by historian Gabriele Rosa, a land with a humble agriculture, noble villas, and monasteries, would become, in but half a century, a great vine-filled garden, cradle of Italy’s most celebrated sparkling wines. (Winery 8 website, English version)

[...] Because saying Franciacorta today, means declaring with pride and confidence a great love for wine, the cultivation and culture of a dream, of a destiny’s sign. (Winery 9 website, English version)

Individual wineries’ visions include collective ambitions and projects:

The vision is once again proposed by [name of manager]. “I imagine a Franciacorta knowing how to farm, defend and evaluate its own land heritage, composed of many specific realities, and we shouldn’t forget it.” Turning the vision into a concrete proposal: “I think of a series of ambitious projects, with ideas someone could define as virtuous, such as thinking about a prestigious oenology school based on Franciacorta model and method.” (Winery 12 winery book, English version)

Similarly, these wineries express the collective values both as values of the territory and as their leading values. One website discussed a celebration book for the 50-year anniversary of the winery:

[Long list of journalists’ names] tell of the virtuous transformation of a territory, of an entrepreneur who transformed his dream in the engine of a territorial economy [...] of the innovation of bubbles suited to all courses, of a young visionary entrepreneur [...] of excellence, of country gentlemen, of the origin of a territory. Simply, they tell of Franciacorta” (Winery 8 website)

A recurring theme is that of the successful winery entrepreneur, which again—despite being an individual theme—often becomes the vehicle to communicate those values that are both collective and individual. The following example is from a winery’s website describing the entrepreneur’s and corporate philosophy, using the same words and values that the *Consorzio* uses to describe the collective philosophy of excellence:

Taking opportunities to create the excellence. A strong point for [name of entrepreneur]. In this way [name of winery], from its foundation, has been able to fully express and realize this philosophy. [...] Through research,

infrastructures, education and culture we have consistently pursued quality. And this land, to which all our commitment went, reacted as it had never done before. (Winery 9 website)

Some individual values that are not overlapping with the collective ones are also projected, but with much less emphasis, and usually they are peripheral supports to the collective core values.

Compared to wineries adopting the blending combination strategy, these wineries communicate much more about their specific products, projects, and events, which again are much coherent with collective identity themes. In many cases, these individual themes are even used as an occasion to show the over-conformity to collective rules and values, as in the following examples:

[Name of winery] is member of the *Consorzio* and it respects the regulations, it interprets and stiffens the rules according to its own corporate style. (Winery 11, cellar tour, December 16, 2011)

Here is the [name of product], [name of winery] keeps it on lees 50 to 60 months. Think about the richness, and also the costs....that's why then it doesn't cost 10 euros. (Winery 12, cellar tour, January 14, 2012)

Categorizing identity themes are clearly present in these wineries' communication. In particular, they emphasize their association with the social world of high culture and arts through partnerships with theatres, artists, and universities. At the same time, they associate themselves with the worlds of luxury and wine professional excellence through the communication of their hospitality properties and their membership to prestigious wine and food associations.

As with all the other individual identity themes, categorizing verbal accounts define the individual identity of these wineries while simultaneously communicating the values and the imagery that are typical of the collective identity.

Table 18: *Personalizing: Collective Verbal Accounts (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 8	W 9	W 11	W 12
<b>COLLECTIVE AUTHORITATIVE VERBAL ACCOUNTS</b>	labeling and packaging rules				Yes
	<b>method rules</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	territory boundaries and zones	Yes		Yes	Yes
	typologies and profiles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>COLLECTIVE ACCLAIMING VERBAL ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>future ambitions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>historical achievements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>method praise</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>territory praise (geo &amp; climate)</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	territory praise (history & heritage)	Yes	Yes		
	<b>positive values</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>COLLECTIVE CATEGORIZING VERBAL ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>distinctiveness other collective identities</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	similarity other collective identities			Yes	



Table 19: *Personalizing: Individual Verbal Accounts (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 8	W 9	W 11	W 12
INDIVIDUAL ACCLAIMING VERBAL ACCOUNTS	filière			Yes	Yes
	<b>firm characteristics</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes		Yes
	<b>firm history</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	<b>firm characters</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>individual events activities</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	individual future ambitions	Yes			
	individual projects		Yes	Yes	Yes
	<b>specific products</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	value authenticity	Yes			
	value consistency	Yes			
	<b>value craftsmanship</b>			<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	value creativity				Yes
	value culture		Yes		
	value entrepreneurship		Yes	Yes	
	value heritage	Yes			
	value honesty	Yes			
	value joy				Yes
	value territory/terroir/heritage		Yes		
	value time	Yes	Yes		
	value tradition			Yes	
	Value youth				Yes
INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIZING VERBAL ACCOUNTS	<b>association with other collective identities (not regional wines)</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	inspiration other collective identities	Yes			
	projecting also other collective identities (regional wines)	Yes		Yes	

### ***Intent***

This group of wineries definitely stands out from the group of Franciacorta wineries through individual visual identity markers, especially because of their elaborateness and prominence. At the same time, these wineries convey important elements of the collective identity through verbal accounts, both using collective identity themes and conforming with individual identity themes (Table 20).

These wineries contributed to building the Franciacorta wine cluster and emphasize their role as collective ambassadors:

[Winery name] is a company symbolizing a land, maker and protagonist of Franciacorta success. (Winery 11 winery book, English version)

Now that the collective identity is gaining legitimacy and status, they still want to support it. They relate the collective effort to impose the name Franciacorta over the more general *spumante*, which they do not like because it is an umbrella term for all the Italian fizzy products and does not recognize the peculiarity of the Franciacorta territory and method. They are aware that the collective identity is a key supporting element for their individual legitimacy—maybe not so relevant in those markets where their individual brand is already established, but certainly in new complex markets:

Unfortunately [the winery brand is stronger than the Franciacorta brand], and to me there should instead be a nice competition, meaning that the brand Franciacorta should also be aligned to individual wineries' brands. In fact under an individualistic point of view you say "how nice," but it is a myopic perspective, it is a perspective that assumes that we only have to sell our product in Northern and Central Italy, and in this way you don't build a future. In the provision of future markets and sceneries it is a failing perspective and that could destroy a brand in few years, because champagne demonstrated it, today the name champagne is stronger than its wines' names and individual brands. (Winery 11 Communication Manager, personal communication, December 16, 2011)

Furthermore, the legitimacy provided by the collective identity is an essential element for supporting wineries that are approaching their maturity phase so as to exploit a categorical status not so relevant in the first decades of their lives, but that could become increasingly important, as this entrepreneur explained:

Piacenza hills has long produced wine, but they never perfected their production. If [name of firm] were in Piacenza probably it would have had the same development until three, four, or five years ago, then it would have stopped inevitably, both in dimensions and in qualitative appreciations, because [name of firm] in Piacenza, doing the very same things for what concerns promotion, image, projects, could not have the same power in the market without the fundamental accessory which is the territory [...] providing that guarantee and self-confidence made by the core of the territory which is increasingly strong and important. (Winery 9 Entrepreneur, personal communication, December 6, 2011)

Although collective identity themes emphasize elements that make these wineries distinctive from other regional wines, distinctiveness is mainly pursued through over-conformity and visual identity communication.

Over-conforming projections tend to depict these wineries as “the Franciacorta wineries”—those that first and better than others interpreted the quality of the territory:

[Name of entrepreneur] saw in Franciacorta the land that would generate the finest fruits, both in still wines and in premium bubbly: his winery was the first and best expression of the qualitative potential of this wine territory. (Winery 9 website, English version)

The emphasis on individual visual identity markers also resonates in written texts and oral tales; for example, an employee guiding the cellar tour explained:

Our Riserva is a wine which the initial project was to make a champenoise wine like 100 years ago; hence, also the remuage is handmade with the cork [...] therefore the degorgement is also rigorously handmade, “à la vole” [...] Then, because we want to stick to the project in all details, the packaging is also hand crafted. (Winery 11, cellar tour, December 16, 2011)

The enlightened investments of founders are often acknowledged, or special attention is given to the craft of visual symbols, such as the tale of the designer conceptualizing an innovative logo (Winery 12), the struggle to choose a specific name for a wine (Winery 8), and the effort to build a holistic visual impact of what the organization is:

We tell how [the company] was born, which is to say its origins, but I have to say honestly that we don't give priority to words, but simply to images or to the tour like the one you did, because a walk here is enough to understand our mission. (Winery 9 Entrepreneur, personal communication, December 6, 2011)

Table 20: *Personalizing: Legitimacy and Distinctiveness (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 8	W 9	W 11	W 12
MAINTAIN/INCREASE COLLECTIVE LEGITIMACY	<b>ambassadors</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	
	Franciacorta first	Yes	Yes		
	<b>keep collective identity consistency</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
CATEGORICAL STATUS	emphasis on collective visual identity markers	Yes			
	<b>emphasis on conformity</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Franciacorta has strong image	Yes	Yes		
DISTINCTIVENESS FROM OTHER COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES	<b>distinctiveness from other collective identities</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<b>distinctiveness through investments</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
	<b>distinctiveness through individual visual identity markers</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	<b>distinctiveness through over-conformity</b>		Yes	Yes	Yes
	distinctiveness through people		Yes		
	distinctiveness through positioning	Yes			
	<b>distinctiveness through prizes</b>	Yes	Yes		Yes
	distinctiveness through product			Yes	Yes
	distinctiveness through promotional campaigns				Yes
	distinctiveness through values	Partially			

### ***Demographics, social role, and identification with the cluster***

These wineries are the most prestigious and renowned of the cluster, as well as the most resourceful. They all produce more than 1 million bottles per year, and their high status is confirmed by top ratings in wine guides (I vini di Veronelli, Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book; I Vini d'Italia - L'Espresso) as well as by other interviewees. In fact, they are often referred to as Franciacorta leaders or the most prestigious wineries. They all originated in Franciacorta, although most of them are part of groups owning other wineries and firms in both Franciacorta and other Italian regions. They include the actual inventor of the Franciacorta white sparkling wine and the charismatic leaders that drove the reconversion of the region to high-quality wine-making. These firms are highly influential in the *Consorzio*, because of both their actual roles in the board and the power of their leadership in quantitative production and reputation.

The interviewees declared a moderate or significant identity overlap between the winery identity and the Franciacorta identity (Table 21). The assessment of practices, strategies, and value overlap as emerging from the triangulation of these wineries projections and the *Consorzio*'s projections actually reveal a quite significant overlap. However, unlike in the blending combination, themes related to personal relationships with other cluster wineries and to affective commitment are almost completely absent. In fact, when interviewees spoke about their identification with Franciacorta, they emphasized the cognitive component of identification—that is, the rational overlap of identity attributes given by the common denominator of the territory and the sharing of values guiding their behavior and other wineries' behaviors.

Table 21: *Personalizing Social Role and Identification*

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND- ORDER THEMES	W 8	W 9	W 11	W 12
SOCIAL ROLE	STATUS	high status	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		mid status				Yes
		low status				
	HISTORICAL/ STRATEGIC ROLE	pioneers	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		role in <i>Consorzio</i>	Board	Board	Board	Board
	FRIENDSHIP AND FAMILY TIES	friendship ties				
		family ties				
	IDENTIFICATION	COGNITIVE IDENTIFICATION	being similar to prototype		Yes	
claimed membership				Yes	Yes	Yes
role of winery as a Franciacorta member						
declared identity overlap (scale from Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000)			F, big	G, very big	E, moderate	E, moderate
practices overlap			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
strategy overlap			Partial	Yes	Yes	Partial
value overlap			Partial	Yes	Yes	Yes
AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT			enthusiasm			
		personal involvement				
		pride	Yes			
		love				

### 7.2.3 Shifting

I labeled the identity combination strategy adopted by those wineries showing a pattern of identity projections characterized by a prominence of individual identity projections, both for what concerns visual identity markers and verbal accounts, as “shifting.” These wineries also project some features of the collective identity, especially those elements that define them clearly as Franciacorta wine producers. However, individual identity

projections are much more prominent, and often they are also distinctive compared to the identity communicated by the *Consorzio* and the identity projected by the other wineries in the sample. In addition, being more individually oriented and distinctive, the identity projections of this group of wineries are also much more distinct within the group when compared to the other two groups. What makes them similar is the prominence of individual projections and the smaller conformity to the collective identity. This group comprises three wineries: one originally included in the theoretical sample and two suggested by other interviewees.

### ***Visual identity markers***

These wineries strongly emphasize their individual visual identity markers, both in documents and in the winery environment (Table 22). In some cases, the corporate visual identity that characterizes the group to which the winery belongs is pervasive, comprising not only the logo, but also posters and corporate colors on the winery's artifacts and documents. In other cases, visual identity markers, like advertising artifacts and wine packaging and accessories, are not only pervasive, but clearly not coherent in design compared to the visual communication of the *Consorzio* and of other wineries (see Figure 26). In fact, often the distinctive design of labels, packaging, and artifacts is not only an interpretation of standard colors and shapes belonging to the cluster tradition, such as with wineries adopting the personalization combination strategy. These wineries often use totally different and sometimes provocative designs that make them stand out from the group.



*Figure 26.* Example of distinctive artifact (Winery 5)

Collective visual identity elements are not completely absent. They are present at a minimally sufficient level to clearly signal membership in the Franciacorta cluster. For example, the name Franciacorta is enclosed in the winery logo on some documents, and the collective logo sometimes appears on the website. In some cases, the link with the territory is also stressed by winery architecture inspired by the 18<sup>th</sup>-century villas that are typical of the local heritage. At any rate, the visual impact is much more individual than collective.

Table 22: *Shifting: Visual Identity Markers (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 4	W 5	W 7
<b>COLLECTIVE VISUAL IDENTITY MARKERS</b>	collective logo	Yes		Yes
	collective other artifacts			
	Franciacorta glass	Yes		
	<b>Franciacorta in logo</b>		Yes (not always)	Yes (not always)
	Franciacorta bigger on labels			
<b>INDIVIDUAL VISUAL IDENTITY MARKERS</b>	<b>individual logo and name</b>	Yes (pervasive)	Yes (two versions, one with and one without Franciacorta in it)	Yes (pervasive, with Franciacorta in it only on some documents)
	<b>distinctive labels and packaging</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<b>individual other artifacts</b>	Corporate logo and visual identity system including other wineries	Yes, glasses and accessories (very distinctive)	Yes, posters (distinctive)
	<b>winery architecture</b>	New building Franciacorta villa style	New building Franciacorta villa style	New farmstead



### ***Verbal accounts***

Overall, these wineries' verbal accounts are characterized by more individual identity themes that, in many cases, are not coherent with collective identity themes (Tables 23 and 24). Communicated themes are not illegitimate, which means that these wineries do not project anything that goes against the authoritative identity ratified by the regulations and projected by the *Consorzio*. In fact, the few collective identity themes projected regard mainly the method and the characteristics of the territory. However, often these wineries emphasize their unique interpretation of the disciplinary and do not conform to the collective acclaiming identity themes. These wineries' individual identity projections focus greatly on individual wineries' histories and characteristics, which are not linked to the collective cluster history. A highly recurring theme in acclaiming verbal accounts is the competent oenologist, who is often more relevant than the entrepreneurs themselves. The following website excerpt is an example highlighting the oenologist's character:

[The winery is the] property of the family [name] that chose to give the general and technical management to [name oenologist], one of the most representative men of the Italian oenology. (Winery 7 website)

Oenologists also directly address readers or often engage in personal conversations with external audiences on blogs that are displayed prominently on the winery's homepage, expressing their ideologies and visions:

I had a dream, to start a wine-growing and wine-producing project based on a very simple principle: identify territories with a high oenological vocation to make there one specific wine typology. (Winery 4 website)

Beyond extreme quality, which is also strictly linked to the defined regulations, these wineries express values like originality, youth, joy, and trendiness, which are quite different from those of the *Consorzio* and of other wineries. Furthermore, when talking of wine-growing and wine-making techniques, they strongly emphasize their unique interpretation of the territory and its rules of production. This individual production style is often acknowledged in wineries' acclaiming verbal accounts, as these two interview excerpts show:

[T]he strong identity of the company is the philosophy that all products share [...] it is that all products are finished in purity. That is, when you take off that famous lees, and the disgorging is done, a final liqueur d'expédition is normally added, which is a secret mix and each winery has its own recipe. In France indeed there are great liqueur masters and so on. Liqueur could be brandy, cognac, wines of different vintages, passito, barrique wines, or a mix of all these things together. We choose to use only the same wine of the same vintage. (Winery 5 Entrepreneur, personal communication, November 28, 2011)

[We are] thinking of a heresy, [...] a wine that makes Pinot blanc its principal ingredient, as a provocation [...] as something unorthodox. (Winery 7 Managing Director, personal communication, December 2, 2011)

Following the individual philosophy of unique interpretation, great emphasis is given to wineries' specific products, on which wineries' interpretations are defined. The following two examples are from two different websites—the first one showing the peculiar characteristics of a Brut compared to the usual ones, and the second more extreme, where the oenologist personally describes his unique creation:

A Brut that comes from a unique vineyard, on a fertile soil where the Chardonnay ripens more slowly than in other places. Fully developed and fruity aromas are the peculiar characteristics of grapes cultivated on these soils. (Winery 4 website)

[Name of wine] is finally ready, the revolutionary Franciacorta that I conceived, designed and created for a curious audience and for those who love to taste “out of the crowd.” [...] The hazardous thinking of a Franciacorta without its bedrock, the Chardonnay. And so [...] I fulfilled my dream by combining the two Pinots, blanc—in primis—and noir, to give birth to an unusual and “never seen before” Franciacorta. (Winery 7 website)

Some of these wineries also project other regional wine identities because they are not only producing Franciacorta; this is another reason why the individual identity becomes prominent compared to the collective. One entrepreneur does not exclude producing other types of wine in the future, differentiating the production, or expressing the wish to focus the visual identity projections even more on individual elements, progressively abandoning the collective name from the corporate logo:

In my personal ambition, as I see this project, and I don't know if I will get to see it, or my sons and grandsons will, but the idea is the following: to cover one day all the fizzy traditions, and therefore there will be [winery name] Prosecco, [winery name] Champagne. And there will also the Australian classic method or the Napa Valley one...but if I keep the place name [in the winery name], I cannot do it... (Winery 5 Entrepreneur, personal communication, November 28, 2011)

In some instances, these wineries do not openly support the acclaiming identity themes communicated by the *Consorzio* and other wineries, and they emphasize their association with other social groups and organizations more than their association with the *Consorzio*, such as niche wine exhibitions, distribution groups, and research groups.

Table 23: *Shifting: Collective Verbal Accounts (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 4	W 5	W 7
<b>COLLECTIVE AUTHORITATIVE VERBAL ACCOUNTS</b>	labeling and packaging rules		mentioned	
	<b>method rules</b>	Mentioned	mentioned	<b>Yes</b>
	territory boundaries and zones	Yes		<b>Yes</b>
	typologies and profiles	Yes	mentioned	Yes
<b>COLLECTIVE ACCLAIMING VERBAL ACCOUNTS</b>	future ambitions			mentioned
	historical achievements	Yes		Yes
	method praise	Mentioned	Yes	Yes
	territory praise (geo & climate)	Yes		<b>Yes</b>
	territory praise (history & heritage)			No
	Positive values	Mentioned	Yes (only quality)	Yes (only quality and innovation)
<b>COLLECTIVE CATEGORIZING VERBAL ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>distinctiveness other collective identities</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	similarity other collective identities		mentioned	

Table 24: *Shifting: Individual Verbal Accounts (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 4	W 5	W 7
INDIVIDUAL ACCLAIMING VERBAL ACCOUNTS	<b>filière</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	firm characteristics	<b>Yes</b>		Yes
	<b>firm history</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>firm characters</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	individual events activities	Yes	Yes	
	<b>individual future ambitions</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>individual projects</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	<b>pushing production to the limits of rules</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>specific products</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	value entrepreneurship	Yes		
	value exclusivity		<b>Yes</b>	
	value joy	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	
	value originality			Yes
	value territory/terroir/heritage	Yes		
	value tradition	Yes		
INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIZING VERBAL ACCOUNTS	association with other collective identities (not regional wines)		Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	inspiration other collective identities	Yes		
	projecting also other collective identities (regional wines)	Yes		

### ***Intent***

Collective visual identity markers are considered by these wineries to be an important vehicle for winery communication and a plus for promotion. As one communication manager indicated:

Franciaorta is for [name of firm] a strong vehicle of communication, of which we make great use. It is a useful commercial and communication element. In this moment Franciaorta is a plus for the company. (Winery 4 Communication Manager, personal communication, November 20, 2011)

They respect the regulations and use the legal denomination of Franciaorta producers, which they clearly signal in their logos. This could seem to be a contradiction with the rest of their identity communication, but in fact wineries are well aware that they need the categorical status provided by the collective identity. They need the immediate detectability given by the collective name:

Now Franciaorta exists, it is strong, it is a running train, and fundamentally I'm the last to arrive. I arrived and I'm benefiting from their image. (Winery 5 Entrepreneur, personal communication, November 28, 2011)

However, beyond that, they mainly pursue internal relational distinctiveness through their visual and verbal identity communication (Table 25). These wineries often declare that they produce by pushing the legal disciplinary to the limit because they want to pursue a distinct individual style for the sake of uniqueness and innovation. At the same time, these wineries strongly seek to emphasize how they differ from the prototypical local wineries. This is what one wine-maker said about the message he wants to convey:

I tried to avoid a number of redundancies in my communication that could be meant as [collective] values [...] but that are not at all differential and thus aren't useful to nurture, delineate, and connote the organizational identity, of which I am, and I want to be a supporter [...] Therefore drawing one's own identity into a prominent, reassuring, and shared message could mean entering a choir and nobody hears my voice anymore. Hence, playing the solo in the choir, having the chance and the numbers to do it, is something that we like to do. (Winery 7 Managing Director, personal communication, December 2, 2011)

Some wineries are aware that they are operating and communicating at the borders of orthodoxy, and they are proud of it. An extreme example is that of an advertisement

claiming “Franciacorta as you’ve never seen it,” simultaneously evoking legitimacy as a category membership and distinctiveness from the rest of the members. The entrepreneur of another winery explains the fanciful choice to package wines with a golden film that covers the bottle:

The choice of [our] image is daring, because usually wine has an austere and elegant image [...] it’s a product made for parties, therefore I don’t see why when it’s promoted, it has to be promoted with all that seriousness. (Winery 5 Entrepreneur, personal communication, November 28, 2011)

Some interviewees declared that at this stage they feel the need to expand the collective identity, which is becoming too crystallized and narrowly reliant on the characteristics of historical and powerful actors:

[T]here’s an initial path, I don’t deny the start. I believe that starting from there one can find different directions of expression—maybe one is happy with the starting point, and another one always wants to push the limits. I belong to this second category, which I don’t know if it will give results and be successful, but it’s the path I like to imagine, the path along which I want to drive my team. (Winery 7 Managing Director, personal communication, December 2, 2011)

The distinctive vision of these wineries’ entrepreneurs and oenologists are other prominent themes that emphasize the difference from other cluster wineries. Often wineries’ characters themselves are used to characterize the distinctiveness of the winery. In the following example, a cellar tour guide described the oenologist’s role for the winery:

The year zero for us is 2008, when [name of oenologist] arrived [...]. He found wines that..., not that they were wrong, but they were not in line with his philosophy. The situation of production and commercialization was not in line with his credo. He changed completely the winery settings, and you can feel it in our products. (Winery 7 cellar tour, January 18, 2012)

Table 25: *Shifting: Legitimacy and Distinctiveness (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 4	W 5	W 7
MAINTAIN/INCREASE COLLECTIVE LEGITIMACY	Franciaorta first	Depending on the context		Depending on the context
	keep collective identity consistency			No
CATEGORICAL STATUS	emphasis on collective visual identity markers	Into individual logo	Into individual logo	Into individual logo
	emphasis on conformity	Yes		Depending on the context
	<b>imitation Franciaorta heritage</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
	Franciaorta has strong image		Yes	
DISTINCTIVENESS FROM OTHER COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES	<b>distinctiveness from other collective identities</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
INTERNAL RELATIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS	<b>distinctive vision</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>distinctiveness through individual visual identity markers</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	Yes
	distinctiveness through over-conformity		Yes	Yes
	<b>distinctiveness through people</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>Yes</b>
	<b>distinctiveness through product</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	distinctiveness through promotional campaigns		Yes	<b>Yes</b>

### ***Demographics, social role, and identification with the cluster***

These wineries are less embedded into the sociocultural environment of the cluster (see Table 26). Generally, they have been recently established and therefore do not have a historical perspective of the pioneering years. They are members of the *Consorzio*, but do not hold strategic positions. Some of them explicitly say that they do not even participate in collective meetings, but being small and young they still need to be affiliated with the *Consorzio*. Actually, these wineries are small (producing from 150,000 to 350,000 bottles per year) but not smaller on average than wineries adopting the blending combination. Based on auto-definitions and wine guides (Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book; I Vini d'Italia – L'Espresso), these wineries are low and mid status. They are all family owned, yet the actual management of the winery is often given to non-family members who do not always come from Franciacorta. These wineries were all born from investments made by entrepreneurs operating in other industries.

The declared level of identification is small or moderate, except in one case where the communication manager declared a big level of identification. However, triangulating with other themes denoting the level of identity overlap, the last winery also shows a small to moderate level of identification. There is overlap for what concerns the regulations and the collective philosophy of excellence. However, production choices, strategies, and values are only partially overlapping. Some interviewees also expressed disagreement with the collective identity projections of the *Consorzio*, especially acclaiming verbal accounts, because they do not feel represented by the collective imagery that is communicated. Furthermore, these wineries do not seem affectively attached to the Franciacorta collective identity; in fact, when talking of the relationship between the winery and the wine cluster, all the emerging themes related to very rational and cognitive aspects of overlap or distance, such as co-location, production choices, strategies, or value overlap.



Table 26: *Shifting: Social Role and Identification (bold emphasizes most prominent themes)*

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND-ORDER THEMES	W 4	W 5	W 7
<b>SOCIAL ROLE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	high status			
		mid status	Yes		
		low status		Yes	Yes
	<b>HISTORICAL/ STRATEGIC ROLE</b>	pioneers			
		role in <i>Consorzio</i>	associate	associate	associate
	<b>FRIENDSHIP AND FAMILY TIES</b>	friendship ties			
		family ties			
	<b>IDENTIFICATION COGNITIVE IDENTIFICATION</b>	being similar to prototype			
		claimed membership			Yes
		role of winery as a Franciacorta member	Yes		
		declared identity overlap (scale from Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000)	G, very high overlap	D, small overlap	E, moderate overlap
		practices overlap	Partial	Partial	Partial
		strategy overlap	Partial		Partial
		value overlap	Yes	Partial	Partial
	<b>AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT</b>	enthusiasm			
		personal involvement			
		pride			
		love			



## CHAPTER 8. EMERGING THEORETICAL MODEL AND PROPOSITIONS

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The aim of this research was to explore how organizations in a regional business cluster combine collective regional identity elements and individual organizational elements in their external identity projections (RQ1), how they differently use collective and individual identity elements in external identity projections to attain legitimacy and distinctiveness (RQ2), and what influences the patterns of their identity projections (RQ3).

Regarding the first question, the inductive analysis identified three wineries' identity combination strategies that illustrate different types of combinations of collective and organizational identity elements: blending, personalizing, and shifting (see Chapter 7). Propositions are going to be developed to answer to the second and third research questions. Propositions 1 through 3 provide an answer to research question 2 by showing that each identity combination strategy emphasizes different intents for what concerns the effort to attain legitimacy and distinctiveness by wineries. The aim was not to analyze the actual legitimacy and distinctiveness achieved by wineries, but instead focus on the intent of their identity projections as the research question focused on how wineries strategically choose to deploy collective or individual identity elements into their identity projections in order to create legitimate and/or distinctive organizational images in external stakeholders' minds. Finally, regarding the third research question, propositions 4 through 10 elaborate upon the relationship among organizational variables (both demographical and social), managers' identification with the cluster, and the different strategies of identity combination adopted by wineries.

This chapter illustrates the theoretical model and the propositions emerging from the research. The model illustrates the different emerging identity combination strategies and the first three propositions that illustrate the association between identity combination strategy and emphasized intent for legitimacy and distinctiveness. The remaining

propositions illustrate the relationship between antecedents and the adopted strategies of identity combination.

### **8.1 THREE STRATEGIES OF IDENTITY COMBINATION**

The analysis of wineries' visual, oral, and written identity projections showed that three groups of wineries differently combine collective and organizational individual identity elements into their external identity projections.

Based on emerging findings, the upper part of the model (Figure 27) shows that wineries draw on a reservoir of identity elements that comprise the collective identity themes circulating within the cluster as well as the organization-specific identity themes originating from their history, characters, traits, and cultures. Using a cooking metaphor, the data show that organizations use different ways to knead the four principal "ingredients": collective and individual visual identity markers and collective and individual verbal accounts (see Table 27). The analysis suggested that wineries use three main identity combination strategies to mix these ingredients into their external identity projections. Some wineries adopt a blending strategy insofar as they blend all these "ingredients" in a way that collective and organizational identities are completely interpenetrated into their identity projections. Some wineries adopt a personalizing strategy: They personalize the collective identity by making the collective identity meanings personal and conveying them mainly behind the label of their organizational name and brand. Finally, some wineries adopt a shifting strategy; they project both collective identity elements that make their membership in the Franciacorta wine cluster evident and individually distinctive identity themes that contribute to shift the meanings of the collective Franciacorta identity (see Chapter 7).

Table 27: *Emerging Combinations of Collective and Individual Visual Identity Markers and Verbal Accounts*

	Blending	Personalizing	Shifting
<b>Visual identity markers (predominance)</b>	Collective	Individual	Individual (except prominent collective name)
<b>Verbal accounts</b>	Individual and collective intertwined	Individual and collective	Individual predominant (except collective authoritative accounts)

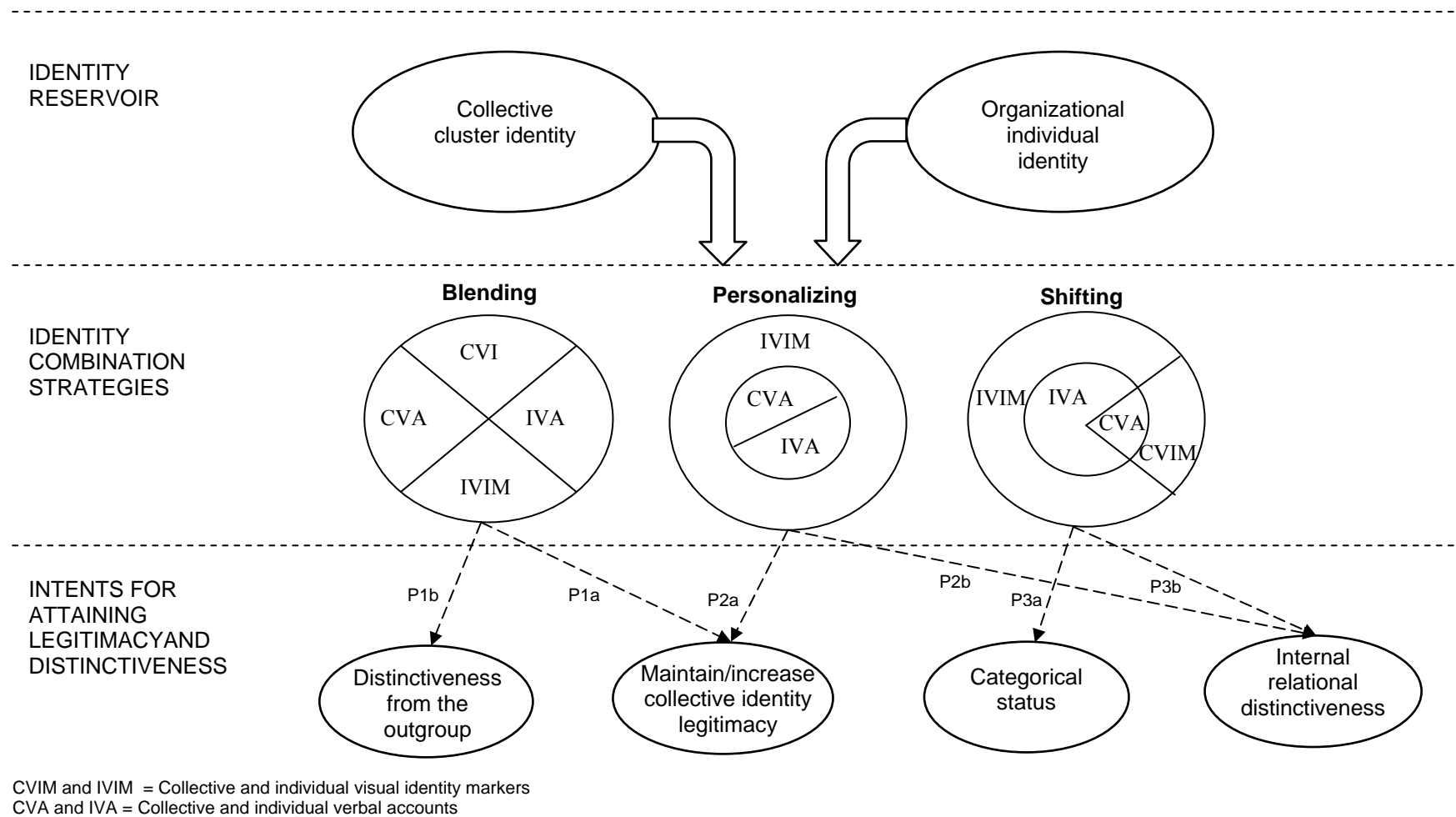


Figure 27. The emerging model of wineries' identity combination strategies and their intents for attaining legitimacy and distinctiveness

The group of wineries adopting a blending strategy mainly projects a collective identity story, where both visual and verbal collective elements are predominant. This group of wineries communicates organizational identity elements that are mainly conforming to the institutionalized collective identity as communicated by the *Consorzio*. Furthermore, beyond the emphasis on collective identity themes and the conformity of organizational identity themes, the collective and individual identity themes are so intertwined into organizational projections that it is sometimes difficult to understand when the subject of the narration is Franciacorta or the winery itself. The second group of wineries emerging from the analysis adopts a personalizing identity combination strategy. These wineries put great emphasis on organizational visual identity markers as well as physical artifacts like peculiar wineries' architectures and objects, which are predominantly displayed in the winery environment and emphatically reproduced in all wineries' documents. However, the verbal projections are a mix of collective identity themes and individual conforming identity themes. Despite this, unlike the first group, the wineries adopting the personalizing strategy do not blend the themes; rather, they include collective identity themes within their organizational identity narration. For instance, comparing an excerpt of the verbal accounts of the wineries adopting the blending strategy to one of the wineries adopting the personalizing strategy, it is evident that the first ones use the personal pronoun "we" as a subject whereas the second ones use the name of the winery as a subject (see Chapter 7). Therefore, rather than blending collective and individual identity themes, these wineries seem to personalize collective identity themes by including them in their organizational identity description. Finally, the group of wineries adopting a shifting identity combination strategy project the authoritative elements of the collective identity that are essential to be recognized as cluster members, adding to them the individual winery's identity themes, both visually and verbally. Furthermore, individual identity themes often do not conform to the collective cluster identity. Therefore, together with the label Franciacorta, these wineries project organizational identity themes that slowly add new meanings to the collective repertoire of Franciacorta identity projections that external audiences receive.

## 8.2 INTENTS FOR LEGITIMACY AND DISTINCTIVENESS ATTAINING

The second question guiding the research was how organizations in a regional business cluster differently use collective and individual identity elements in external identity projections to seek legitimacy and distinctiveness. During the analysis, I evaluated the relationship (see Section 4.2.3) between the strategies of identity combinations and the legitimacy and distinctiveness attaining intents emphasized by wineries' communication. The lower part of the model (Figure 27) shows that the three identified strategies of identity combination emphasize different intents for what concerns the attaining of legitimacy and distinctiveness. Wineries adopting the blending strategy emphasize the intent to increase the regional cluster legitimacy and highlight differences from other collective identities; wineries adopting the personalizing strategy project collective verbal accounts to increase the regional cluster legitimacy as well as individual visual identity markers to emerge from the group of other regional cluster firms; finally, wineries adopting a shifting strategy project individual identity themes to highlight differences from the other wineries in the cluster while simultaneously projecting the collective name as a visual identity marker and collective authoritative verbal accounts on production practices to be recognized as legitimate cluster members both inside and outside the wine cluster (see Tables 28 and 29).

Table 28: *Identity Combination Strategies and Their Legitimacy-Seeking Intent*

	Blending	Personalizing	Shifting
Maintain/increase collective legitimacy	+++	++	
Categorical status	+	+	++



Table 29: *Identity Combination Strategies and Their Distinctiveness-Seeking Intent*

	Blending	Personalizing	Shifting
Distinctiveness from other collective identities	+++	+	+
Internal relational distinctiveness	+/-	++	+++

Wineries adopting a blending combination of collective and individual identity themes are very much concerned with the legitimacy of the whole wine cluster. They believe that their organizational legitimacy and the legitimacy of the wine cluster overlap. Coherently with this, these wineries are not much interested in emphasizing how they differ from direct competitors within the cluster. To the contrary, they strongly communicate all those identity themes that highlight how being a Franciacorta winery makes them different from other wineries in the industry, especially within the market category of white sparkling wines. They acknowledge the importance of being individually recognized by external stakeholders, yet they consider it to be strategically more relevant to emphasize the uniqueness given by their membership in the cluster to build their competitive advantage on the market. Thus, they emphasize what Brewer (1993, p. 475) called “distinctive category membership” when describing the effort to achieve optimal distinctiveness by individuals belonging to social groups. These wineries’ behaviors are reminiscent of what entrepreneurial organizations usually do in the emerging phases of supra-organizational groups. As Navis and Glynn (2010) proposed in their study on the emergence of the US satellite radio market category, entrepreneurial organizations adopt a linguistic frame into their identity claims that support the recognition of the collective identity. However, they further proposed that, after achieving collective legitimation, organizations normally shift their linguistic frames from “normalizing the collective identity of the category, to qualifying the distinctiveness of their membership within the category” (Navis & Glynn 2010, p. 443). Data show that in some instances organizations can strategically choose to continue to emphasize the normalizing of the collective identity, even after legitimation has been

achieved. This choice allows them to qualify their organizational distinctiveness, emphasizing inter-group comparison within their competitive fields rather than intra-group comparison. As proposed in the literature on strategic groups (Peteraf & Shanley 1996) and in the Marshallian tradition on industrial districts (Becattini, 2003), wineries adopting a blending strategy of identity combination exploit the differential competitive elements provided by their group collective identity (Becattini, 2003). At the same time, they continuously contribute to keeping the collective identity strength through their identity claims (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997). Based on these findings, I propose that:

*P1a: Organizations in regional business clusters that adopt a blending combination of collective and organizational identities into their external identity projections seek to attain organizational legitimacy mainly by trying to maintain and increase the legitimacy of the whole regional business cluster.*

*P1b: Organizations in regional business clusters that adopt a blending combination of collective and organizational identities into their external identity projections seek to attain organizational distinctiveness mainly by emphasizing distinctiveness from the outgroup.*

Wineries adopting a personalizing combination are also concerned with maintaining and increasing the legitimacy of the whole regional wine cluster. They emphasize all the acclaiming verbal accounts that the *Consorzio* also uses to impress an image of the Franciacorta identity as proper, acceptable, and desirable (Suchman, 1995) by external stakeholders. Furthermore, they often stress their role as cluster ambassadors, saying that—having more resources and success than others in the past—they deemed it relevant to nurture the legitimacy of Franciacorta and not only their individual one. All interviewees declared that single wineries should contribute to the collective legitimacy because a legitimate collective identity is essential for supporting individual wineries' legitimacy. They consider this to be strategically important because the collective identity support is especially relevant in the maturity phase they are facing as well as in

the exploration of new markets where their individual legitimacy is not yet established. Unlike wineries adopting a blending strategy, those adopting a personalizing strategy also emphasize their distinctiveness from other wineries in the cluster. However, they do not claim it by projecting identity themes that are distinctive from the collective identity reservoir; rather, they seek to stand out from the group by emphasizing individual visual identity markers (both logos and particular artifacts) that resonate in all corporate materials and in the winery environment. In terms of verbal identity themes, the few themes these wineries use to compare themselves to other cluster wineries relate mainly to over-conforming practices and principles. It almost seems that these wineries project their identity as they were “the Franciacorta winery” *par excellence*. Also with wineries adopting the personalizing combination strategy, data emphasize that the linguistic focus of organizational identity claims is still partially oriented to support a consistent external perception of the Franciacorta collective identity. However, in this case, the shift predicted by Navis and Glynn (2010) in the post-legitimation phase of a collective identity occurs. What is interesting is that the shift toward the qualification of organizational distinctiveness within the group happens primarily through visual rather than linguistic projections. This also happens because these wineries are not actually adopting many distinctive practices compared to others, although they want to emerge with their individual brands and effectively have the resources to do so. Therefore, they stand out from the group with a great emphasis on their individual names, logos, packaging, and artifacts. Entrepreneurs and managers emphasize that their brands are in fact more recognized than the collective brand Franciacorta—or at least that they obtained external recognition for their individual brands first, before the Franciacorta collective brand. Hence, one could say that these wineries acted and continued to act as ambassadors; they are reminiscent of the collective identity advocates described by Wry et al. (2011). In fact, together with the trade association, they consistently spread a collective identity growth story that contributes to signaling externally the main features of the collective identity to which new entrant actors should conform. Based on these findings, I propose that:

*P2a: Organizations in regional business clusters that adopt a personalizing combination of collective and organizational identities into their external identity projections seek to attain organizational legitimacy mainly by trying to maintain and increase the legitimacy of the whole regional business cluster.*

*P2b: Organizations in regional business clusters that adopt a personalizing combination of collective and organizational identities into their external identity projections seek to attain organizational distinctiveness mainly by emphasizing internal relational distinctiveness through individual visual identity markers.*

Finally, wineries that adopt a shifting combination of collective and organizational identities into external identity projections primarily emphasize internal relational distinctiveness in their communication and project the core elements of the collective identity (i.e., the name Franciacorta and authoritative verbal accounts) to be legitimately recognized as Franciacorta wineries and benefit from the categorical status. In fact, beyond the description of the method, other collective verbal accounts are not much emphasized, whereas both oral and written communications are strongly characterized by individual identity themes, which are often different and distinctive from those available in the collective identity reservoir. This distinctiveness does not stem much from the introduction of themes borrowed from other social collectivities to which the winery belongs, but mainly from the idiosyncratic organizational identity traits and culture. At the visual level, the Franciacorta name is always included in the winery logo, but it is matched to individual visual identity markers that are very distinctive of the individual winery identity and that often emphasize a different image of Franciacorta with respect to the one depicted by the *Consorzio* and by other wineries. In some of the most radical examples, the distinctiveness from “the average” Franciacorta winery is also explicitly emphasized.

The identity combination strategy adopted by these wineries is the one matching the most with previous theories on strategic balance and optimal distinctiveness. In fact, these wineries visibly deploy those category-based identity cues (Lerpold et al., 2007)

that clearly communicate their membership to the supra-organizational group, emphasizing the similarities of the practices adopted (Lamertz et al., 2005). This enables them to be recognized internally as legitimate group members (Lamertz et al., 2005; Peteraf & Shanley, 1997) and to obtain a categorical status by external stakeholders (Benjamin & Podolny, 1999; Zhao & Zhou, 2011). As a second step, building on this legitimacy, wineries adopting a shifting combination strategy further qualify their individual distinctiveness (Navis & Glynn, 2010; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001) by projecting their trait-based identity cues (Lerpold et al., 2007) and emphasizing their relational distinctiveness within the group (Deephouse, 1999; Deephouse & Carter, 2005). However, they do not emphasize much their distinctiveness through self-categorization into other social groups or by emphasizing benefits to unique stakeholders (Lamertz et al., 2005); instead, they emphasize their under-conformity to the collective identity reservoir, especially due to the distinctiveness of organization-specific cultures (e.g., oenologists' and entrepreneurs' peculiar visions). Therefore, based on these findings, I propose that:

*P3a: Organizations in regional business clusters that adopt a shifting combination of collective and organizational identities into their external identity projections seek to attain organizational legitimacy by projecting the minimum required elements needed to be recognized as legitimate cluster members and obtain a categorical status.*

*P3b: Organizations in regional business clusters that adopt a shifting combination of collective and organizational identities into their external identity projections seek to attain organizational distinctiveness by emphasizing internal relational distinctiveness through distinctive visual and verbal individual identity projections.*

### **8.3 VARIABLES INFLUENCING IDENTITY COMBINATION STRATEGIES**

The third question guiding the research examined what influences different patterns of identity projections among wineries in the same regional cluster. The preliminary exploratory quantitative analysis of wineries' websites excluded any relevant correlation between wineries' demographic data and differences in identity projections. The

qualitative phase allowed a deeper understanding of wineries' identity projections and what influences them. The analysis (see Section 4.2.3) emphasized that the social role of the organizations within the cluster and managers' identification with the cluster were related to differences in wineries' identity combination strategies. Furthermore, the emerging inductive picture suggested the need to reconsider some demographic variables that seemed relevant to discriminate between different identity combination strategies. The following section illustrates the emerging propositions on the variables influencing different wineries' identity projections. After elaborating upon and discussing each proposition, the section ends with a discussion of the possible relationships plausibly existing among some of the proposed antecedents. The current research design did not allow for a check for collinearity or multicollinearity among influencing variables. However, based on plausibility and previous theory, the section ends with a speculation on possible collinear relationships between antecedents deserving further attention to understand the differences in identity combination strategies within regional business clusters.

### **8.3.1 Size and foundation date**

Starting with demographic data, the qualitative analysis with the selected sample of wineries confirmed the preliminary results on demographics with a few exceptions (see Table 30).

Table 30: *Wineries' Demographic Variables and Identity Combination Strategies*

	Blending	Personalizing	Shifting
Production	250,000-500,000 bottles per year	1 – 5 million bottles per year	150,000 – 350,000 bottles per year
Founded	60s-70s-80s	60s-70s-80s	After 1995 (after DOCG)
Wines produced	Local	Local / Local and non-local	Local/Local and non-local
Management	Family	Family and mixed	Family and mixed
Property	Local	Local and non-local	Local

All the wineries in the sample—and in the whole cluster—produce mainly local wines. Some of the wineries are part of groups owning other wineries in other regions of Italy; however, this does not discriminate the three types of identity combinations emerging from the data. In fact, all three groups comprise local wineries, and two of the three groups also include wineries whose corporate groups produce wines in other regions. All wineries are family managed, with few exceptions where oenologists who are not members of the owning family and fulfill the role of managing directors. These small differences in managerial settings do not distinguish any of the three groups adopting different strategies of identity combinations. In addition, the property of the wineries in the sample is almost always local, which is true for the vast majority of the wineries of the whole regional cluster (see Chapter 5), with one exception.

The only demographic variables that influence the identity combination strategies adopted by wineries are size and foundation date. However, neither of the variables distinguishes the three groups; rather, they are correlated to one group over the other two. Size distinguishes the group of wineries personalizing the collective identity from the other two groups. In fact, the personalizing combination is adopted only by wineries that produce more than one million bottles per year and that are considerably bigger than the average Franciacorta winery. These wineries are also considerably bigger than the next biggest wineries of the cluster, which produce around 500,000 bottles per year.

Even if there are no specific data regarding the investments of these wineries in marketing and communication, the overall data indicate that they have the most professionally developed corporate materials and the most magnificent wineries and artifacts. They also have the most developed organizational structure to manage marketing and external communication (i.e., more than one professional employee, rather than family members). All these characteristics make these wineries quite similar to the cluster leader firm profile developed by Foresti et al. (2007) and to the regional wine cluster leaders described by the professional literature on wine marketing (Guibert, 2006; Sharp & Smith, 1990). Therefore, I propose that:

*P4: Regional cluster leader organizations are more likely to adopt a personalizing identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

For what concerns size, there is no difference between wineries adopting a blending strategy and wineries adopting a shifting strategy. Foundation date instead distinguishes between the group of wineries adopting the shifting strategy of identity combination from the other two groups. The preliminary quantitative analysis did not emphasize any correlation between organizational age and the patterns of projected identities, but from the deeper qualitative analysis it emerged that there is a breaking point that divides wineries founded before the mid-1990s and those founded from the late 1990s onwards. This breaking point is meaningful inasmuch 1995 is the year that the DOCG was awarded to Franciacorta. The analysis showed that wineries founded before the DOCG blend the collective and individual identities or personalize the collective identity. Both groups project an identity that is coherent with the collective identity reservoir. Meanwhile, wineries in the sample that were founded after the DOCG all show a shifting combination strategy, which means that they project an identity that matches the Franciacorta name with meanings that are distinctive from the collective imagery communicated by the *Consorzio*. The DOCG is a typical certification of achievement given by institutional intermediaries, such as the ISO9000 or consumer quality reports described by Rindova, Williamson, Petkova, and Sever (2005) for individual



organizations. Previous theories have predicted that, when institutional intermediaries endorse an organization, it increases the organization's status (Rao, 1994) and prominence (Rindova et al., 2005). In addition, extant theories emphasize that usually the greater the legitimacy of a social actor or a social group, the higher the probability that other actors will seek affiliation to it (Rao et al., 2003). Governmental bodies are traditionally considered institutional intermediaries whose actions activate the mechanisms of legitimation (DiMaggio, 1991). In the Italian wine industry, the governmental award of DOCG appellations not only affirms the legitimacy of a regional wine cluster, but also increases its status compared to regions having lower appellations (DOC, IGT). Therefore, it could be plausibly hypothesized that, after a regional cluster receives a certification that increases its legitimacy and status, there is an exponential growth of new entrants that want to conform in order to obtain categorical status, but that when entering the cluster try to find a specific distinctive positioning compared to elder cluster members. Considering that age *per se* has no effect on differences in identity projections, but that the foundation date before or after the DOCG award discriminates the blending and personalizing strategies from the shifting, I propose that:

*P5: Organizations in a regional business cluster that are founded after the cluster obtained certifications of achievement by institutional intermediaries are more likely to adopt a shifting identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

Here I proposed a relationship between the date of being founded after a certification of achievement and the adoption of one specific identity combination strategy. Later I will develop a proposition describing the relationship between wineries' historical role and the adoption of different identity combination strategies. Although in the sample under study wineries founded before the DOCG are also wineries that have a historical role within the cluster, the foundation date before or after a certification and the historical role are conceptually two distinct variables. In fact, foundation date is a demographic variable, whereas historical role is a social variable inasmuch it concerns organizational involvement in the pioneering activities of the cluster, including the foundation of

collective associations. In this sample of wineries, the two variables have a collinear relationship; however, it can be argued that, in contexts with longer histories, not all organizations founded before a certification given by institutional intermediaries also have a historical role. For instance, sticking to the Italian wine industry, we can find examples of wineries in the Chianti region that are not historical pioneers, but were founded about a century before the achievement of a legal appellation that in Italy was only created in 1967. Furthermore, certifications by institutional intermediaries could be multiple and awarded periodically, thereby increasing the status of a regional cluster and reinforcing its legitimacy. Finally, in some cases, certifications simply could not be awarded. For all these reasons, being founded after a certification of achievement and the historical role are considered as two different antecedents and addressed in two different propositions. The next section discusses the propositions concerning the influencing role of organizational social variables, including the historical role.

### 8.3.2 Social variables

Beyond the mentioned historical role, other organizational social variables that influence the adoption of different identity combination strategies are the strategic role of wineries in the *Consorzio*'s decisional processes and wineries' status (see Table 31).

Table 31: *Wineries' Social Variables and Identity Combination Strategies*

	Blending	Personalizing	Shifting
<b>Historical role</b>	Pioneers and <i>Consorzio</i> 's founders	Pioneers and <i>Consorzio</i> 's founders	Later entrants
<b>Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i></b>	Board members	Board members	Members
<b>Status</b>	Mid status	High status	Mid-low status

Wineries that had a historical role as pioneers or the *Consorzio*'s founders adopt either the blending or personalizing identity combinations whereas wineries that did not have a

historical role in the cluster always adopt a shifting identity combination. Establishment after certifications influences identity combination strategies because new entrants are likely to affiliate with a cluster after its status has increased; meanwhile, historical role influences identity combination strategies because historical organizations were the ones that contributed to creating the cluster's collective identity. In fact, as Fiol and Romanelli (2012) discussed, pioneer entrepreneurs are those that create collective narratives and identify strongly with the emerging story world that develops within a group of organizations. Therefore, I propose that:

*P6a: Organizations in a regional business cluster that had a historical role in the cluster development are more likely to adopt either a blending or personalizing identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

*P6b: Organizations in a regional business cluster that did not have a historical role in the cluster development are more likely to adopt a shifting identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

Similarly, the strategic role of wineries in the *Consorzio*'s decisional processes distinguishes the two groups adopting the blending and personalizing identity combination strategies from the group adopting the shifting identity combination strategy. All the wineries belonging to the first two groups reported their involvement in strategic decisions due to their participation on the *Consorzio*'s board whereas wineries in the third group reported only being associated with the *Consorzio* and, in some cases, not even participating in meetings or collective promotional activities. Interviewees across all groups emphasized that they believe that the level of involvement into the *Consorzio* affects how wineries communicate the identity of Franciacorta. Managers of wineries adopting the blending and personalizing strategies emphasized that less involved wineries sometimes say the "incorrect" things about Franciacorta or do not have the "right culture" for communicating Franciacorta wine. Managers of wineries adopting a shifting type of combination on their part explained that they recognize that

they are less involved into the strategic collective decisions and sometimes do not agree with the *Consortio* or the collective identity story that it communicates; therefore, they do not feel the need to align their identity communication to those elements of the collective identity with which they do not agree.

The relationship between the wineries' strategic role in the *Consortio* and the adoption of the two identity combination strategies that are more conforming to the collective identity reservoir resonates with theories predicting a relationship between involvement in trade associations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) and the regional community of practice (Fiol & Romanelli, 2012) and conforming behaviors. Therefore, I propose that:

*P7a: Organizations in a regional business cluster that have a strategic role in collective coordinating associations are more likely to adopt either a blending or personalizing combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

*P7b: Organizations in a regional business cluster that do not have a strategic role in collective coordinating associations are more likely to adopt a shifting identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

As both historical role and strategic role could be plausibly conceived as antecedents of identification and in-group supporting behaviors, and as historical role could also exert an influence on the strategic role of a cluster firm, possible relationships of collinearity and multicollinearity are discussed at the end of this section.

The winery status is the only social variable that distinguishes the three identity combination strategies. High status wineries are those considered by themselves and by other wineries to be the leaders of the cluster; in fact, they are also in the top rankings of wine guides. High status wineries recognize that in their first decade their emphasis on the collective identity was much higher and their identity projections focused much less on their individual winery identity. Now that they have become renowned wineries, their individual names are more “brand” than the name Franciacorta, but still the collective identity is projected to show fundamental support to their individual wineries' identities.

Therefore, considering that the high status of these wineries co-occurs with a personalizing type of identity combination and that the managers of these wineries recognize that their increased status changed the weight given to their individual wineries' identities in their external identity projections, I propose that:

*P8a: High status organizations in a regional business cluster are more likely to adopt a personalizing identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

Mid-status wineries are those wineries that are not the most renowned in the cluster, but still receive good critiques (according to them), are sometimes mentioned by other wineries behind the top high status wineries, and appear in wine guides, although not at the top of rankings and often with mentions about single products. All mid-status wineries in the sample except one adopted the blending strategy of identity combination. Most managers of these wineries reported that the way they communicate their identities is also due to the fact that they are not sufficiently renowned; therefore, they prefer to present themselves as actors of Franciacorta. Therefore, I propose that:

*P8b: Middle status organizations in a regional business cluster are more likely to adopt a blending identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

Low status wineries are those wineries that recognize that they still need to get some recognition within the market, from critics and within the cluster because they are young and in the wine industry it takes a while to reach full productive potentiality. These wineries want to acquire a higher status rapidly, and they firmly believe that to do so they need to be distinct Franciacorta producers in order to capture the attention of curious consumers, wine lovers, and critics as well as cover different consumer targets than the ones traditionally addressed by other Franciacorta producers. Therefore, I propose that:

*P8c: Low status organizations in a regional business cluster are more likely to adopt a shifting identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

These findings provide a different picture than what was expected based on the theory of middle-status conformity elaborated by Phillips and Zuckerman (2001). Indeed, mid-status wineries in the sample are the most conforming to the collective identity reservoir. However, high status firms also conform much, especially for what concerns the verbal identity themes communicated. As previously said, high status wineries stand out from the group by personalizing the collective identity, but the meanings communicated under their individual brands are not so distinctive. Therefore, if it is true that in many contexts high status organizations have already acquired a legitimacy that leaves them more freedom to deviate, as Phillips and Zuckerman predicted, these findings show that there are institutional contexts from which, even given this freedom, high status firms prefer not to deviate. To the contrary, high status wineries in the sample seemed to adopt a behavior to maintain the hegemonic institutional logics that are “favorable to their interest” (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006, p. 28). Considering that in this case high status wineries are also well embedded into the socio-cultural cluster environment, given their historical role and strategic involvement in the *Consorzio*, their conformity resonates with theories predicting that more central and prototypical organizations are more likely to conform to their supra-organizational identity (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997; Pólos et al., 2000). Supporting these theories is the finding that more peripheral organizations—in this case the wineries adopting the shifting strategy, who are new entrants with no historical or strategic role within the cluster—are less conforming to their supra-organizational identity. Also according to Phillips and Zuckerman (2001), low status firms are not conforming; however, in their theory, low status organizations are those that are outside the boundaries of a category and have no chance to enter it, meaning they are free not to conform. In the case under study, low status wineries are the lowest in the status ranking of the sample, but they are indeed within the boundaries of the Franciacorta collective identity and are legitimate members. In fact, they conform to the authoritative collective identity elements, not putting their legitimate member status at

risk. Therefore, it is precisely the fact that these low status wineries are both legitimate and under-conforming that makes their identity projection strategies more interesting. Although less extreme, wineries adopting the shifting combination strategy are like the insider defector wineries described by Negro et al. (2011), where some wineries adopting the label Barolo were actually changing the practices behind the label by adopting practices commonly used in other regions and contrary to the local production tradition. What is interesting in this case is that the meanings projected by the wineries adopting the shifting strategy are less “rival” (Negro et al., 2011, p. 1452; Rao et al., 2003) compared to the collective identity reservoir, although they are used to make the winery distinctive in the regional cluster landscape.

As explained at the beginning of this section, data only allowed to propose direct relationships between historical role, strategic role and status with the three different identity combination strategies. Despite this, based on extant theory and plausibility, there could reasonably be some moderating variables affecting the proposed relationships. Status and size could have a moderating role between historical and strategic role and the choice of a blending or personalizing strategy (P6a and P7a). In fact, the findings indicated that when the historical and strategic role are equal, wineries that are the biggest in size and the highest in status adopt a personalizing identity combination strategy instead of a blending identity combination strategy. This resonates with extant theories inasmuch as organizations that are more resourceful and have a high organizational legitimacy based on status are more prone to adopt individual distinctive behaviors (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). Therefore in this case, these two variables would moderate the high conformity given by the historical and strategic role, leading to the choice of a personalizing combination strategy that, although still conforming to the collective identity reservoir, at least aims at internal relational distinctiveness through individual visual identity markers. As previously mentioned, data do not provide sufficient empirical support to propose a moderating role of size and status between historical and strategic role and identity combination strategies. However, this moderation could be reasonably expected and is therefore worth further study.

### 8.3.3 Identification

Finally, the following propositions illustrate the role of identification in the adoption of different identity combination strategies. The emerging data emphasized a distinction between themes related to cognitive components of identification, and themes related to affective components of identification (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000). Concerning cognitive identification, the three strategies of identity combination are correlated with decreasing levels of identification, starting from the blending strategy correlated with the highest levels of identification, passing through the personalizing strategy correlated with moderate/high levels of managers' identification, to the shifting strategy correlated to moderate/low levels of identification (see Table 32).

Table 32: *Identification with the Cluster and Identity Combination Strategies*

	Blending	Personalizing	Shifting
<b>Cognitive identification</b>	+++	++/+++	+/++
<b>Affective commitment</b>	+++		

Beyond constant conjunction (see Section 4.2.3) between identification levels and identity combination strategies, the data also provided explicit quotations from interviews supporting the correlation and indicating the level of identification as an antecedent of identity projections type. For instance, managers of the wineries adopting a blending strategy of identity combination emphasized that they see themselves as Franciacorta actors ("I present myself as Mr. Franciacorta," as one manager said), which is why they emphasized the collective identity of the cluster so much and described their wineries as actors of a collective story. Indeed these wineries' managers also showed a consistent affective commitment toward the cluster and the territory, and they considered these to be the reasons why they put so much effort into communicating the collective identity coherently with the *Consorzio* and to the fact that they tell the story of a group of wineries, not only of their specific winery.



*P9: Organizations in a regional business cluster whose managers show a high affective commitment to the cluster, are more likely to adopt a blending combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

Managers of the wineries adopting a personalizing identity combination strategy expressed a more rational evaluation of the identity overlap they see between their wineries and the wine cluster. They explained their identification with the cluster by talking of the common practices, the overlap of values, and the vision they share with the *Consorzio*. As they see this overlap, they consider the collective identity to be strong support for their individual identity communication that, as one entrepreneur explained, in some cases is “an essential accessory”, while in other cases, where wineries are less renowned, is “a part of the suit.”

Therefore I propose that:

*P10a: Organizations in a regional business cluster whose managers show a high cognitive identification with the cluster are more likely to adopt either a blending or personalizing identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

Managers of the wineries adopting a shifting type of identity combination declared a moderate or low level of identification with the cluster. When explaining why they perceived a partial identity overlap with the cluster, they said that it was due to the co-location and the rules of production outlined in the regulations as well as to the philosophy of excellence that marks the collective identity of Franciacorta. However, beyond these elements, they perceived elements of non-overlap. There are recurring quotations from managers explaining that they are different from the majority of other wineries in the cluster and thus they want to communicate their specificities.

*P10b: Organizations in a regional business cluster whose managers show a moderate or low cognitive identification with the cluster are more likely to adopt a shifting identity combination strategy in their external identity projections.*

These findings suggest that the relationships predicted between identification and identity expression at the organizational level of analysis (Ashforth & Mael, 1996; Ashforth et al., 2008) also exist at a superior level of analysis—namely, between organizations and their supra-organizational groups. No studies have empirically investigated the relationship between organizations' identification with a supra-organizational group and organizational identity expressions. However theories of strategic group identity (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997) assume that organizations that identify more with the strategic group should be more prototypical of the group traits and therefore contribute to claim the groups' central, distinctive and enduring elements, thereby enhancing the collective identity strength. Even more interestingly, the findings suggest (proposition 9) that an affective commitment to the cluster identity leads to an increased collective identity enactment (through self-expression), compared to the only cognitive identity overlap. In fact, wineries showing both high cognitive identification and affective commitment adopt a blending combination strategy whereas wineries showing only high cognitive identification adopt a personalizing combination strategy. Considering that, being equal the level of cognitive identification, the presence of affective commitment changes the identity combination strategy adopted, and considering that affective commitment is an acknowledged consequence of cognitive identification (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000), I could propose that affective commitment mediates the relationships between cognitive identification and identity combination strategy. This mediating effect of affective commitment would also be supported by a match with previous theory at the organizational level, where individuals' affective commitment toward their organization mediates the influence of cognitive identification on organizational identity enactment (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000). However, data do not offer enough support to develop this proposition because the context under study also provides some reasonable alternative explanations to understand why organizations with

the same level of cognitive identification engage in different strategies of identity combination in their external identity projections. In fact, wineries that do not show an affective commitment to the cluster correspond to the cluster leaders, who are the biggest and highest status wineries in the cluster. Further research willing to better understand a possible mediating effect of affective commitment between identification and identity enactment at the supra-organizational level should consider a sample that allows for controlling for size and status.

#### **8.3.4 Relationships among antecedents**

To conclude, in this section, I elaborated upon a series of propositions, suggesting possible influencing variables for the three identity combinations strategies that emerged from the case findings. As anticipated at the beginning of the section and in the discussion concerning affective commitment, it can be reasonably imagined that some of the influencing variables identified are related to one another and could act as a mediating or moderating variable, rather than as a direct antecedent. Starting from social variables, it can be plausibly suspected that both historical role within the cluster and status could have an influence on the likeliness that an organization has a strategic role in the collective coordinating associations. Beyond being a reasonable hypothesis, this would also be consistent with previous theories stating that prototypical members and leaders often want to act strategically as collective identity advocates to maintain their collective identity strength (Peteraf & Shanley, 1997), to coordinate the group expansion through collective identity stories (Wry et al., 2011), and to maintain established institutional logics that are favorable to them (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006). Furthermore, considering that organizational status is often attributed by stakeholders based on past organizational performances (Benjamin & Podolny, 1999; Zhao & Zhou, 2011), it could be reasonably inferred that the historical role within the cluster might also exert an influence on organizational status.

Regarding socio-psychological variables, I have already discussed some reasonable interactions between cognitive identification and affective commitment. I would like instead to further elaborate on possible relationships between social variables and identification. In fact, considering the extensive research on identification antecedents at

the organizational level, it could be inferred that the historical role and strategic role (P6 and P7) might actually be antecedents of wineries' identification with the cluster. In fact, at the organizational level, the length of membership and intensity of contact of organizational members with the organizations are considered possible antecedents of members' identification (Dutton et al., 1994) insofar that they increase the saliency of the group identity to the individual. In the same vein, in the industrial district literature, both tenure in the cluster (Staber, 2010) and the perceived interdependence caused by actual intense relationships among firms in the district (Sammorra & Biggiero, 2001) are considered antecedents of organizational identification with the district. Further research to better understand the relationship among social variables, identification, and identity combination strategies adopted by organizations in a cluster should probably adopt a design that could better discriminate between the role of intensity and duration. This could probably be refined by also measuring the actual relationships between organizations in a cluster and investigating their relationship with identification and identity projections.

## CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSION

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The main aim of this research was to understand how and why organizations in a regional business cluster differently combine the collective regional identity with their individual identities into their identity projections in order to claim legitimacy and distinctiveness. We explored the context of a coordinated regional wine cluster with a case study design comprising embedded units of analysis and using mixed methods to collect and analyze data. The emerging model defines three different strategies that wineries in a regional wine cluster adopt to combine the elements derived from their collective cluster identity reservoir as well as the elements originating from their individual organizational identity traits and culture. Furthermore the model shows that each identity combination strategy emphasizes different intents for what concerns the effort to attain legitimacy and distinctiveness by wineries (P1–P3). Propositions 4 through 10 then identify influencing variables that distinguish wineries preferring one strategy of identity combination over the others.

The findings emerging from this research contribute to the literature on organizational identity by refining the understanding of how macro-institutional identities constrain and enable the processes by which organizations develop identity contents to claim legitimate distinctiveness. In particular, Section 9.1 elaborates on four main contributions. The first two affirm that assessing the degree of conformity or distinctiveness of organizational identity claims to their referent groups does not provide a sufficient understanding of how organizations try to achieve legitimate distinctiveness. In fact, the findings show that organizations strategically orchestrate conforming and distinctive claims through multimodal identity projections. Furthermore, some organizations prefer inter-group comparison, trying to achieve distinctiveness by over-conforming to the cluster collective identity. The second two contributions instead reaffirm the value of considering the role of both organizational idiosyncratic characteristics and collective institutional elements in the processes of organizational

identity construction, thereby supporting recent theories of identity formation (Gioia et al., 2010; Gioia et al., 2013; Kroezen & Heugens 2012) and strategic identity claims (van Halderen et al., 2011). More specifically, the findings indicate that organization-specific contents complement the bricolage (Glynn, 2008) of institutionalized available regional contents and that organizational characteristics like historical role, social role, and managers' identification influence the adoption of different identity combination strategies.

Beyond these main contributions, the findings provide insights that contribute to the literature on institutional work and regional business clusters by suggesting directions for future research. Section 9.2 will discuss these further contributions. The chapter then ends with a discussion of the limitations of this research and recommendations for further research.

## **9.1 CONTRIBUTIONS**

### **9.1.1 Legitimate distinctiveness through strategic multimodal identity projections: Indicative versus thematic conformity**

The model proposed in this thesis shows that organizations differently combine collective and organizational visual and verbal identity cues into their identity projections. Especially relevant is the emerging different use that wineries make of visual identity markers and verbal accounts in their combination strategies and that visual and verbal projections often have different roles in emphasizing legitimacy or distinctiveness. Regional collective verbal accounts are deployed with the main purposes of increasing community legitimacy and achieving distinctiveness from other communities. In contrast, collective visual elements, such as the collective name appended to the organizational name, are used as labels (Glynn, 2008) to provide an immediate cue of categorical membership and a sense of place (Glynn & Azbug, 2002), which is not always supported by conforming verbal accounts. This is particularly evident in the shifting combination strategies. In fact, the shifting strategy matches collective visual impressions to both visual and verbal individual distinctive projections. This strategy suggests a symbolic decoupling. According to new institutional theory, in fact, decoupling defines the process by which some organizations formally conform to

their field, but then actually do not implement what the field prescribes (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Indeed wineries using a shifting strategy try to gain immediate recognition as regional cluster members by clearly projecting collective visual identity markers, but then they use distinctive individual visual identity markers to stand out visibly from the group and verbal identity projections to elaborate on their membership and build their individual interpretation of the collective identity reservoir.

Meanwhile, wineries adopting a personalizing strategy emphasize individual visual identity markers to achieve visibility and prominence within the group of direct competitors. However, they then support the collective identity with verbal projections that are conforming to the regional wine cluster identity. The corporate identity tradition originally emphasized a distinction between indicative versus thematic identity projections (Kammerer, 1989). Visual projections serve to foster an immediate recognition of an organization's identity while the role of verbal communication is used to manage positive impressions in a more elaborate way to meet the expectations of multiple stakeholders (Kammerer, 1989; van Riel, 1995). However, as the literature review demonstrated (see Chapter 2), the few empirical studies on optimal distinctiveness measured verbal identity claims without determining how visual identity projections (artifacts, visual symbols, names into logos) and verbal identity projections were distinctly used. Therefore, the findings emerging from this study expand the understanding of how organizations manage their symbolic isomorphism to their referent fields (Glynn & Azbug, 2002) by suggesting that organizations might differently claim an indicative or thematic symbolic conformity.

Furthermore, the emerging differences on how wineries use visual and verbal projections expand the understanding of how organizations may use category-based cues coming from their strategic supra-organizational groups and organization-specific trait-based cues to project their identities as legitimate group members and unique organizations (Lerpold et al., 2007). In fact, the findings showed that organizations might not only select and project a combination of category-based and trait-based cues, but also choose the modality with which to project them to external stakeholders. This increases the multiple configurations of possible strategic communication choices available to them.

These findings resonate with studies on meaning generation by individuals stating that “people orchestrate meaning through their selection and configuration of [visual and linguistic] modes” (Jewitt, 2009, cited in Bell & Davison, 2013, p. 177) and suggest the worthiness of refining the understanding of how organizations manage their symbolic isomorphism and optimal distinctiveness through strategic multimodal identity projections.

Understanding the different legitimizing or differentiating role of visual and verbal identity projections also has practical implications for corporate branding strategies, especially in those fields where it is difficult to find “the right amount of local content” (Bernetti et al., 2006, p. 34). This happens not only in the wine industry, but more generally in those industries where the product is strictly related to a place. Further research could investigate the legitimating or differentiating role of collective visual identity markers in contexts where these signs are not elaborated upon by coordinating identity advocates. Indeed, marketing research on brand of origin cues shows that organizations often use visual cues that represent stereotypical features of a place to leverage on the identity of that geographic community (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008). Future research could deepen the understanding of how these visual cues are combined with verbal identity projections that could reinforce the visual identity, or be decoupled from them, as it happens for instance to those organizations that project visual symbols of a place without being actually located in or originating from that place (Thakor & Kohli, 1996).

### **9.1.2 Distinctiveness through conformity to the regional cluster identity and collective legitimacy nurturing**

The findings from this study suggest that assessing how much organizations conform to or distinguish themselves from a specific supra-organizational group provides a limited understanding of how organizations try to achieve a strategic balance in their markets. Previous theories have predicted that organizations manage their optimal distinctiveness by strategically claiming conformity and distinctiveness to their referent institutional groups (Deephouse, 1999; McNamara et al., 2002; Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). Wineries adopting a blending strategy also demonstrate that they are organizations



greatly emphasizing conformity to their main referent group, and they are able to emphasize their distinctiveness in the market by making more salient inter-group comparisons rather than intra-group comparisons. As proposed in the literature on strategic groups (Peteraf & Shanley, 1996) and in the Marshallian tradition on industrial districts (Becattini, 2003), wineries adopting a blending strategy of identity combination exploit the differential competitive elements provided by their group collective identity and at the same time continuously contribute to keep the collective identity strength through their identity claims. Thus, these wineries deem it to be more strategic to stand out in the wine industry by emphasizing their conformity to a prototypical Franciacorta identity than to appear to be different from their direct Franciacorta competitors. This is one aspect of social categorization theory that has been quite underestimated in empirical studies of organizational optimal distinctiveness. The “distinctive category membership” (Brewer, 1993, p. 475) is often considered when studying organizational and field identity formation; however, the findings emerging from this study suggest the value of reconsidering it when trying to understand how organizations signal their legitimate distinctiveness to their markets.

This also implies the value of investigating how organizations strategically consider the legitimating or differentiating value given to them by their membership within nested supra-organizational groups (e.g., regional clusters, strategic groups, industries, nations). Therefore, future research could move beyond the equation that collective is equal to legitimizing and organizational is equal to distinctive by investigating how different types of nested collectivities are deemed relevant by organizations to provide legitimizing or differentiating elements.

Addressing this could also move theorization beyond the models predicting that organizations achieve legitimacy through identity claims conforming to their primary referent social group and distinctiveness by claiming self-categorization into a number of secondary social groups (Lamertz et al., 2005). For instance, findings from this study do not offer support to this last theory. Of course, wineries in the Franciacorta wine cluster also self-categorize into multiple other social groups, whether professional associations or broader social categories like arts and design. However, their multiple self-

categorizations did not vary across the three identity combination strategies emerging from the inductive analysis of their identity projections.

Finally another counterintuitive finding related to the previously identified points is that wineries try to seek organizational legitimacy through identity projections not only by portraying themselves as legitimate cluster members, but also by trying to increase and maintain the legitimacy of the whole cluster. In fact, data show that some wineries strategically choose to continue to emphasize the normalization of the collective identity, even after legitimation has been achieved. If a supporting role to the maintenance of institutionalized identities is acknowledged to trade associations and other leading identity advocates (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Wry et al., 2011), it is less expected by individual organizations. The fact that organizations project narratives that contribute to the formation and legitimation of a nascent organizational field has been acknowledged in the literature (Fiol & Romanelli, 2012; Navis & Glynn, 2010; Wry et al., 2011). However, in this case, the majority of wineries still seek to support the collective cluster legitimacy through the projection of collective acclaiming verbal accounts, even if the cluster has already been legitimized by consumers and other institutional intermediaries (wine critics and official Italian and European appellations). In particular, wineries adopting a blending strategy did not shift to the second phase theorized by Navis and Glynn (2010), who asserted that, after the collective field emerging phase in which organizations try to support the establishing of a legitimate collective identity, organizations shift to claims emphasizing their uniqueness within the field. Interestingly, these wineries were also the ones preferring an inter-group comparison to intra-group distinction. Further research could investigate under which circumstances organizations choose to strategically underestimate their intra-group distinctiveness in favor of a strong collective identity that provides distinctiveness from less direct competitors within their industry. Indeed, wineries adopting a personalizing strategy project their individual identity; however, counterintuitively, their identity projections emphasize the intent to maintain and increase the collective identity legitimacy through collective acclaiming themes. This strategy shows that, even after a collective identity is objectified and legitimized to external stakeholders, some organizations might pursue the dual intent of

acquiring visibility individually while continuing to nurture a collective identity that functions as a safety net against organizational challenges like slowed growth or new market explorations.

Sections 9.1.1 and 9.1.2 have proposed that a more fine-tuned understanding of how organizations try to achieve legitimate distinctiveness through identity projections requires thinking beyond the degree of conformity or distinctiveness of organizational identity claims to their main referent group. Meanwhile, the two following sections illustrate how findings emerging from this research offer support to recent organizational identity theories, claiming that it is essential to consider both the role of organization-specific characteristics and institutional available elements in order to understand how organizations socially construct their identities in relation to their macro-institutional environments.

### **9.1. 3 Organizational characteristics complement institutional bricolage**

As Rindova (2007, p. 158) affirmed, “corporate communications play an important identity-constructing role because they are carefully crafted self-presentations that reflect how an organization wishes to be viewed and treated.” In broader terms, sense-giving is in itself an act of sense-making if, together with Weick, we ask “How can I know what I think until I see what I say?” (Weick, 1979, p. 5). Therefore, as Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy (2004) explained, sense-making is inherently a textual process. Drawing on these assumptions, the grounded model emerging from this research also illustrates how organizations in a regional business cluster construct their identities in relation to their supra-organizational identity.

The three emerging identity combination strategies indicate that organizations in regional clusters, even after years of establishment, continuously make sense of their identities through a) different re-combinations of regional labels and meanings and (b) integrating/combining them with organization-specific identity themes derived from organizations’ characters, entrepreneurs’ ideologies, specific organizational traits, and events. These findings support and complement the definition of institutional bricolage as a mechanism of identity construction by which institutions also enable organizational

identity distinctiveness (Glynn, 2008). According to Duymedjian and Rüling (2010, p. 138), Lévi-Strauss stated that “the outcome [of bricolage] differs from the original elements in the repertoire only by the way in which the parts are assembled (1962/1966, p. 18), which ensures that the outcome of bricolage can easily be disassembled and re-integrated into the repertoire.” Glynn (2008) explained that the different ways in which the parts are assembled allow organizations to construct their unique identities. Yet the identity combination strategies emerging from this study tell a partially different story. In fact, not only are the elements of the collective identity differently re-combined by different wineries, but there are also different individual organizational idiosyncratic meanings that are added to the re-combination of available elements, consistent with what has been described by recent identity formation models (Gioia et al., 2010; Kroezen & Heugens, 2012; Lerpold et al. 2007). These models explain that organizational identities’ formation does not derive from either membership in super-ordinate categories or entrepreneurs’ vision and other organization-specific traits. It is a continuous interaction between internally negotiated claims and external comparison (similarities to or differences from other organizations) that continuously give form to an organization’s identity. The findings from this research support this view by showing that organizations develop their identity contents (Kroezen & Heugens, 2012) by combining both organization-specific themes and the local cluster’s institutionalized themes. Therefore, the role of organizational characteristics is not only limited to the guidance of the repetitive translation of institutional meanings (Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008), but also offers a repertoire of elements used as a cultural toolkit (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006; Rindova, Ravasi, & Dalpiaz, 2010) that complements the toolkit of institutional cultural elements.

#### **9.1.4 Historical role, strategic role, and identification influence conformity more than status**

Beyond the model, I offered a set of propositions identifying possible antecedents to the three emerging identity combination strategies (see Section 8.3). These propositions have implications for organizational identity theory inasmuch as they confirm the relevant role of characteristics related to organizations’ specific identities in explaining

the likelihood that organizations will more or less conform to their referent groups (van Halderen et al., 2011). In fact, they show that organizational identity combination strategies are influenced by the organization's historical and social role within the cluster and by managers' identification with the cluster. In addition, some mechanisms influencing organizational identity expression by individuals in an organizational context are also operating at a superior level of analysis. In particular, in terms of conforming identity projections, the findings from this research suggest that variables like managers' identification with the cluster, affective commitment, historical role, and strategic role in the trade association are more predictive of conforming behavior than organizational status. In fact, the findings from this study do not support previous theories on middle status conformity (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001). In the context under study, high status wineries project highly conforming verbal identity claims, seeming to maintain the hegemonic institutional logics that are "favorable to their interest" (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006, p. 28). This demonstrates that, in certain institutional contexts, even if given more freedom by an already achieved organizational legitimacy (Phillips & Zuckerman, 2001), high status firms prefer not to deviate. In particular, the findings suggest that, when high status organizations are highly embedded in the socio-cultural milieu of the cluster, they use more collective identity themes and coherent organizational identity themes in their external identity communication, whereas more peripheral firms use more distinctive organizational identity themes. This confirms theories emphasizing that collective identities are more represented by prototypical and central firms of a group (Mervis & Rosch, 1981; Peteraf & Shanley, 1997). This also confirms that firms that are actively involved in trade associations are more likely subject to isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) and that conforming strategies are influenced by past organizational history (van Halderen et al., 2011). Furthermore, the findings confirm that strong identification with a collective identity favors expressive behaviors of that identity and that strongly identified firms foster inter-group comparison for "distinctive category membership" whereas less identified firms emphasize relational internal distinctiveness, as acknowledged at the organizational and social group levels (Ashforth & Mael, 1996; Brewer, 1991; Emler & Hopkins, 1990;

Shamir, 1990). Interestingly, the data also emphasize the role of affective commitment in influencing identity combination strategies. Although the specific role of affective commitment needs further investigation (see Section 8.1.2), the findings support the relevance of emotional aspects for collective organizational identity construction within communities, as emphasized by recent research (Howard-Grenville, Metzger, & Meyer, in press, cited in Gioia et al., 2013).

Finally, another interesting consideration emerging from this study's findings is the relevance of considering organizational socio-psychological and social variables to understand how collective identities are maintained or changed. In the case under study, wineries that are highly and moderately identified, that played a relevant historical role during the cluster pioneering phase, and that still play an influential strategic role through the trade association are those that are more concerned with maintaining and increasing the legitimacy of the collective regional cluster identity. In contrast, firms that are less identified, that were established after the cluster had already obtained its legitimacy, and that play a less relevant social role in the cluster community are those that mainly seek categorical legitimacy. By projecting distinctive identity features within the boundaries of legitimate membership, the latter group of wineries contributes to a progressive shifting of the collective regional cluster identity (Rao et al., 2005) by providing stakeholders with different cues along with the collective label (Negro et al., 2011). In theories of collective identity formation, the identification of pioneers and enthusiast entrepreneurs with collective story worlds is considered influential in helping the emergence and consolidation of collective identity stories, which in turn favor the legitimacy establishment of the collective identity (Fiol & Romanelli, 2012). Based on the exploration of an already established collective identity, I propose that socio-psychological and social organizational variables deserve further attention, not only to understand how collective identities emerge, but also to investigate the processes by which individual organizational identity projections can maintain and change collective identities over time. These considerations also have relevant practical implications for coordinated regional fields, inasmuch as they suggest that coordinating actors (e.g., trade associations) could foster organizational alignment with the regional identity working on

the enhancement of managers' identification with the cluster and expand participation to strategic collective discussions.

## **9.2 FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS**

Although this research contributes principally to the literature on organizational identity, emerging findings have some implications for other literature as they provide insights suggesting interesting directions for future research. More specifically, considering that identity is defined by Scott (2008) as a carrier of institutions, the findings from the current research have some implications for new institutional theory, especially for what concerns the recent and developing debate on institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby 2006). Furthermore, as the object of this research is a regional business cluster, findings have implications for the current debate on the strategic relevance of business cluster identities and their role in facing globalization challenges. The next two sections further elaborate upon these implications and suggest related directions for further research.

### **9.2.1 Steering institutional change through legitimate organizational texts**

The three identity combination strategies emerging from this research show how formal organizational communications contribute to introducing both supporting and shifting meanings within and outside the institutional field, which may end up transforming the macro-discourse of the field. As explained in Section 9.1.3, organizations not only assemble elements of the collective repertoire in different ways, but also assemble new meanings drawn from their idiosyncratic organizational traits and experiences. Therefore, when recipients receive and disassemble what organizations communicate, these new meanings may be re-integrated into the collective repertoire, together with old institutionalized meanings, and might cause a slow shift in the macro collective discourse. Hence, these findings suggest how organizational communication might contribute to the institutionalization of meanings into macro discourses (Phillips et al., 2004; Suddaby, 2011; Hardy, 2011). In particular, findings from this research provide an illustration of how organizations may steer a slow institutional change through the craft of legitimate organizational texts. In fact, this study investigates the micro-organizational work that wineries do in interpreting and translating the discursive resources (Phillips et

al., 2004; Vaara et al., 2007) available at their institutional field level (i.e., the regional business cluster) to craft their organizational identity projections. More specifically, I investigated how organizations interpret, translate, and communicate the identity contents elaborated by the cluster trade association, which is, according to theories in institutional work, an authorizing agent that provides cultural-cognitive elements to enable the maintenance of the institutional field (Greenwood et al., 2002; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). As this research does not address how the institutional collective identity is affected by the three different identity combinations adopted by wineries, further research in this direction is needed to confirm and complement what these findings suggest. However, they indeed shed light on different strategies by which wineries craft texts that associate more or less supporting meanings to the collective identity label of Franciacorta. Furthermore, the model shows how more or less conforming organizational texts emerge according to different combinations of visual and verbal identity themes, thereby providing an expanded understanding of how organizations contribute to institutional work with their production of whole sign systems that potentially contribute to “maintain or alter institutional understandings” (Lawrence & Suddaby 2006, p. 246). The findings indicated how the discursive resources supported by the trade association are differently used and reproduced in organizational texts by wineries. The role of organizational texts has an increasing relevance in the literature on institutional work, especially because, according to a discursive view on institutional maintenance and change, “institutionalization does not occur through the simple imitation of an action by immediate observers but, rather, through the creation of supporting texts”; furthermore, “the actions of individual actors affect the discursive realm through the production of texts” (Phillips et al., 2004, p. 640). This study demonstrated that, even in a highly institutionalized context like a regional wine cluster, where coercive, normative, and mimetic pressures are strong but competition is high, organizations find different ways of using the legitimate labels and meanings circulating in the field, ending up with different types of legitimate identity projections. Particularly interesting is the case of wineries adopting the shifting type of combinations. They reproduce the labels and authoritative meanings that are supported



by the trade association, although they associate with them new meanings, originating from their organizational culture, that provide external audiences a wider range of possible meanings to associate with the collective identity Franciacorta. This is an empirical illustration of how micro-processes might contribute to a slow modification of institutional discourses without the need for actors to mobilize resources from rival institutional discourses as the majority of institutional change theories have theorized thus far (Negro et al., 2011; Rao et al., 2003). The process by which some organizations steer legitimate changes to the institutionalized collective identity of the regional cluster also offers some relevant practical implications for both trade associations and individual organizations. On the associative side, this process raises awareness that, even when the coordination effort is strong, the pitfall of fostering alignment through strong authoritative stories is that it does not prevent the existence and growth of multiple identities within the cluster. To the contrary, the fact that organizations shift the collective identity meanings but comply with the authoritative and sanctioned collective practices makes the slow change less evident and manageable by coordinating actors. Meanwhile, on the organizational side, the shifting identity combination strategy is an exemplary strategy for legitimately steering collective change and slowly adding new practices and meanings to the institutionalized collective identity, without incurring sanctions.

### **9.2.2 Regional cluster identity as a resource for organizational strategic communication and organizations' identification with the cluster as support for the cluster's symbolic survival**

The recent debate on regional business clusters challenges the strategic value of collective cluster identities for individual organizations for two main reasons. One is the influence of globalization that has a standardizing effect on regional cluster specificities due to the opening of local networks (Belussi & Sammarra, 2010; Camuffo & Grandinetti, 2011). The other is the growing investments of individual organizations, especially the biggest and the cluster leaders, in the development and communication of their corporate identities and brands (Foresti et al., 2007). These dynamics keep nurturing the old debate between scholars supporting a neo-Marshallian view of regional

business clusters (Becattini, 1979; Dei Ottati, 1991), where collective socio-cultural aspects are key resources for organizational action, and scholars supporting an organizational view (Lazerson & Lorenzoni, 1999), where organizational culture and investments are instead more relevant for cluster firms' actions.

Findings from this research affirm the value of both socio-cultural collective resources and organizational resources. First of all data showed that, at least in some context where there is a strong link between the product and the territory, the collective cluster identity has a strong strategic value for individual organizations' communication. In fact, in the context under study, the collective cluster identity—rather than being challenged by globalization—is considered a resource to be used in building an organizational competitive advantage and better face globalization challenges. This is true for both smaller and larger wineries, albeit in different ways. In fact, individual organizational identities, particularly entrepreneurs' choices, play a relevant role in choosing how to use the collective identity resource and integrate it into one's own organizational projections. Some wineries only consider the advantages of the categorical status that being member of a regional cluster grants. Instead, unlike what was expected based on the economic literature (Foresti et al., 2007; Guelpa & Micelli, 2007; Lazerson & Lorenzoni, 1999), the cluster leaders strongly communicate the collective cluster identity. In fact, they consider the collective regional identity to be strategic support to their organizational identities, especially because of the added value of a consistent cultural baggage that is nurtured not by one, but by a whole group of dedicated firms in a territory. This conclusion is further confirmed, at least in terms of what concerns the Italian wine industry, by recent news reports of big Italian wine firms going back to their regional cluster trade associations after years of non-membership ([www.winenews.it](http://www.winenews.it)). As already pointed out in Section 8.3, in this empirical case, the biggest wineries—and market leaders—are also wineries that played a relevant historical role in the development of the cluster and a prominent strategic role in the *Consorzio*'s board. It can be reasonably hypothesized that leaders that are not as socially embedded in the regional cluster, such as new entrants and non-local mass producers or even multinationals investing in a regional business cluster, could consider the collective cluster identity to be less relevant.

However, in many cases, regional cluster leaders indeed have strong roots in the territory.

Second, the refinement of the understanding of the relationship between cluster firms' identification and their cluster identity expression enriches the understanding of how organizations' identification with the cluster contributes to the cluster identity strength (Becattini, 2003; Peteraf & Shanley, 1997). This again confirms the value of considering the relevance of both collective cluster identities and organizational identities, supporting the view that cluster identity is not a given due to agglomeration, but rather is shaped and sustained by individual firms' behaviors and identification with the cluster (Biggiero & Sammarra, 2003a). Previous studies on identification at the district level demonstrated that identification is an antecedent of cooperation attitudes, situated learning, and attachment (Biggiero & Sammarra, 2003a, 2003b); therefore, the identification of organizations to cluster contributes to their actual survival. Findings emerging from this research show that organizations' identification with the cluster also implies that identified organizations project identities that are conforming to the cluster collective identity, thereby nurturing the symbolic survival of the cluster identity. This research addressed a context where production and the supply chain are still mainly local. Further research could investigate whether organizations' identification with a cluster could contribute to the survival of a collective symbolic identity, despite actual disintegration of local relationships and production. Finally, and still related to organizations' identification with the cluster, previous studies (Sammarra & Biggiero 2001; Staber, 2010) did not differentiate cognitive from affective components of social identity (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000), which seem to have different consequences. This shows the relevance of considering cognitive and affective components of social identity separately at the supra-organizational level as well, especially in terms of what concerns their consequences on identity expression, as proposed by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) at the organizational level.

### **9.3 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

Having discussed the implications of emerging findings, I would also like to address some limitations of this study and propose possible solutions through further research.

As in the nature of qualitative inductive research, these findings need replication and testing. Considering more specific features of the case design, I first of all acknowledge that the wine industry is a context in which the regional collective identity is particularly relevant because of the link existing between the product and the territory (Carlsen et al., 1997). This makes the collective identity a resource for marketing and branding strategies (Christy & Norris, 1999; Swaminathan, 2001) and for achieving categorical status (Zhao & Zhou, 2011). This provided a rationale for selecting a wine cluster for an exploratory study; however, it limits findings with respect to their generalizability to contexts in which the local identity is less relevant for commercial and promotional strategies, such as in many typical manufacturing industrial districts. I also acknowledge that this research provided space for comparison only among organizations of the same regional cluster. It would be worthwhile to replicate the case study in other regional clusters with different characteristics. For instance, the variation of cluster organization types (e.g., specialists versus mass producers, local versus multinational, family versus non-family managed, subcontractors versus final producers) could be worth considering in further research. In addition, this case was also purposively chosen because of the presence of a highly active *Consorzio*—that is, a strong identity advocate of an institutionalized collective identity story. It would be highly interesting, and undoubtedly challenging, to replicate this study in a context where the collective identity is less supported by coordinating institutional actors and less institutionalized. Finally, this case is characterized by generally well-performing wineries, and the cluster's total annual sales are still slightly growing (see Chapter 4), despite reaching its maturity phase. Therefore, wineries' performances were not considered, and the model does not explain whether different performances are related to different identity combination strategies. This is indeed a relevant question worth further study.

In addition to methodological issues, I would like to acknowledge a limitation of emerging findings originating from the approach to the research. In fact, this exploration was guided by an interest in organizational identity projections; therefore, I adopted an inside-out perspective. Although this approach was consistent with the research questions, developing a complementary study with an outside-in perspective would

allow for added complexity in the model. In fact, considering external stakeholders' influence on identity projections and legitimacy/distinctiveness strategies would make it possible to draw a more comprehensive model of identity dynamics at the supra-organizational level, as is done by models of identity dynamics at the organizational level (Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Rindova & Fombrun, 1999).

Finally, I would like to suggest some possible areas for further research inspired by the emerging findings. The qualitative inductive results suggest that socio-cultural embeddedness influences the different types of identity combination strategies adopted. I believe that, to further refine the relationships emerging from the propositions and eventually to test them, a research design including mixed methods would be particularly appropriate. In fact, it would be highly valuable to include both qualitative and quantitative content analyses of organizational identity projections as well as survey data on a network's actual relationships and identification. Network analysis would be extremely useful not only for measuring organizational social embeddedness, but also for assessing communicative flows among organizations within the cluster (Lee & Monge, 2011). These efforts would provide further insights into how and why organizations combine the collective cluster identities with their organizational identities and on how communicating institutionalizes (Hardy, 2011).

In addition, the findings exemplify how relevant it is to consider the multimodality of visual and verbal projections to understand organizational identity expressions especially related to their institutional positioning. Further research could deepen the analysis of multimodal organizational identity projections not only to understand how "people orchestrate meaning through their selection and configuration of modes" (Jewitt, 2009, p. 14, cited in Bell & Davison, 2013, p. 177), but also to understand how visual organizational identity projections within institutional fields could contribute to the maintenance and shift of collective identities through rhetorical patterns like repetition and antithesis (Bell & Davison, 2013).

Finally, the present research has explored how organizations combine their identities with identity cues coming from a reservoir that is simultaneously supra-organizational and local. Therefore, as outlined in the theoretical implications, these findings contribute

to the understanding of those local community fields that have only recently regained attention in new institutional studies (Marquis et al., 2011). However, the context under study constitutes a community of firms in the same industry. It would be highly interesting to design further research on how organizational identities are constructed and communicated in community fields comprising organizations that are not operating in the same industry, but that still constitute a local community field. This would help acquire richer insights on how co-location contributes to identity construction and how locally constructed identities become strategic resources in a globalized world.

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Collective and individual identities in the external  
communication of regional cluster firms:  
The case of Franciacorta wineries

ANNEXES

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## ANNEX 1. THE CODEBOOK

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RECORDING AND CONTEXT UNITS are defined in the NOTES column.

NUMBER	THEME	VAR.	VALUE	DESCRIPTION	NOTES
1		V1	Text	WINERY NAME	
2		V2	Text	WINERY URL	
<b>PART 1 – VISUAL IDENTITY MARKERS</b> (Balmer 2006; Olins and Selame 2000; Elsbach 2003)					
3	LOGO	V3	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta logo in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: collective logo
4		V3.a	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta logo in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: collective logo
5		V3.b	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta logo in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: collective logo
6		V3.c	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta logo in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: collective logo
7		V3.d	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta logo in other pages	RECORDING UNIT: collective logo
		V3.e	1= old logo 2= new logo 3= both	Old/new logo	RECORDING UNIT: collective logo
8	TAGLINE	V4	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta tagline “Unione di passioni” in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence
9		V4.a	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta tagline “Unione di passioni” in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence
10		V4.b	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta tagline “Unione di passioni” in	RECORDING UNIT: sentence

				the firm description page	
11		V4.c	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta tagline “Unione di passioni” in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence
12		V4.d	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Franciacorta tagline “Unione di passioni” in other pages	RECORDING UNIT: sentence
13	FRANCIACORTA	V5	FREQUENCY ( <i>ratio scale</i> )	Frequency of the word Franciacorta <sup>1</sup> (except wine names and labels) in the homepage	RECORDING UNIT: word
14		V5.a	FREQUENCY ( <i>ratio scale</i> )	Frequency of the word Franciacorta (except wine names and labels) in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: word
15		V5.b	FREQUENCY ( <i>ratio scale</i> )	Frequency of the word Franciacorta (except wine names and labels) in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: word
16		V5.c	FREQUENCY ( <i>ratio scale</i> )	Frequency of the word Franciacorta (except wine names and labels) in the territory	RECORDING UNIT: word

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<sup>1</sup> Count also “Franciacortino” and “Franciacurtense”

				description page	
17		V5.d	FREQUENCY ( <i>ratio scale</i> )	TOT. WORD FRANCIACORTA	RECORDING UNIT: word
18		V6	0= not applicable 1= product name 2= method of production 3= winery 4= territory ( <i>nominal</i> )	Does the word Franciacorta refer mainly to the product name, the method of production, the winery or the territory?	RECORDING UNIT: word CONTEXT UNIT: website pages (home+product+firm +territory). Consider only the main text in pages, exclude indexes and boxes with product lists. The choice territory is to be selected if Franciacorta is used to describe the region per se. If it refers to the origin, history, location of the winery, the choice winery is to be selected.
19		V7	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Is the word Franciacorta used in sentences that describe values and purposes of the winery?	RECORDING UNIT: word CONTEXT UNIT: sentence.

20		V8	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	Is the word Franciacorta used in association to the winery name (e.g. name winery + “winery of Franciacorta” or “in Franciacorta”)?	RECORDING UNIT: word CONTEXT UNIT: sentence.
21		V9	0 – ABSENT 1 – bigger than wine and firm name 2 – bigger than wine name but not than firm name 3 – bigger than firm name but not than wine name 4 – smaller than wine name and firm name 5- equal firm name, smaller than product name 6- equal firm name, bigger than product name 7- equal product	Prominence of the word Franciacorta in wine labels	RECORDING UNIT: word CONTEXT UNIT: label picture. Not all labels are analysed. According to the talk with the consortium CEO each firm has a main label design for all Franciacortas. There are few exceptions for special vintages or special wines. Therefore the “main label design” for each firm is considered as emerging from the websites. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the label style that appears more often

			name, smaller firm name 8- equal product name, bigger than firm name (nominal)		
<b>PART 2 – VALUES</b> (van Riel and Balmer 1997; Lamertz, Heugens and Calmet 2005)					
22	CONSORZIO'S VALUES	V10	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INNOVATION in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.  Count sentences that explicitly or implicitly express the values.  These values have been inductively detected from the Consortium press kit and website. See examples in the annex 1 enclosed (Valori Consorzio Franciacorta)
23		V10.a	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INNOVATION in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.



24		V10.b	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INNOVATION in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
25		V10.c	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INNOVATION in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
26		V10.d	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INNOVATION TOTAL	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
27		V11	FREQUENCY (ratio)	QUALITY in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
28		V11.a	FREQUENCY (ratio)	QUALITY in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
29		V11.b	FREQUENCY (ratio)	QUALITY in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.

30		V11.c	FREQUENCY (ratio)	QUALITY in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
31		V11.d	FREQUENCY (ratio)	QUALITY TOTAL	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
32		V12	FREQUENCY (ratio)	UNIQUENESS in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
33		V12.a	FREQUENCY (ratio)	UNIQUENESS in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
34		V12.b	FREQUENCY (ratio)	UNIQUENESS in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
35		V12.c	FREQUENCY (ratio)	UNIQUENESS in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
36		V12.d	FREQUENCY	UNIQUENESS	RECORDING UNIT:

			<i>(ratio)</i>	TOTAL	sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
37		V13	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	COMPETENCE in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
38		V13.a	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	COMPETENCE in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
39		V13.b	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	COMPETENCE in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
40		V13.c	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	COMPETENCE in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
41		V13.d	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	COMPETENCE TOTAL	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
42		V14	FREQUENCY	TRUSTWORTHINESS	RECORDING UNIT:

			<i>(ratio)</i>	in homepage	sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
43		V14.a	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	TRUSTWORTHINESS in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
44		V14.b	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	TRUSTWORTHINESS in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
50		V14.c	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	TRUSTWORTHINESS in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
51		V14.d	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	TRUSTWORTHINESS TOTAL	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
52		V15	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	PASSION in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
53		V15.a	FREQUENCY	PASSION	RECORDING UNIT:

			<i>(ratio)</i>	in the wine description page	sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
54		V15.b	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	PASSION in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
55		V15.c	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	PASSION in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
56		V15.d	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	PASSION TOTAL	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
57		V16	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	ELEGANCE/ REFINEMENT in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
58		V16.a	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	ELEGANCE/ REFINEMENT in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
59		V16.b	FREQUENCY	ELEGANCE/	RECORDING UNIT:

			<i>(ratio)</i>	REFINEMENT in the firm description page	sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
45		V16.c	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	ELEGANCE/ REFINEMENT in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
46		V16.d	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	ELEGANCE/ REFINEMENT TOTAL	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
47		V17	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLINESS in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
48		V17.a	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLINESS in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
49		V17.b	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLINESS in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
50		V17.c	FREQUENCY	ENVIRONMENTAL	RECORDING UNIT:

			<i>(ratio)</i>	FRIENDLINESS in the territory description page	sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
51		V17.d	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLINESS TOTAL	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
52	INDIVIDUAL FIRM VALUES	V18	STRING <i>(nominal)</i>	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 1 NAME	Inductively detect values that are not included in the consortium values list, but that are prominent in the text analyzed. (max. 3 values).
53		V18.a	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 1 in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
54		V18.b	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 1 in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
55		V18.c	FREQUENCY <i>(ratio)</i>	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 1 in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT:

					paragraph.
56		V18.d	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 1 in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
57		V18.e	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 1 TOTAL	
58		V19	STRING (nominal)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 2 NAME	
59		V19.a	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 2 in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
60		V19.b	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 2 in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
61		V19.c	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 2 in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
62		V19.d	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 2 in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.



63		V19.e	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 2 TOTAL	
64		V20	STRING (nominal)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 3 NAME	
65		V20.a	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 3 in homepage	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
66		V20.b	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 3 in the wine description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
67		V20.c	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 3 in the firm description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
68		V20.d	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 3 in the territory description page	RECORDING UNIT: sentence. CONTEXT UNIT: paragraph.
69		V20.e	FREQUENCY (ratio)	INDIVIDUAL VALUE 1 TOTAL	
<b>PART 3 – CUES OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS</b> (Begalli, Coduri and Gaeta, 2009; Bernetti, Casini and Marinelli 2006; Corkindale and Welsh 2003; Foresti, Guelpa and Trenti 2007; Hingley and Lindgreen 2002; Maizza and Iazzi 2011; Remaud and Couderc 2006)					

70	WEBSITE EVALUATION	V21	0 = not determined 1= from weekly to monthly 2= more than monthly ( <i>nominal</i> )	WEBSITE UPDATE	RECORDING UNIT: date CONTEXT UNIT: homepage
71		V22	0 = only graphics 1 = with sound 2 = with animation 3 = with sound and animation ( <i>nominal</i> )	GRAPHIC QUALITY	CONTEXT UNIT: website
72		V23	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	ENGLISH VERSION OF WEBSITE	CONTEXT UNIT: homepage
73		V24	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	E-COMMERCE	CONTEXT UNIT: website
74		V25	0 = none 1 = visit book 2 = forum 3 = blog 4 = facebook 5= twitter 6= rss feed 7= more than one ( <i>nominal</i> )	COMMUNITY	CONTEXT UNIT: website
75	OPENNESS TO INTERNATIONAL INTERACTIONS	V26	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	PRESS PAGES IN ENGLISH	CONTEXT UNIT: website
76		V27	(0= NO; 1= YES) ( <i>nominal</i> )	PARTICIPATION TO EVENTS ABROAD	CONTEXT UNIT: website

77	INNOVATION	V28	(0= NO; 1= YES) (nominal)	INNOVATION AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES	CONTEXT UNIT: website
78	ENVIRONMENT	V29	0= NO; 1= YES, bio 2= YES, PROJECTS (nominal)	ACTIVITIES PRO- ENVIRONMENT	CONTEXT UNIT: website
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS (PROVIDED BY <i>CONSORZIO</i>)</b>					
79	DEMOGRAPHICS	V30	NUMBER (interval)	ESTABLISHED IN (YEAR)	
80		V31	NUMBER (ratio)	VINEYARD HECTARES	
81		V32	NUMBER (ratio)	AVERAGE YEARLY PRODUCTION (BOTTLES)	
82		V33	(0= NO; 1= YES) (nominal)	WINE DIRECT SALE	
83		V34	0 - LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS TRADITIONALLY MAKING WINE 1- LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS ORIGINALLY OPERATING IN OTHER SECTORS 2 - NON LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS 3 - PART OF A LOCAL GROUP	PROPERTY	

			4 - PART OF A NON LOCAL GROUP <i>(nominal)</i>		
84		V35	0=FAMILY 1=MIXED 2= NON FAMILY <i>(nominal)</i>	MANAGEMENT	
85		V36	1 = ONLY WINE 2 = WINE AND OTHER PRODUCTS <i>(nominal)</i>	PRODUCTS	
86		V37	(0= NO; 1= YES) <i>(nominal)</i>	ACCOMMODATION	
87		V38	(0= NO; 1= YES) <i>(nominal)</i>	RESTAURANT	
88		V39	(0= NO; 1= YES) <i>(nominal)</i>	WINERY VISITS	

## ANNEX 2. LOG OF QUALITATIVE DATA GATHERING

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DATE	PLACE	ACTIVITY	WHO	WHAT
June, July 2010	Lugano (CH)	Pre-study document collection; checking case relevance.	--	Online newspaper articles <a href="http://www.corriere.it">www.corriere.it</a> <a href="http://www.repubblica.it">www.repubblica.it</a>
June, July 2010	Lugano (CH)	Pre-study document collection; checking case relevance.	--	Wine blogs and websites : <a href="http://www.winenews.it">www.winenews.it</a> <a href="http://www.stradedeivini.it">www.stradedeivini.it</a> <a href="http://www.spiritodivino.biz/">http://www.spiritodivino.biz/</a> <a href="http://www.gamberorosso.it">www.gamberorosso.it</a> <a href="http://www.espresso.repubblica.it">www.espresso.repubblica.it</a>
June, July 2010	Lugano (CH)	Pre-study document collection; checking case relevance.	--	Franciacorta <i>Consorzio's</i> website <a href="http://www.franciacorta.net">www.franciacorta.net</a> including press releases 2009-2010 and press clippings November/December 2009.
September 21, 2010	Erbusco, Franciacorta (Bs-Italy)	Preliminary understanding of the case	Key-informant	First non structured interview with key-informant of the <i>Consorzio</i>
October 2010	Lugano (Ch)	Preliminary understanding of the case, and codebook design.	--	Franciacorta <i>Consorzio's</i> website <a href="http://www.franciacorta.net">www.franciacorta.net</a>
October 21, 2010		Preliminary understanding of the case, and codebook design.	Key-informant	Second non structured interview with key-informant of the <i>Consorzio</i>
October 21, 2010	Erbusco, Franciacorta (Bs-Italy)	Preliminary understanding of the case, and codebook design.	--	<i>Consorzio's</i> Press kit + brochures
October 21, 2010	Erbusco, Franciacorta (Bs-Italy)	Preliminary understanding of the case, and codebook design.	--	Book: "Franciacorta. Un vino, una terra" (2010 – Swan Group)
July 28, 2011	Erbusco, Franciacorta (Bs-Italy)	Discussion of preliminary quantitative findings.	Key-informant	Third non structured interview with key-informant of the <i>Consorzio</i> .

October 30, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 1: owner and communication manager	Semi-structured interview
October 30, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 2: owner and communication manager	Semi-structured interview
October 31, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 3: owner and communication manager	Semi-structured interview
October 31, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 3: owner and communication manager	Observation cellar tour
October 31, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 3	Press kit (printed version) Brochures + Press kit (cd)
November 20, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 4: communication manager (owning family)	Semi-structured interview
November 20, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 4: employee + oenologist	Observation cellar tour + tasting event
November 20, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 4	Brochures Press kit (pdf) Music cd
Novmeber 27, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 2: owner and oenologist	Observation cellar tour
Novmeber 27, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 2	Brochure
November 28, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 5: entrepreneur/founder	Semi-structured interview
November 28, 2011	Franciacorta	Data collection from sample of	Winery 5:	Observation cellar tour

	(Bs- Italy)	embedded units	entrepreneur/founder	
November 28, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 5	Brochures
November 30, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 6: entrepreneur/founder	Semi-structured interview
November 30, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 6	Brochures
December 2, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 7: director- oenologist	Semi-structured interview
December 5, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 8: employee	Observation cellar tour
December 5, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 8: owner, communication manager	Semi-structured interview
December 5, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 8	Brochures Books Flyers Posters Roll up
December 6, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 9: employee	Observation cellar tour
December 6, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 9: entrepreneur/founder	Semi-structured interview
December 6, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 9	Press releases Press clippings Book
December 7, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 10: owner	Semi-structured interview
December 16, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 11 and 12: communication	Semi-structured interview



			manager	
December 16, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 11 and 12	Brochures Books Cuvée design kit
December 16, 2011	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 11: employee	Observation cellar tour
January 14, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 12: employee	Observation cellar tour
January 14, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 1: employee	Observation cellar tour
January 14, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 1	Brochure
January 18, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 7: employee	Observation cellar tour
January 18, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 7	Press releases Poster Roll up
February 12, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 10: employee	Observation cellar tour
February 12, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 10	Brochures Internal tour guidelines + Brochure Strada del Vino and Torbiere del Sebino
March, 25 2012	Verona (Italy)	Data collection on <i>Consorzio</i> and wineries	--	Observation exhibition Vinitaly
June 4, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 6: owners/founders	Observation cellar tour
June 8, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 13: owner	Semi-structured interview
June 8, 2012	Franciacorta (Bs- Italy)	Data collection from sample of embedded units	Winery 13	Press releases

September 5, 2012	Erbusco, Franciacorta (Bs-Italy)	Discussion findings.	Key- informant	Fourth non structured interview with key-informant of the <i>Consortio</i> .
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## ANNEX 3. INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

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### ITALIAN VERSION (ORIGINAL)

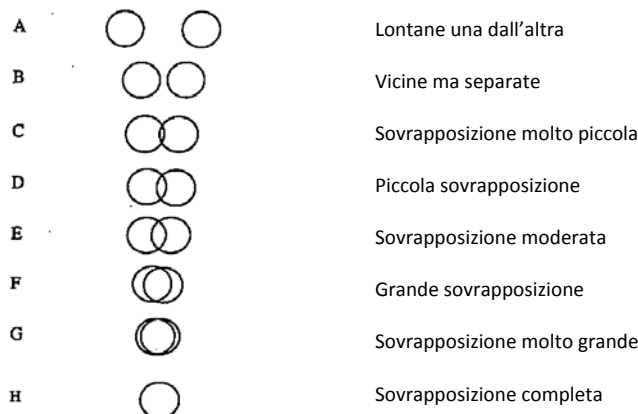
#### 1. Identità azienda e identità distretto regionale

1.a) Mi può raccontare chi è "nome azienda"? (*Probe. Chi è? Cosa fa?*)

1.b) Mi può parlare ora invece del distretto vitivinicolo della Franciacorta?  
(*Probe. Chi è? Cosa fa?*)

#### 2. Identificazione al distretto

2.a) Le mostro ora questa figura. Immagini che uno dei cerchi a sinistra rappresenti la sua identità e autodefinizione di azienda, mentre il cerchio a destra rappresenti l'identità del distretto vitivinicolo della Franciacorta. Mi può indicare per favore quale caso meglio descrive il livello di sovrapposizione tra la vostra identità e l'identità del distretto vitivinicolo della Franciacorta?



(*Probes: Che cosa l'ha portato a indicare [ripetere risposta data]? Territorio? Prodotto rigidamente regolamentato? Stesso modo di fare le cose? Storia comune? Stessi valori? Prestigio di Franciacorta? Unicità di Franciacorta?*)

*Aziende fuori da Franciacorta sono molto diverse da voi? Perchè sentite un rapporto di interdipendenza con le altre aziende franciacortine?)*

2.b) Se qualcuno critica o elogia il distretto di Franciacorta lo ritiene una critica/elogia anche per [nome azienda]? (*Probe: Chiedere esempi*).

### **3. Comunicazione identità**

3.a) Ora vorrei parlare con lei di comunicazione. A prescindere dal nome del prodotto e del territorio, mi può raccontare come comunicate all'esterno di essere un'azienda di Franciacorta? Quanto e perché è importante? (*Probe: a livello di simboli, di pratiche, di valori, esempi. Vi rende più riconoscibili? Trasmette i vostri valori? È una garanzia di come voi operate? Se no, perchè no? È diversamente importante per diversi destinatari?*)

3.b) Ora invece mi può raccontare come comunicate all'esterno la vostra unicità di azienda? Quanto è importante per [nome azienda] comunicare la propria individualità e diversità dal gruppo? (*Probe: a livello di simboli, di modo di fare, di valori, esempi. Per emergere nella competizione? Perchè siete diversi? Perchè fate qualcosa di diverso? Perchè volete prendere le distanze?*)

3.c) Ritiene che sia importante a livello strategico gestire questi due aspetti - azienda di Franciacorta/[nome azienda] - nella comunicazione con l'esterno? (*Probe: Perchè? Per raggiungere quali scopi? Avete mai avuto difficoltà nel gestire questa duplicità? Se sì come le avete affrontate? Mi può fare degli esempi?*)

3.d) Quello che mi dice è coerente/dissonante con il [livello di identificazione dichiarato]. Pensa che ci sia una connessione/secondo lei come si giustifica questa dissonanza?

### **4. Consorzio (Relazioni e percezioni della comunicazione)**

4.a) Ora vorrei parlare con lei del Consorzio. Mi può raccontare da quando siete membri e come siete entrati a farne parte? (*Probe: che tipo di relazione esiste? Solo associazione? Attività? Riflessioni strategiche?*)

4.b) So che il Consorzio recentemente ha lanciato una nuova brand identity, sa raccontarmi come si è sviluppato questo nuovo concetto? (*Probe: ritiene utile questa operazione? Per cosa esattamente?[Nome azienda] si sente rappresentata? Pensa che in generale la maggior parte delle aziende di Franciacorta possa essere rappresentata? Il fatto di avere un brand collettivo vi fa sentire più parte -identificazione- del distretto di Franciacorta?*)

4.c) Oltre al nuovo logo, il Consorzio sembra molto attivo nel promuovere una certa immagine del distretto di Franciacorta, cosa ne pensa? (*Probe: Vi riconoscete nelle definizioni del Consorzio? Vi fanno sentire parte del gruppo Franciacorta [rif. al livello di identificazione indicato]? È utile a mantenere viva la vostra percezione di chi è e cosa fa il distretto di Franciacorta? Vi ispirate alle definizioni del Consorzio per comunicare [nome azienda]?*)

4.d) Ci sono altre attività del Consorzio che vi fanno sentire parte del gruppo Franciacorta (es. Ricerca; eventi; riflessioni strategiche; protezione legale...) (*Probe: chiedere esempi*).

4.e) Immaginiamo ora che il Consorzio non sia mai esistito, come sarebbe [nome azienda]? (*Probe: pensa che sentirebbe ancora una sovrapposizione con il distretto - se è il caso)? Cambierebbe qualcosa nel vostro modo di essere e fare le cose? E nelle vostro modo di comunicarvi al pubblico?*)

4.f) E se invece il Consorzio cessasse di esistere ora, come vedrebbe il futuro di [nome azienda]? (*Probe: pensa che sentirebbe ancora una sovrapposizione con il distretto (se è il caso)? Cambierebbe qualcosa nel vostro modo di essere e fare le cose? E nelle vostro modo di comunicarvi al pubblico?*)

## **5. Altre aziende (relazioni e percezioni della comunicazione)**

- 5.a) Parliamo ora dei suoi rapporti con le altre aziende del distretto. Che tipo di relazioni intrattiene con loro? (*Probe: si parte in generale e poi si chiede eventualmente di situazioni particolari menzionate*).
- 5.b) Vi ispirate a ciò che dicono le altre aziende franciacortine nel comunicare [nome azienda]? In che modo? (*Probe: se è no, in che modo vi distinguete? Se sì nel senso che fate emergere ognuno la propria individualità o nel senso che comunicate l'identità Franciacorta?*).
- 5.c) Esiste secondo lei un'azienda, o più di una, che rappresenta il prototipo dell'azienda franciacortina? Me la può descrivere? (*Probe: [nome azienda] si ispira in quello che fa e comunica, a quello che l'azienda prototipica fa e comunica? Perché? Esempi? [Se l'azienda prototipica comunica l'appartenenza o l'identità Franciacorta] pensa che questo influisca sul fatto di [livello di identificazione indicato]?*)
- 5.d) Qual è/quali sono le aziende leader della Franciacorta? Me le può descrivere? (*Probe: [nome azienda] si ispira in quello che fa e comunica, a quello che l'azienda leader fa e comunica? Perché? Esempi? [Se l'azienda leader comunica l'appartenenza o l'identità Franciacorta] pensa che questo influisca sul fatto di [livello di identificazione indicato]?*)
- 5.e) Per decidere come raccontare chi siete al pubblico esterno, avete mai preso ispirazione da aziende non franciacortine? Se sì quali e in che modo? (*Probe: chiedere esempi*).
- 5.f) È mai capitato che qualche azienda nel distretto si sia comportata in modo non appropriato? Se sì mi può raccontare brevemente cosa è successo? (*Probe: Questa azienda ha utilizzato il nome Franciacorta in modo non appropriato? In che modo questo ha influito su [nome azienda]? E sul [livello di identificazione indicato] a Franciacorta? Pensa che questa, o azioni simili, abbiano influito su come comunicate la vostra appartenenza al distretto di Franciacorta?*)

## ENGLISH VERSION

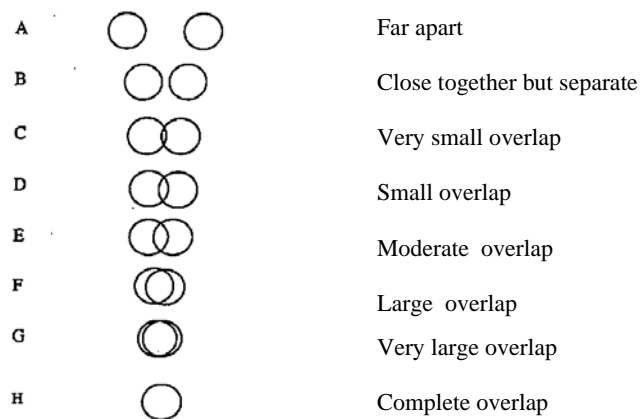
### 1. Winery's identity and regional cluster's identity.

1.a) Could you please tell me who is [name winery]? (*Probe. Who are you? What do you do?*)

1.b) Could you please tell me now who is the Franciacorta wine cluster? (*Probe. Who are you? What do you do?*)

### 2. Identification with the wine cluster

2.a) Please have a look at this figure. Imagine that one of the circles on the left represents your winery's identity and the other circle on the right represents the Franciacorta wine cluster identity. Could you please indicate which case best describes the level of overlap between your winery's and the Franciacorta wine cluster's identities?



(*Probes: What motivated [repeat response]? The common territory? Strictly ruled production? Same way of doing things? Common history? Common values? Franciacorta's prestige? Franciacorta's uniqueness? Are wineries outside of Franciacorta very different from you? Do you feel an interdependence with other Franciacorta wineries?*)

2.b) If anybody criticizes or praises the Franciacorta wine cluster, do you perceive it as a critique/praise of [name winery] as well? (*Probe: Ask for examples.*)

### **3. Identity communication**

3.a) Now I would like to talk about communication. Beyond the product's and territory's name, could you tell me how do you communicate externally that you are a Franciacorta winery? How much and why is that important? (*Probe: symbols, practices, values, examples. Does it make you more recognizable? Does it convey your values? Is it a guarantee of what you do? If not, why? Is it differently relevant depending on different targets?*)

3.b) Now could you please tell me how do you communicate externally your winery's uniqueness? How important is it to [name winery] to communicate its distinctiveness from the group? (*Probe: symbols, practices, values, examples. To emerge from competitors? Because you are different? Because you do something different? Because you want to distance yourself?*)

3.c) Do you think it is relevant to strategically manage these two aspects, being a Franciacorta winery and being [name winery], in external communication? (*Probe: Why? To what end? Have you ever had any difficulties in managing these two aspects? If so, how did you face them? Ask for examples.*)

3.d) What you are saying is consistent/dissonant with the [declared identification level]. Do you think that the two things are connected/how do you justify this dissonance?

### **4. The Consorzio (Relationships and perceptions of communication)**

4.a) Now I would like to talk with you about the *Consorzio*. Could you please tell me when you became associated with the *Consorzio* and how it happened? (*Probe: What is your relationship with the Consorzio? Only association? Joint activities? Strategic involvement?*)



4.b) The *Consorzio* has recently launched a new brand identity. Do you know how this new concept has been developed? (*Probe: Do you find it useful? For what exactly? Do you [name winery] feel represented by it? Do you think that a great part of Franciacorta wineries could feel represented by it? Does having a collective brand makes you feel more included—through identification—in the Franciacorta wine cluster?*)

4.c) Beyond the new logo, the *Consorzio* looks very active in promoting a certain image of the Franciacorta wine cluster. What do you think about this? (*Probe: Do you feel represented by what they say? Does it make you feel like part of the cluster [reference to the declared level of identification]? Is it useful to remind you of who the Franciacorta wine cluster is and what it does? Do you take inspiration from the Consorzio's definitions when you communicate?*)

4.d) Is there any other activity of the *Consorzio* that makes you feel part of the Franciacorta group? (e.g., research; events; strategic considerations; legal protection) (*Probe: Ask for examples.*)

4.e) Imagine that the *Consorzio* never existed. What would [name winery] be like now? (*Probe: Do you think that you would still be identified with the cluster if that were the case)? Would it change anything in your way of being and of doing things? In the way that you communicate to the public?*)

4.f) Imagine if the *Consorzio* were to stop its activities now. What would the future of [name winery] be? (*Probe: Do you think that you would still have an overlap with the cluster (if this were the case)? Would you change anything in your way of being and doing things? In the way that you communicate to the public?*)

## **5. Other wineries (relationships and perceptions of what they communicate)**

5.a) Now I would like to talk about your relationships with the other wineries of the cluster. What kinds of relationships do you have with them? (*Probe: Ask more about specific situations mentioned.*)

5.b) Are you inspired by what other wineries in Franciacorta say when you develop your communications? How? (*Probe: If not, how do you distinguish yourself from them? If yes, do you take inspiration to find ways to make your organizational identity stand out or to communicate the Franciacorta identity consistently?*)

5.c) Is there a winery, or more than one, that represents the prototype of the Franciacorta winery? Could you please describe it? (*Probe: Are you inspired in what you do and communicate by what the prototype does and communicates? Why? Examples? [If the prototypes communicate the Franciacorta identity] do you think that it influences the [level of identification] you mentioned?*)

5.d) Who is the lead winery or wineries of Franciacorta? Could you please describe it? (*Probe: Are you inspired in what you do and communicate by what the leader does and communicates? Why? Examples? [If the leader communicates the Franciacorta identity] do you think that it influences the [level of identification] you mentioned?*)

5.e) Have you ever been inspired by wineries outside Franciacorta to communicate your winery to the public? If yes, which wineries and how? (*Probe: Ask for examples.*)

5.f) Has it ever happened that a Franciacorta winery adopted an inappropriate behavior? If yes, could you briefly tell me what happened? (*Probe: Has this winery used the name Franciacorta in an inappropriate way? How has this influenced your winery? And on the [level of identification declared]? Do you think that this or similar actions influenced the way that you communicate your belongingness to the Franciacorta cluster?*)

## ANNEX 4. WITHIN CASE REPORTS

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## **WINERY 1**

In the preliminary analysis, Winery 1 was included in group 2, communicating collective values less, but using the name Franciacorta more. In general, Winery 1 does not communicate values much.

In terms of visual identity markers, collective visual identity markers are used in documents and collective artifacts are physically visible in the winery. It is worth noting that there is disagreement among the management on the display of the collective logo and tagline. However, the Franciacorta logo was added to the website between 2011 and 2012, and the Franciacorta name is appended to the winery name as part of the individual logo. Top range bottles display the Franciacorta name more prominently than the winery name. The Franciacorta glass is displayed in documents and used during the tasting at the end of the cellar tour. The winery itself is both an individual and collective visual identity marker, being a typical historical Franciacorta farmstead, and its vineyards—as in many other Franciacorta wineries—are surrounded by rose bushes.

In terms of verbal accounts, Winery 1 projects more collective identity themes than individual identity themes. Furthermore, individual identity themes are coherent with collective identity themes. It is worth noting that collective and individual themes are strictly intertwined in the narration. In verbal accounts, Winery 1 often uses the word *we* to narrate about the group of Franciacorta producers.

Winery 1 starts its identity communication with collective themes (Franciacorta first) to increase the recognition of the collective identity. With the same aim, Winery 1 emphasizes its conformity to the collective identity and considers the consistency of messages given by all Franciacorta wineries to be relevant.

Winery 1 was founded before the establishment of the Franciacorta collective identity. It was a farmhouse that was also producing wine. In the early years of Franciacorta, being friends with Guido Berlucchi, Winery 1 decided to convert all its production to wine. They were among the founders of the *Consorzio* and are still on the *Consorzio*'s board.

Winery 1 is a middle-status winery within Franciacorta (based on self-definitions, mentions in wine guides, and other interviewees). The entrepreneur and communication managers declared a complete identity overlap between the winery identity and the collective identity. This is supported by value overlap (although few values are communicated in general), the self-definition as a prototype winery, and the communication of the winery as part of a group of wineries. Finally, affective commitment toward the Franciacorta cluster emerged in the interview related to personal involvement when someone criticizes or praises Franciacorta.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Visual identity markers</b>	Collective logo	Describes the logo	Yes	Yes (not all)	No
		Collective other artifacts		Roses		n.a.
		Franciacorta glass		Franciacorta glass		n.a.
		Franciacorta	Collective name into individual logo	Collective name into individual logo	Collective name into individual logo	Collective name into individual logo. 16 sentences, above average. Mainly associated to territory. Not associated to firm values.

		Franciacorta bigger on labels			On some top quality labels	Bigger than wine name, smaller than firm name
	Authoritative verbal accounts	Labeling and packaging rules		Yes		n.a.
		Method rules	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory boundaries and zones			Yes	n.a.
		Typologies and profiles		Yes	Yes	n.a.
	Acclaiming verbal accounts	Historical achievements	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Method praise	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Territory praise (geo & climate)			Yes	n.a.
		Territory praise (history & heritage)			Yes	n.a.
		Positive values	Competence Passion Quality/Excellence		Comptence Innovation/ Technology/ Research Environmental friendliness	Competence 2 Elegance/ refinement 1 Passion 1 Quality/ excellence 1 Trustworthiness /guarantee 1
	Categorizing verbal accounts	Distinctiveness other collective identities	We are not Champagne	Different from spumante.	First DOCG among white sparkling wines	n.a.

		Similarity other collective identities			DOCG	n.a.
Individual identity projections	Visual identity markers	individual logo and name	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Winery architecture		Farmstead	Farmstead	n.a.
	Acclaiming verbal accounts	Filière	Own vineyards	Own vineyards		n.a.
		Firm characteristics	Yes			n.a.
		Firm history	Pioneers in Franciacorta. Origins in the territory	Pioneers in Franciacorta Origins in the territory.	Pioneers in Franciacorta Origins in the territory.	n.a.
		Individual events activities		Meetings wine lovers	Meetings wine lovers, designers prize	n.a.
		Individual future ambitions	Mentioned, coherent with collective			n.a.
		Individual projects			Yes	n.a.
		Specific products			Own product description (beyond technical card) – coherent	n.a.
		Positive values	Craftmanship, family, time, tradition			n.a.
	Categorizing verbal accounts	Association to other collective identities (not wine)			Yes (designers, wine lovers)	n.a.

		Inspiration other collective identities	Mentioned			n.a.
<b>INTENT</b>						
<b>Legitimacy claiming</b>	<b>Maintain/ increase collective legitimacy</b>	Emphasis on conformity	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Keep collective identity consistency	Yes			n.a.
	<b>Categorical status</b>	Emphasis on collective visual identity markers	Yes			n.a.
<b>Distinctiveness claiming</b>	<b>Distinctiveness from other collective identities</b>	Distinctiveness from other collective identities	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
	<b>Internal relational distinctiveness</b>	Distinctiveness through overconformity		Yes	Yes	n.a.
<b>Social role</b>	<b>Status</b>	Mid status	Yes			n.a.
	<b>Historical/ strategic role</b>	Pioneers	Yes			n.a.
		Role into Consorzio	Founders, board			n.a.
	<b>Friendship and family ties</b>	Friendship ties	Yes, with other pioneers.			n.a.
<b>Identification</b>	<b>Cognitive identification</b>	Being similar to prototype	Yes (wineries like us are prototypes).			n.a.
		Claimed membership	Yes		Yes	n.a.



		Role of winery as a Franciacorta member	Yes			n.a.
		Identity overlap (scale from Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000)	H, complete			n.a.
		Practices overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Strategy overlap	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Value overlap	Yes	Yes	Values less communicated	n.a.
	<b>Affective commitment</b>	Personal involvement	Yes			n.a.
		Pride	Yes	Yes		n.a.

## **WINERY 2**

In the preliminary analysis, Winery 2 was included in group 2, communicating less collective values, but using the name Franciacorta more. However, collective values are communicated much more in oral communication than in written documents.

Regarding visual identity markers, the collective logo is prominently displayed on the website. The name Franciacorta is appended to the winery name in the individual logo. Furthermore, the name Franciacorta is more prominent than the winery's name on the basic line of products. Red roses are planted at the winery's entrance.

In terms of verbal accounts, Winery 2 projects more collective identity themes than individual identity themes. Furthermore, individual identity themes are coherent with collective identity themes. Both collective and individual themes are strictly intertwined in the narration. In verbal accounts, Winery 2 often uses the word *we* to narrate about the group of Franciacorta producers.

Winery 2 starts its identity communication with collective themes (Franciacorta first) to increase the recognition of the collective identity. With the same aim, it emphasizes its conformity to the collective identity and considers the consistency of messages given by all Franciacorta wineries as well as conformity to collective strategies and participation to collective actions to be relevant. Collective identity themes are projected to emphasize the difference from other collective identities. On its website, Winery 2 declares itself to be one of the most relevant wineries of Franciacorta; however, this theme is not recurring in other media. Therefore, Winery 2 pursues distinctiveness more by emphasizing the differences of Franciacorta compared to other wine clusters than by emphasizing its distinctiveness within the cluster.

Winery 2 was founded in the 1970s after the DOC award, but before the establishment of the *Consorzio*. They have always been associates, and in the last years board members as well.

Winery 2 is a middle-status winery within Franciacorta (based on self-definitions, mentions in wine guides, and other interviewees). The communication manager declared a very high identity overlap between the winery's identity and the collective identity. This is supported by strategic overlap and the sharing of rules as well as value overlap. The communication manager described Franciacorta prototypes, beyond the lead wineries, as wineries with very similar characteristics to Winery 2. Finally, affective commitment toward the Franciacorta cluster emerged in the interview, concerning the personal involvement when someone criticizes or praises Franciacorta, the pride of being a Franciacorta winery, and the strong enthusiasm of the group to act collectively.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline	Yes			
		Franciacorta			Franciacorta into individual logo	Franciacorta into individual logo. 4 sentences (below average). Mainly associated to winery. Associated to firm values. On labels bigger than wine and firm name.
		Franciacorta glass				n.a.
		Satèn		Emphasis on Satèn as collective identity marker		n.a.
		State wrapper		Emphasis		n.a.
		Roses		Yes		n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries	Yes			n.a.
		Product categories and profiles	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Labeling packaging rules		Yes		n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Future	Qualitative			n.a.

		ambitions	growth.			
		Method praise		Yes		n.a.
		Territory praise	Yes			n.a.
		Positive values	Passion, quality, technology, environmental friendliness.	Technology, quality	Passion, innovation	Passion 1 Quality 1
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Similarity other collective identities	Franciacorta is a brand, with the same logic of Champagne.	Like Champagne link territory, man, wine.		n.a.
		Distinctiveness other collective identities	Yes. Better quality and resource management compared to other wine clusters. Different from Prosecco.	Yes. At the very beginning difference from other wines.		n.a.
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo		Yes	Yes (Franciacorta included)	Yes
		Winery architecture	Small industrial building.	Small industrial building.	Small industrial building.	n.a.
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Historical firm in Franciacorta.	Rapid growth.		n.a.
		Filière		Yes. Control over the whole filière.		n.a.

		Firm characteristics	Yes	Yes, cellar location and tools	Yes	n.a
		Specific products	Yes (a specific Franciacorta typology)	Yes (a specific Franciacorta typology)	Yes (individual name product)	n.a
		Prizes	Yes		Yes	n.a
		Positive values	Family		Tradition	
		Future ambitions	Individual name more renown			n.a
INTENT						
Intent: legitimacy	Maintain/ increase collective legitimacy	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes (collective actions and consistent strategies)			n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity	Yes		Yes	n.a.
	Categorical status	Emphasis on collective identity markers.	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a
Intent: distinctiveness	Distinctiveness from the outgroup		Better quality and resource management compared to other wine clusters. Different from Prosecco.			n.a.
	Internal relational distinctiveness		Investments, prizes.	One of the most relevant wineries in Franciacorta.	Prizes.	n.a

SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION						
Social embeddedness	Status	Middle status	Yes			n.a.
	Historical and strategic role	Pioneers	Following pioneers			n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Board member			n.a.
	Friendship ties		Yes			n.a.
Identification	Cognitive	Overlap degree	G, very high. I introduce myself as Mr Franciacorta.			n.a.
		Role of winery as a Franciacorta member	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Value overlap		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		Prototype	Implicit autodefinition			n.a.
	Affective	Personal involvement when Franciacorta criticized or praised.	Yes			n.a.
		Will to be a group	Yes			n.a.
		Pride	Yes			n.a.

### WINERY 3

In the preliminary analysis, Winery 3 was included in group 2, communicating less collective values, but using the name Franciacorta more. However, collective values are communicated much more in oral communication than in written documents.

In terms of visual identity markers, the collective logo is used, especially on the website. The name Franciacorta is appended to the winery name in the individual logo. Regarding verbal accounts, Winery 3 projects more collective identity themes than individual identity themes. Furthermore, individual identity themes are coherent with collective identity themes. Both collective and individual themes are strictly intertwined in the narration. In verbal accounts, Winery 3 often uses *we* to narrate about the group of Franciacorta producers.

Winery 3 starts its identity communication with collective themes (Franciacorta first) to increase the recognition of the collective identity. With the same aim, Winery 3 emphasizes its conformity to the collective identity and considers the consistency of messages given by all Franciacorta wineries and the conformity to collective strategies and participation in collective actions to be relevant. Collective identity themes are projected to emphasize the difference from other collective identities. Winery 3 pursues distinctiveness, emphasizing the differences of Franciacorta compared to other wine clusters more than its distinctiveness within the cluster. A few sentences moderately refer to internal relational distinctiveness, relating to particular characteristics of the cellar and to prizes.

Winery 3 was founded in the 1980s after the DOC award, but before the establishment of the *Consorzio*. The owning family was producing wine much earlier in different wineries. The winery participates on the *Consorzio*'s board.

Winery 3 is a middle-status winery within Franciacorta (based on self-definitions, mentions in wine guides, and other interviewees). The communication manager declared a high identity overlap between the winery's identity and the collective identity. This is supported by strategic overlap and the sharing of rules, value overlap, and the narration of the winery as an actor



of Franciacorta. Finally, affective commitment toward the Franciacorta cluster emerged in the interview concerning the personal involvement when someone criticizes or praises Franciacorta, the pride of being a Franciacorta winery, and the strong enthusiasm of participating in a group that acts collectively.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline			Yes	Yes
		Franciacorta			Appended to winery name into individual logo	Appended to winery name into individual logo . 20 sentences (above average). Mainly associated to product name. Associated to firm values. On labels bigger than wine but not firm name.
		Franciacorta glass		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Roses		Yes		
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Product categories and profiles		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Labeling packaging rules				n.a.

	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Future ambitions	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Method praise		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory praise	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Positive values	Passion	Elegance, technology	Passion, quality, technology/research, elegance/refinement	Quality 5 Trustworthiness/guarantee 1
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Distinctiveness other collective identities	Yes. Niche product.			n.a.
		Similarity other collective identities	Yes. Not <i>spumante</i> . Not Prosecco.	Yes. Most restrictive disciplinary.	Yes. Most restrictive disciplinary.	n.a.
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Winery architecture	Historical building (old monastery restructured)	Historical building (old monastery restructured)	Historical building (old monastery restructured)	n.a.
		Wine labels				n.a.
		Other artifacts		Artifacts reminding the 60's. Cellar peculiar machinery. Local artists' works.	Artifacts reminding the 60's. Cellar peculiar machinery. Local artists' works.	n.a.
	<b>Individual verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes, roots in the territory	Yes, roots in the territory	Yes, roots in the territory	n.a.
		Filière	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Winery characteristics		Yes, (size, cellar peculiar	Yes, (size, Cellar peculiar	

				machinery, museum of contemporary arts)	machinery, museum of contemporary arts)	
		Leading products				
		Prizes			Yes	
		Positive values	Family, tradition, authenticity, art	Family	Family	Family 1 Exclusivity 1
		Future ambitions				
		Events, activities	Yes, catering, cingress center	Yes, catering, congress center	Congress center	n.a.
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	association to other collective identities (not regional wines)		Arts	Yes, associations wine, charities, arts	
<b>INTENT</b>						
<b>Intent: legitimacy</b>	<b>Maintain/increase collective legitimacy</b>	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
	<b>Categorical status</b>	Emphasis on collective identity markers.	Yes	Yes	Yes	

		Franciacorta has strong image	Yes			
Intent: distinctiveness	Distinctiveness from other collective identities		Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
	Internal relational distinctiveness				Yes, not prominent (investments, prizes, overconformity)	n.a.
<b>SOCIAL EMBEDDEDNESS AND IDENTIFICATION</b>						
Social embeddedness	Status	Middle status	Yes			n.a.
	Historical and strategic role	Pioneers				n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Yes			n.a.
	Friendship ties		Yes			n.a.
Identification	Cognitive	Overlap degree	F, high.			n.a.
		Role of winery as a Franciacorta member	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Value overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		Prototype				n.a.
	Affective	Personal involvement when Franciacorta criticized or praised.	Yes			n.a.

		Enthusiasm of being a group	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Pride	Yes	Yes		n.a.

## **WINERY 4**

In the preliminary analysis, Winery 4 was included in group 2, the one communicating collective values less and the name Franciacorta more as a visual identity marker. Specifically, Winery 4 projects more individual values than collective ones.

The qualitative analysis indicated that Winery 4 communicates more individual identity themes than collective ones. Individual visual identity markers are much more prominent than collective ones. There is a strong and pervasive corporate visual identity that characterizes the group to which the winery belongs.

Winery 4 projects more individual identity verbal accounts that emphasize the oenologist's and corporate philosophy, not only in Franciacorta. Collective verbal accounts are projected less consistently and mainly refer to the method and the territory.

The emphasis on the name, the DOCG, and conformity to authoritative collective themes is aimed at being recognized as Franciacorta. The winery is also built according to the architectural style of eighteenth-century Franciacorta villas.

The winery conforms to Franciacorta practices and rules and shares some collective values; however, the concern of maintaining and increasing the legitimacy of the collective identity is not evident in its communication.

Distinctiveness is pursued more through the emphasis on distinctive characteristics of the winery (internal relational distinctiveness) than through distinctiveness from other collective identities. To the contrary, other collective identities are communicated (other wineries of the group).

Winery 4 was founded in the late 1990s and, at the time of the current research, was associated with the *Consorzio*, but did not participate on the board. Friendship ties were not mentioned.

Winery 4 declared a very high identity overlap with Franciacorta's collective identity. However, this declaration was only partially supported by the overlap of values, strategies, and practices. The winery does not define its identity as an actor of Franciacorta. There are no signs of affective commitment.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline	Yes		No	Yes
		Franciacorta into logo				Franciacorta 18 sentences (10 homepage) – above average. Refers mainly to winery Associated to name Labels: smaller than wine and firm name
		Franciacorta glass	Yes	Yes		n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules	Yes			n.a.
		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries	Yes (especially zoning)		Yes	n.a.
		Product categories and profiles	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Labeling packaging rules				n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes			n.a.
		Method praise	Yes			n.a.

		Territory praise		Yes		n.a.
		Positive values	excellence	Innovation, quality, elegance	Quality 2 Uniqueness 2 Competence 2 Environmental friendliness 2	Quality 2 Uniqueness 2 Competence 2 Environmental friendliness 2
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Distinctiveness other collective identities	Yes			n.a.
		Similarity other collective identities				n.a.
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes (plus elaborated corporate visual identity including other wineries)	Yes (plus elaborated corporate visual identity including other wineries)	Yes (plus elaborated corporate visual identity including other wineries)	Yes
		Winery architecture	New building Franciacorta Villa style.	New building Franciacorta Villa style.	New building Franciacorta Villa style.	n.a.
		Wine labels	Yes (distinctive labels)	Yes (distinctive labels)	Yes (distinctive labels)	n.a.
		Other artifacts		Posters with corporate visual identity markers		n.a.



	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes, corporate (more wineries in different territories).	Yes, corporate (more wineries in different territories). The oenologist.	Yes, corporate (more wineries in different territories). The oenologist.	n.a.
		Winery characters	Yes, the oenologist.	Yes, the oenologist.	Yes, the oenologist.	
		Filière	Own vineyards (also in othe territories)	Own vineyards (also in othe territories)	Own vineyards (also in othe territories)	n.a.
		Winery characteristic s	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Specific products		Yes	Terroirs and crus. Also in other territories.	n.a.
		Prizes				
		Positive values	Soil/terroir	Soil/terroir, joy, liveliness	Soil/terroir, entrepreneurs hip	Soil/terroir (9) entrepreneurship (2)
		Individual Projects	Yes, in other territories	Yes, in other territories	Yes, in other territories	n.a.
		Events, activities			Yes	n.a.
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Inspired by other collective identities	Champagne and New World			n.a.
		projecting also other collective identities (regional	Yes		Yes	n.a.

		wines)				
<b>INTENT</b>						
<b>Intent: legitimacy</b>	<b>Maintain/increase collective legitimacy</b>	Keep consistency of messages among producers				n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Depending on the context			n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity	Yes		Yes	n.a.
	<b>Categorical status</b>	Emphasis on collective identity markers.	Yes (name)		Yes (DOCG)	n.a.
		Imitation of Franciacorta heritage.	Yes, new building Franciacorta Villa style.	Yes, new building Franciacorta Villa style	Yes, new building Franciacorta Villa style	n.a.
<b>Intent: distinctiveness</b>	<b>Distinctiveness from other collective identities</b>		Yes (best <i>Consorzio</i> )			n.a.
	<b>Internal relational distinctiveness</b>		Corporate identity first. Prizes. Interpretation production	Corporate identity first. Interpretation production.	Corporate identity first. Interpretation production.	n.a.
<b>SOCIAL EMBEDDEDNESS AND IDENTIFICATION</b>						
<b>Social embeddedness</b>	<b>Status</b>	Middle status	Yes			n.a.
	<b>Historical and strategic role</b>	Pioneers				n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Associate			n.a.

	<b>Friendship ties</b>					n.a.
<b>Identification</b>	<b>Cognitive</b>	Overlap degree	G very high overlap			n.a.
		Role of winery as a Franciacorta member				n.a.
		Value overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Yes partial	Yes partial	Yes partial	n.a.
		Prototype				n.a.
	<b>Affective</b>	Personal involvement when Franciacorta criticized or praised.				n.a.
		Enthusiasm of being a group				n.a.
		Pride				n.a.

## **WINERY 5**

In the preliminary phase, Winery 5 was included in group 2, the one communicating collective values less and displaying the name Franciacorta as an identity marker more. The qualitative analysis confirmed the preliminary findings.

Winery 5's identity projections are characterized by more individual identity themes, at the level of both visual identity markers and verbal accounts. Collective identity themes mainly refer to the name of the product, the method, rules, and product typologies. The method is praised for the quality that it allows, although winery 5 emphasizes its extreme interpretation of the regulations. Collective identity themes are sometimes contested (in personal communications). The winery identity is almost exclusively projected through individual visual identity markers and verbal accounts that in many cases are not coherent with collective identity themes. Communicated themes are not illegitimate (i.e., they respect collective rules), but they are distinct.

The few collective elements emphasize belonging to Franciacorta, meaning recognizability as a Franciacorta winery (categorical status). Individual identity projections greatly emphasize internal relational distinctiveness (i.e., differences from other Franciacorta wineries).

Winery 5 was founded after 2000. It is still very young and has a low status (self-definitions, no mentions in wine guides, no mentions by other interviewees). It is associated with the *Consorzio*, but it does not participate in strategic decisions and sometimes does not agree with the *Consorzio*'s policies.

Winery 5 declared a small identity overlap with the Franciacorta collective identity. The small overlap is due to location, origin, and the sharing of the value of quality at the basis of Franciacorta production. There is no sign of affective commitment. The entrepreneur talked about the pride of being a Franciacorta winery because of the qualitative philosophy, but she did not refer to the pride of belonging to a group.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline	No. It is not strong.			
		Franciacorta	Collective name into individual logo	Collective name into individual logo.	Collective name into individual logo. Half the labels Franciacorta smallest name.	Collective name into individual logo. Franciacorta 5 sentences (below average), mainly associated to product name. On labels Franciacorta smaller the winery name, bigger than product name.
		Satèn	Yes			n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Product categories and profiles	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Labeling packaging rules	Yes			n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Method praise	Yes			n.a.
		Positive values	Quality	Quality	Quality	Quality (1) Elegance (2)
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Distinctiveness other collective identities	Is not renown like other wine clusters. Not Prosecco.			n.a.
<b>Individual identity</b>	<b>Individual identity</b>	Logo	Yes (dilemma on	Yes	Yes	Yes

projections	markers		Franciacorta in it)			
		Winery architecture	New building Franciacorta Villa style	New building Franciacorta Villa style	New building Franciacorta Villa style	n.a.
		Wine labels	Yes distinctive	Yes distinctive	Yes distinctive	n.a.
		Other artifacts	Distinctive packaging (golden bottle. Personalized gifts and packagings)	Distinctive packaging (golden bottle. Personalized gifts and packagings)	Distinctive packaging (golden bottle. Distinctive glasses and gifts)	n.a.
	Individual acclaiming verbal accounts	History	Yes, distinctive	Yes, distinctive		n.a.
		Distinctive production practices (at the limits of the disciplinary)	Yes (philosophy of purity, low sugars, grape proportions)	Yes, (philosophy of purity, low sugars, grape proportions)		
		Other collective identities				
		Filière	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Cellar peculiar details				
		Leading products	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		Prizes				
		Positive values	Joy/fun, luxury.	Luxury.		
		Future ambitions	Yes, distinctive			
		Individual Projects	Yes			
		Events, activities	Yes		Yes	n.a.
	Individual	Reference	Yes, partially			

	<b>categorizing verbal accounts</b>	social communities	distinctive. (High quality wine communities ; parties/TV stars)			
<b>INTENT</b>						
<b>Intent: legitimacy</b>	<b>Maintain/ increase collective legitimacy</b>	Keep consistency of messages among producers				n.a.
		Franciacorta first				n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity				n.a.
	<b>Categorical status</b>	Emphasis on collective identity markers.	Only name into individual logo.	Only name into individual logo.	Only name into individual logo.	n.a.
		Imitation of Franciacorta heritage.	Yes			n.a.
<b>Intent: distinctiveness</b>	<b>Distinctiveness from the outgroup</b>		Not Prosecco.			n.a.
	<b>Internal relational distinctiveness</b>		Yes, strong : Individual identity markers Individual acclaiming verbal accounts.	Yes, strong : Individual identity markers Individual acclaiming verbal accounts.	Yes, strong : Individual identity markers	n.a.
<b>SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION</b>						

<b>Social embeddedness</b>	<b>Status</b>	High status				n.a.
		Middle status				n.a.
		Low status	Yes			n.a.
	<b>Historical and strategic role</b>	Pioneers				n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Associate			n.a.
<b>Identification</b>	<b>Cognitive</b>	Overlap degree	D small overlap	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		Value overlap	Only quality	Only quality	Only quality	Quality, elegance.
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Partially practices, not strategy	Partially practices, not strategy	Partially practices	n.a.
		Pride	Small (only because of quality)			n.a.



## **WINERY 6**

In the preliminary phase, Winery 6 was included in group 2, the one communicating collective values less and using the name Franciacorta more as an identity marker. The use of the name Franciacorta as a visual identity marker was confirmed by the qualitative analysis. Collective values are much more projected in oral communication. In addition, individual values are consistently projected, but they are coherent with collective ones.

Winery 6 projects its identity using more collective than individual identity themes. The difference is not as evident as in other cases. However, individual identity themes are always coherent with collective identity themes. Furthermore, collective and individual identity themes are often intertwined in the narration, and the winery's identity is often described with reference to the collective group. Collective identity verbal accounts are often narrated in first plural person (we).

Winery 6 considers it relevant to put forward the collective identity, maintain consistent messages among producers, and emphasize conformity to collective rules and values in order to increase the recognition of the collective identity of Franciacorta ("I say Franciacorta, Franciacorta, Franciacorta"—winery manager). Collective identity themes are often used to emphasize the differences from other collective identities. Individual identity markers (especially marketing campaigns) are projected to obtain distinctiveness from other wineries (even though according to the entrepreneur the focus is not on being different from other Franciacorta wineries, but to be distinctive in general in the wine industry).

Winery 6 was founded before the establishment of the collective identity, and it participated to the early pioneer years. It was among the founders of the *Consorzio*, and it is still on its board. Friendship and family relations were mentioned. Winery 6 enjoys a middle status (according to self-definitions and other interviewees).

Winery 6 declared a very high identity overlap between its identity and the collective identity, which is supported by value overlap, strategy and practices overlap, and the narration of the winery as a group member. Furthermore, the affective commitment

toward the collective identity is projected, including themes like pride, enthusiasm, and personal involvement when Franciacorta is praised or criticized.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline		Yes	Yes	
		Franciacorta	Into individual logo Very big on bottle neck.	Into individual logo	Into individual logo	Franciacorta 8 (below average) sentences, associated to values and product name mainly. Absent on labels, but very big on bottle neck.
		Franciacorta glass		Yes		n.a.
		Satèn				n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Product categories and profiles	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Labeling packaging rules	Yes			n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes			n.a.
		Future ambitions	Yes			n.a.

		Method praise	Yes			n.a.
		Territory praise	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Positive values	Research/ technology, passion, competence.	Technology	Passion, competence, quality, elegance, environmental friendliness.	Quality 1 Competence 1 Trustworthiness/ guarantee 1 Passion 1 Elegance/refinement 1 Environmental friendliness 1
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Distinctiveness other collective identities	Most restrictive disciplinary than Champagne	Not Champagne, not Prosecco.		n.a.
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Winery architecture	Typical Franciacorta farmstead	Typical Franciacorta farmstead	Typical Franciacorta farmstead	n.a.
		Wine labels	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Other artifacts	Marketing campaign tagline	Ancient Art	Marketing campaign tagline Arts	n.a.
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes (family, the farmstead)	Yes (family, the farmstead)	Yes (family, the farmstead)	n.a.
		Filière	Own vineyards	Own vineyards	Own vineyards - names	n.a.
		Cellar peculiar details	Ancient art	Ancient art	Ancient art	n.a.
		Leading products	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Prizes			Yes	n.a.

		Positive values	Culture	Heritage	Soil/land, tradition, craftsmanship.	Soil/land (7), family (3).
		Individual Projects	Yes		Yes	n.a.
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Reference social communities	Wine associations University			n.a.
<b>INTENT</b>						
<b>Intent: legitimacy</b>	<b>Maintain/increase collective legitimacy</b>	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes			n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity	Yes	Yes		n.a.
	<b>Categorical status</b>	Emphasis on collective identity markers.	Yes			n.a.
<b>Intent: distinctiveness</b>	<b>Distinctiveness from the outgroup</b>		Yes. Disciplinary, terroir, pioneers in research.	Yes. Disciplinary, terroir, pioneers in research.		n.a.
	<b>Internal relational distinctiveness</b>		Yes, marketing campaign		Yes, marketing campaign	n.a.
<b>SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION</b>						

<b>Social embeddedness</b>	<b>Status</b>	High status				n.a.
		Middle status	Yes			n.a.
		Low status				n.a.
	<b>Historical and strategic role</b>	Pioneers	Yes			n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Founders, now in the board.			n.a.
	<b>Friendship ties</b>		Yes			n.a.
<b>Identification</b>	<b>Cognitive</b>	Overlap degree	G, very big overlap	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		Firm actor in Franciacorta	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Value overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Prototype				n.a.
	<b>Affective</b>	Personal involvement when Franciacorta criticized or praised.	Yes			n.a.
		Enthusiasm of being a group	Yes			
		Pride	Yes			n.a.

## **WINERY 7**

In the preliminary phase, Winery 7 was included in group 2, the one communicating collective values less and displaying the name Franciacorta as an identity marker more. The qualitative analysis partially confirmed the preliminary findings. Collective values are not communicated much, and the name Franciacorta is used as a visual identity marker, although individual identity markers are much more prominent.

Overall, Winery 7's identity projections are characterized by more individual identity themes at the level of both visual identity markers and verbal accounts. Collective identity themes mainly refer to the name of the product, method, rules, and product typologies. The method is praised for the quality that it allows; however, Winery 7 emphasized its extreme interpretation of the regulations. Collective identity visual identity markers and some collective acclaiming verbal accounts are not positively perceived (in personal communications). The winery's identity is almost exclusively projected through individual visual identity markers and verbal accounts that, in many cases, are not coherent with collective identity themes. Communicated themes are not illegitimate (i.e., they respect collective rules), although they are distinct.

The few collective elements emphasize belonging to Franciacorta, meaning recognizability as a Franciacorta winery (categorical status). Individual identity projections significantly emphasize internal relational distinctiveness (i.e., differences from other Franciacorta wineries). The winery identity is also described by social inclusion with other groups, especially the distributor group. There is a strong intent to be different from the typical Franciacorta winery as well as the desire that the collective identity be more varied.

Winery 7 was founded after 2000. It is still very young and has a low status (self-definitions, no mentions in wine guides, no mentions by other interviewees). It is associated with the *Consorzio*, but it does not participate in strategic decisions and sometimes does not agree with the *Consorzio*'s policies.

Winery 7 declared a moderate identity overlap with the Franciacorta collective identity. The overlap is due to the shared philosophy of quality and the choice to concentrate on the core production of the region—that is, Franciacorta. There is no sign of affective commitment.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline	About the tagline : passions can be different	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Franciacorta			Collective name into individual logo On labels : Firm>Franciacorta>product.	Franciacorta 14 sentences (above average), mainly in homepage and territory page. It mainly refers to the product and it is not associated to firm values. On labels smaller than wine and firm name.
		Franciacorta glass				n.a.
		Satèn				n.a.
		Book	Not representing Franciacorta distinctively			n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules		Yes	Yes	n.a.

		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Product categories and profiles		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Labeling packaging rules				n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Future ambitions				n.a.
		Method praise	Yes			n.a.
		Territory praise	No (Franciacorta is an industrial region)	Yes		n.a.
		Positive values	Innovation/ research	Research, quality	Research, Quality, environmental friendliness	Innovation 1 Quality 2 Competence 1 Elegance/refinement 2
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Distinctiveness other collective identities	We are not Champagne.	More restrictive disciplinary than Champagne. First classic method with DOCG.		n.a.
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes	Yes, everywhere without Franciacorta	Yes pervasive	Yes



				appended		
		Winery architecture		Farmstead	Farmstead	n.a.
		Wine labels	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive)	n.a.
		Other artifacts	Advertising posters (distinctive)	Advertising posters (distinctive)		n.a.
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive – the oenologist)	Yes (distinctive – the oenologist, the team)	n.a.
		Distinctive production practices (at the limits of the disciplinary)	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive)	n.a.
		Filière	Own vineyards	Own vineyards		n.a.
		Leading products	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive)	n.a.
		Positive values	Innovation	Innovation	Originality	n.a.
		Future ambitions	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Individual Projects	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Events, activities			Yes	n.a.
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Reference social communities	University Distribution group	Distribution group	Distribution group	n.a.

INTENT						
Intent: legitimacy	Maintain/increase collective legitimacy	Keep consistency of messages among producers	No			n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity	No			n.a.
	Categorical status	Emphasis on collective identity markers.				Yes, name
Intent: distinctiveness	Distinctiveness from the outgroup		Franciacorta first when comparison with other collective identities	Yes, first classic method DOCG. More restrictive disciplinary than Champagne.		n.a.
	Internal relational distinctiveness		Winery identity first when together with other Franciacorta wineries.	Distinctive production. Visual identity markers.	Distinctive production. Visual identity markers	n.a.
SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION						
Social embeddedness	Status	High status		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		Middle status		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		Low status	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
	Historical and strategic role	Pioneers	No			n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	No			n.a.
Identification	Cognitive	Overlap degree	E moderate overlap	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

		Value overlap	Partial	Partial	Partial	
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Partial	Partial	Partial	n.a.

## **WINERY 8**

In the preliminary analysis, Winery 8 was included in group 2, the one communicating collective values less and the name Franciacorta as a visual identity marker more. The qualitative phase did not confirm the preliminary findings because, between 2011 and 2012, the website was completely redesigned and the production of Franciacorta for this firm, who was producing in great part non-DOCG wines, increased dramatically.

Emerging results showed that Winery 8 combines collective and individual identity projections in an almost balanced way. In terms of visual identity markers, there is a much higher presence of individual themes, as evident in the logo, distinctive bottle labels, particular cellar characteristics, and a wide range of promotional artifacts. However, collective visual identity markers are also consistently projected. The entrepreneur and communication manager emphasized the importance of projecting collective identity markers, as reflected what emerged from the observation of the cellar and the document analysis. The Vinitaly exhibition observations indicated an impressive similarity of style, especially in colors, between the *Consorzio* stand and Winery 8's stands (one smaller in the Franciacorta area and another big stand situated in another building). Therefore, visual identity markers projecting the individual winery brand are prevalent, although they are highly coherent with the collective identity markers that are also included in Winery 8's identity projections.

In terms of verbal accounts, a similar situation emerged from the results. Collective identity themes are consistently projected, especially acclaiming verbal accounts. In addition, individual identity themes are consistently projected, again with a prevalence of acclaiming verbal accounts. Unlike in other cases, collective and individual identity themes are not much intertwined into verbal accounts, except for historical accounts, where the history of the cluster and of the winery actually overlap, as the winery was one of the pioneers of the cluster. In the past, Winery 8 engaged in practices that were not coherent with collective authoritative

accounts. Now, production is totally conforming to the collective rules, and past practices are just mentioned in oral communication. There is a consistent emphasis on conformity to the collective identity in verbal accounts.

Regarding legitimacy and distinctiveness intents, Winery 8 projects collective identity themes with the aim of both maintaining and increasing the collective identity legitimacy and achieving categorical status. According to the entrepreneur and communication manager, the winery brand is stronger than the collective Franciacorta brand. However, the collective identity is part of the winery identity; it supports the winery identity in its maturity phase and helps improve the legitimacy of Winery 8 for specific stakeholders (wine critics). In some markets, the collective identity already provides a categorical status, whereas in others it does not. Thus, it is important to keep nurturing the collective identity legitimacy.

Winery 8 is a high status firm (based on self-definitions, wine guides, and other interviewees). It was a pioneer of the wine cluster and has been associated with the *Consorzio* since its beginning. However, only recently has it engaged in strategic participation within the *Consorzio*'s board.

The entrepreneur and communication manager declared a significant overlap between the winery's identity and Franciacorta's collective identity. This is supported by the fact that the winery is often identified as a relevant actor within the cluster in both oral and written communication. Values and practices are increasingly overlapping (increased deduction from the difference between documents in 2011 and 2012). However, there are still some discrepancies in both values and strategies.

The entrepreneur and communication manager showed enthusiasm toward being a part of the Franciacorta group and pride in being a Franciacorta member. However, these themes are not emerging from the observation and documents, with the exception of the historical origins of the winery and the cluster (overlapping).

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline	Yes always	Yes	Yes	
		Franciacorta	Yes always	Yes	Yes	Franciacorta 10 sentences, below average. Refers mainly to product name and it is associated to firm values. Smaller than wine and firm name.
		Franciacorta glass		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Satèn				n.a.
		Book		Yes	Yes	n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Product categories and profiles		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Labeling packaging rules		Yes		n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Future ambitions	Yes			n.a.
		Method praise		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory	Yes		Yes	n.a.

		praise				
		Positive values	Excellence, passion. Heritage?	Quality	Quality. Research/Tec hnology. Competence. Passion. Elegance/refinement.	Innovation 1 Quality 3 Uniqueness 1 Competence 1 Elegance/Refinement 1
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Distinctiveness other collective identities	We are not champagne	Most restrictive disciplinary		n.a.
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Winery architecture	Historical building	Historical building	Historical building	n.a.
		Wine labels	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Other artifacts		Yes (posters, books, cellar furniture)	Yes (posters, books cellar furniture)	n.a.
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes (overlapping with collective one, then deviating, then back)	Yes (overlapping with collective one, then deviating, then back)	Yes (overlapping with collective one, then deviating, then back)	n.a.
		Distinctive production practices (at the limits of the disciplinary)				n.a.
		Other collective identities		Yes (one mention)	Yes	n.a.
		Filière	Yes, control	Yes, control	Yes, control	n.a.
		Cellar peculiar		Yes		n.a.

		details				
		Leading products	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Prizes	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Positive values	Honesty, affordability, consistency.	Pioneerism	Pride, consistency, time.	Pioneerism 2 Equilibrium 1
		Future ambitions	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Individual Projects	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Events, activities	Yes		Yes	n.a.
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Reference social communities			Wine and food associations	n.a.
<b>INTENT</b>						
<b>Intent: legitimacy</b>	<b>Maintain/ increase collective legitimacy</b>	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes			n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
	<b>Categorical status</b>	Emphasis on collective identity markers.	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Imitation of Franciacorta heritage.				n.a.
<b>Intent:</b>	<b>Distinctiveness</b>			Most restrictive		n.a.



distinctiveness	from the outgroup			disciplinary		
	Internal relational distinctiveness		Few verbal accounts (on values and strategy)	Visual identity markers Few verbal accounts (on artifacts)	Yes, few verbal accounts on investments and prizes.	n.a.
<b>SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION</b>						
Social embeddedness	Status	High status	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Middle status				n.a.
		Low status				n.a.
	Historical and strategic role	Pioneers	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Always associate, now into the board			n.a.
Identification	Cognitive	Overlap degree	F, big overlap	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		Firm actor in Franciacorta	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Value overlap	Partial	Partial	Partial	
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Partial			n.a.
	Affective	Enthusiasm of being a group	Yes			n.a.
		Pride	Yes			n.a.

## **WINERY 9**

In the preliminary analysis, Winery 9 was included in group 1, the one communicating more collective values and fewer collective visual identity markers. The qualitative analysis confirmed the preliminary results. Collective visual identity markers are present, but not at all prominent. Meanwhile, individual identity markers are pervasive and prominent. The cellar's architecture and the pieces of contemporary art on the estate are projected as visual identity markers. They are distinctive because they are magnificent and definitely "stand out from the crowd." However, they are coherent with the image and the values that characterize the collective identity.

Collective identity themes are consistently projected, especially acclaiming verbal accounts. In addition, individual identity themes are consistently projected, especially praising the winery's history, leading products, and projects. A consistent individual projection also exists in its verbal accounts, in which Winery 9 projects its emphasis on its affinity to the world of contemporary arts. Unlike other cases, collective and individual identity themes are not much intertwined within verbal accounts, except for historical accounts, where the history of the cluster and the winery actually overlap as the winery was one of the pioneers of the cluster. The themes emerging from individual verbal accounts are indeed coherent with the collective identity of the cluster.

The analysis indicated that collective identity themes are projected mainly with the intent of increasing the collective identity legitimacy. The entrepreneur firmly believes in the importance that all wineries communicate the collective identity with coherent messages, and both oral and written communication emphasize an over-conformity to Franciacorta rules, practices, and values. Both oral and written communications refer to the role of Winery 9 as an ambassador of the collective identity.

At the same time, communications show some elements that distinguish Winery 9 from the other wineries in the cluster (internal relational distinctiveness), particularly related to individual visual identity markers, which are prominent, elaborate, and magnificent compared to other wineries. In addition, some acclaiming verbal accounts emphasize internal relational distinctiveness

through over-conformity, highlighting that Winery 9 commits to rules even more than what is required (and implicitly more than others) and is able to interpret “the essence of Franciacorta” in its own style.

Therefore, Winery 9’s identity projections are directed to both increased collective legitimacy and internal relational distinctiveness. Verbal accounts emphasize the need to increase collective legitimacy more whereas visual identity markers let the winery stand out from the crowd of competitors.

Winery 9 is a high status winery (based on self-definitions, ratings in wine guides, and other interviewees). It was a pioneer winery in the cluster and contributed largely to Franciacorta’s affirmation. It was among the founders of the *Consorzio* and still plays a strategic role on the board. Friendship ties are not emphasized in either oral or written communications.

The entrepreneur declared a very big overlap between the winery’s identity and the collective identity. This is supported by a consistent value overlap, strategy and practices overlap, and the description of the role of the winery for the collective identity. The entrepreneur specified that the main identification refers to the rules, values, and philosophy of the territory, while relationships with other wineries are not as intense (which is coherent with a definition of cognitive identification; Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000). Themes referring to affective commitment are not emphasized.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline	Yes, necessary.	Yes, not prominent.	Yes, not prominent (old)	Yes
		Franciacorta (count)	Yes			Franciacorta 11, below average. Mainly refers to the territory, and not associated to firm values. On labels bigger than wine but not than firm name.
		Franciacorta glass				n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Product categories and profiles			Yes	n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Future ambitions	Yes			n.a.
		Method praise		Yes		n.a.
		Territory praise	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Positive values	Trustworthiness/ guarantee/ rigour, excellence, passion	Excellence, innovation, refinement.	Innovation, excellence, passion, Environmental e firendliness.	Innovation 5 Quality 5 Competence 2 Trustworthiness 1 Passion 6 Enviromental friendliness 1

<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo		Yes, (magnificent places)	Yes	Yes
		Winery architecture		Yes (distinctive because magnificent, but coherent with collective identity).	Yes (distinctive because magnificent, but coherent with collective identity).	n.a.
		Wine labels/bottle packaging		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Other artifacts		Contemporary art (pervasive-famous artists). Peculiar cellar artifacts (e.g. "Il 3000" huge tank for the cuvée).	Contemporary art (pervasive-famous artists).	n.a.
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes (overlapping with collective history)		Yes (overlapping with collective history)	n.a.
		Filière		Yes		n.a.
		Cellar peculiar details	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Leading products		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Prizes			Yes	n.a.
		Positive values	Beauty, design, art	Design	Tradition, commitment, soil/land, time, entrepreneurship	Equilibrium 4 Commitment 2

		Individual Projects		Yes (then sharing results)	Yes	n.a.
		Investments		Yes		
		Events, activities			Yes	n.a.
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Reference social communities	Arts	Arts	Arts	n.a.
<b>INTENT</b>						
<b>Intent: legitimacy</b>	<b>Maintain/increase collective legitimacy</b>	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes			n.a.
		Franciacorta first				n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity	Overconformity	Overconformity	Overconformity	
		Ambassador	Yes	Yes		n.a.
	<b>Categorical status</b>	Emphasis on collective identity markers.	Only name "accessorio fondamentale"			n.a.
<b>Intent: distinctiveness</b>	<b>Internal relational distinctiveness</b>		Yes, through visual identity markers	Yes, through visual identity markers. Yes, through acclaiming verbal accounts (overconforming)	Yes, through visual identity markers. Yes, through acclaiming verbal accounts (overconforming).	n.a.

SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION						
Social embeddedness	Status	High status	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Middle status				n.a.
		Low status				n.a.
	Historical and strategic role	Pioneers	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Yes	Yes		n.a.
Identification	Cognitive	Overlap degree	G, very big overlap	n.a	n.a.	n.a.
		Firm actor in Franciacorta	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Value overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.

## **WINERY 10**

In the preliminary analysis, Winery 10 was included in group 1, the one communicating more collective values and fewer collective identity markers. The qualitative analysis confirmed that Winery 10 communicates consistently collective values. The collective logo and tagline, although absent from documents, are prominently shown in the tasting room, together with other collective identity markers, such as the glass, the book *Franciacorta, the wine, the land*, and a celebrative wine for the 50 years of Franciacorta. The glass is also included in documents' pictures.

The qualitative analysis showed that Winery 10 projects more collective identity themes, although individual identity themes are not in a dramatic minority. In terms of visual identity markers, the presence is almost equal to individual identity markers. As noted, the collective identity markers are highly present in the winery, together with the individual logo and the distinctive colored wine labels. The cellar's architecture also projects both the collective and the individual identity, putting together ancient walls and art pieces from the Franciacorta heritage with the design of the new parts built for hospitality. Individual identity markers are indeed coherent with the imagery and values characterizing the collective identity.

Regarding verbal accounts, collective themes definitely occur more frequently than individual identity themes, especially acclaiming verbal accounts. Individual identity themes relate to the history of the winery and its role in Franciacorta since the beginnings and even before the advent of Franciacorta wine. Hospitality activities are described. Individual accounts do not contradict the collective identity.

All communications include a strong emphasis on conformity, respect of the regulations, and membership in the *Consorzio*. Some accounts even refer to over-conformity, describing how the winery goes beyond the minimum standard requirements. The entrepreneur emphasized the importance that all wineries communicate coherent messages about Franciacorta as all wineries need the support of a strong and coherent collective identity; thus, Franciacorta should always be described before individual wineries.



Winery 10 pursues distinctiveness mainly by emphasizing the differences between Franciacorta and other wines; in a few cases, internal relational distinctiveness is addressed by talking about over-conforming practices and hospitality structures' beautiful locations.

Winery 10 is a middle status winery (according to self-definition and ratings in wine guides). It was among the founders of the *Consorzio* and still plays a strategic role on its board. The entrepreneur emphasized her friendly relationships with other entrepreneurs and the joint activities in which they engaged in the past.

The entrepreneur declared a very high overlap between the winery's identity and the collective identity. This was also supported by a strong value overlap, an overlap of strategies and practices, and by an emphasis on the winery's role as a Franciacorta member. She also consistently referred to the enthusiasm of being part of a group and the pride of being a Franciacorta producer.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline	Yes	Yes		No
		Franciacorta	n.a.	n.a.	Yes (into individual logo). Smaller on labels.	Franciacorta 21, above average. It mainly refers to the territory and it is associated to firm values. Smaller on labels.
		Franciacorta glass	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Book		Yes		n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Product categories and profiles		Yes		n.a.
		Labeling packaging rules				n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Future ambitions	Yes			n.a.
		Method praise	Yes			n.a.
		Territory praise		Yes	Yes	n.a.

		Positive values	Excellence, quality	Quality	Passion, excellence, competence, elegance/refinement. Environmental friendliness.	Quality 8 Uniqueness 2 Competence 4 Trustworthiness 3 Passion 6 Elegance/refinement 5 Environmental friendliness 2
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Distinctiveness other collective identities	We are not champagne			n.a.
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Winery architecture		Yes (restructuring, parts of Franciacorta heritage)	Yes (restructuring, parts of Franciacorta heritage)	n.a.
		Wine labels		Yes (colours but also celebration 50 years Franciacorta)	Yes (colours but also celebration 50 years Franciacorta)	n.a.
		Other artifacts		Hospitality structures		n.a.
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes (family)		The estate and role in Franciacorta. The family	n.a.
		Filière		Own vineyards	Own vineyards (mainly chardonnay)	n.a.
		Cellar peculiar details		Ancient walls and modern restructuring.		n.a.

		Positive values	Family, tradition, femininity		Family, tradition, femininity.	Family 1 Tradition 1
		Events, other activities			Yes	n.a.
	Individual categorizing verbal accounts	Inspired by other collective identities	Champagne for communication style, other Italian regions that are wine destinations.			n.a.
		Reference social communities	Hospitality, events. Local community. Wine associations.	Hospitality, events.	Wine associations	n.a.
INTENT						
Intent: legitimacy	Maintain/increase collective legitimacy	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes			n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Intent: distinctiveness	Distinctiveness from the outgroup		Yes	Yes	Blind tastings with Champagne and Prosecco	n.a.
	Internal relational distinctiveness		Yes, hospitality	Yes, some overconformity	Yes, hospitality. Yes, some	n.a.

					overconformity	
<b>SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION</b>						
<b>Social embeddedness</b>	<b>Status</b>	High status				n.a.
		Middle status	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Low status				n.a.
	<b>Historical and strategic role</b>	Pioneers	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Yes		Yes	n.a.
<b>Identification</b>	<b>Cognitive</b>	Overlap degree	G, very big overlap	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		Firm actor in Franciacorta	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Value overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
	<b>Affective</b>	Personal involvement when Franciacorta criticized or praised.	Yes			n.a.
		Enthusiasm of being a group	Yes			
		Pride	Yes			n.a.

## **WINERY 11**

In the preliminary phase, winery 11 was included in group 1, the one communicating more collective values and fewer collective visual identity markers. The qualitative analysis confirmed the preliminary results.

Regarding collective visual identity markers, the name Franciacorta is included in the logo, but it is the only symbol used to visibly claim membership to the collective identity. Furthermore, the version of the logo that more frequently occurs in the cellar and on documents does not include the name Franciacorta. The Franciacorta glass is used during the tasting, and it appears in documents' pictures. Meanwhile, a number of individual identity markers are pervasive in both the cellar and documents. They are distinctive because they are magnificent and definitely “stand out from the crowd.” One visitor described the cellar as “like a cathedral.” Artifacts are coherent with the imagery and the values that characterize the collective identity.

Collective identity themes are projected quite consistently, especially those acclaiming verbal accounts referring to historical achievements and praising the territory. Authoritative verbal accounts are more emphasized in the cellar tour than in other communications. Individual identity themes are also consistently projected, especially praising the winery's history and specific products. A consistent individual projection related to categorizing verbal accounts indicates that winery 11 emphasizes its affinity to the world of luxury hospitality and celebrities. Unlike in other cases, collective and individual identity themes are not much intertwined into verbal accounts, except for historical accounts, where the history of the cluster and of the winery partially overlap, as the winery was one of the pioneers of the cluster. The themes emerging from individual verbal accounts are indeed coherent with the collective identity of the cluster.

The analysis indicated that collective identity themes are projected with the intent to increase the collective identity legitimacy. The communication manager emphasized the importance that all wineries communicate the collective identity with coherent messages because Franciacorta is the heart, the book that each winery can partially interpret to give its style while sharing a

common denominator. The communication manager and the tour guide both emphasized the role Winery 11 as an ambassador of the collective identity. At the same time, projections distinguish Winery 11 from the other wineries in the cluster (internal relational distinctiveness), particularly individual visual identity markers, which are prominent, elaborate, and magnificent compared to other wineries. Some acclaiming verbal accounts also emphasize internal relational distinctiveness through over-conformity, highlighting that Winery 11 commits to rules even more than required (and implicitly more than others). Therefore, Winery 11 identity projections are directed to both collective legitimacy increases and internal relational distinctiveness. Verbal accounts emphasize the need to increase collective legitimacy more, while visual identity markers let the winery stand out from the crowd of competitors.

Winery 11 is a high status winery (based on self-definition, ratings in wine guides, and other interviewees). It was founded in the early years of the cluster and largely contributed to Franciacorta's affirmation. It was among the founders of the *Consorzio* and still plays a strategic role on the board. Friendship ties are not emphasized in either oral or written communications.

The communication manager declared a moderate overlap between the winery's identity and the collective identity. Despite this, both written and oral communications show a consistent value overlap, strategy and practices overlap, and the description of the role of the winery as a member of the collective identity. Themes referring to affective commitment are not emphasized.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline		No	No	No
		Franciacorta			Into the winery logo.	Franciacorta 8 sentences (below the average), 4 sentences into the page dedicated to the winery. Associated mainly to the territory. Included into the winery logo. Smaller on labels.
		Franciacorta glass		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Book				n.a.
		Method-rules		Yes	Yes	n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Territory – geomorphology and boundaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Product categories and profiles		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Historical achievements	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Method praise		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory praise	Yes			n.a.



		Positive values	Elegance/ refinement Excellence Uniqueness	Elegance/ Refinement Excellence Uniqueness	Excellence Elegance/ refinement Passion	Quality 5 Uniqueness 8 Comptence 4 Passion 1 Elegance/refine ment 2 Environmental friendliness 1
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Similarity other collective identities		Recognitions like Champagne and Cava		n.a.
		Distinctiveness other collective identities	Not Prosecco			n.a.
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes	Yes (mainly without Franciacorta into it)	Yes	Yes
		Winery architecture		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Wine labels/bottle packaging		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Other artifacts	Hospitality structures	Artifacts celebrating the family.	Yes	n.a.
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes, visionary entrepreneur, the property group	Yes, visionary entrepreneur, the property group	Yes, visionary entrepreneur, the property group	n.a.
		Other collective identities (wine)		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Filière	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Cellar peculiar		Yes	Yes	n.a.

		details				
		specific products		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Positive values	Luxury craftmanship, Tradition	Luxury craftmanship, Tradition	Luxury craftmanship, Tradition Commitment	Soil/land 8 Equilibrium 1
		Future ambitions		Yes		n.a.
		Individual Projects	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Investments	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Reference social communities	Luxury hospitality Celebrities		Luxury hospitality Celebrities	n.a.
<b>INTENT</b>						
<b>Intent: legitimacy</b>	<b>Maintain/increase collective legitimacy</b>	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes			n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Yes	No		n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity		Yes		
		Ambassador	Yes, Franciacorta should become brand like Champagne	Yes	Yes	n.a.
<b>Intent: distinctiveness</b>	<b>Distinctiveness from the outgroup</b>		Yes (thanks to terroir)			n.a.
	<b>Internal relational distinctiveness</b>			Yes, mainly visual identity markers. Overconformity (verbal accounts)	Yes	n.a.

SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION						
Social embeddedness	Status	High status	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Middle status				n.a.
		Low status				n.a.
	Historical and strategic role	Pioneers	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Yes			n.a.
Identification	Cognitive	Overlap degree	E, moderate overlap	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		Firm actor in Franciacorta	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Value overlap	Yes	Yes	Yes	
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Prototype				n.a.

## **WINERY 12**

In the preliminary phase, Winery 12 was included in group 1, the one communicating more collective values and fewer collective visual identity markers. The qualitative analysis confirmed the preliminary results.

In terms of collective visual identity markers, the name Franciacorta is included in the logo, but it is the only symbol used to visibly claim membership to the collective identity. Furthermore, the more common version of the logo in the cellar does not include the name Franciacorta. The Franciacorta glass is used during the tasting, and it appears in documents' pictures. Meanwhile, the winery's logo and some promotional materials are very distinctive, meaning that they have a different style compared to other wineries in the cluster. However, they are coherent with the imagery and the values that characterize the collective identity.

Collective identity themes are projected quite consistently, especially those acclaiming verbal accounts referring to historical achievements and praising the territory. Authoritative verbal accounts are more emphasized in the cellar tour and in documents. Individual identity themes are also consistently projected, especially in praising the winery's history and specific products. A consistent individual projection in categorizing verbal accounts indicates that Winery 12 projects its emphasis of its affinity to the university and research world. Unlike in other cases, collective and individual identity themes are not much intertwined into verbal accounts. The themes emerging from individual verbal accounts are indeed coherent with the collective identity of the cluster.

The analysis indicated that collective identity themes are projected with the intent to increase the collective identity legitimacy. The communication manager emphasized the importance that all wineries communicate the collective identity with coherent messages as Franciacorta is the heart, the book that each winery can partially interpret to give its style while sharing a common denominator. At the same time, projections distinguish Winery 12 from the other wineries in the cluster (internal relational distinctiveness), particularly individual visual identity markers and some verbal accounts that emphasize over-conformity on

specific products. Therefore, Winery 12's identity projections are directed to both increased collective legitimacy and internal relational distinctiveness. Verbal accounts emphasize the need to increase collective legitimacy more, while visual identity markers let the winery stand out from the crowd of competitors.

Winery 12 is a middle status winery (based on self-definition, ratings in wine guides, and other interviewees). It was founded in the late 1980s. It plays a strategic role on the board. Friendship ties are not emphasized in either oral or written communications.

The communication manager declared a moderate overlap between the winery's identity and the collective identity. Despite this, both written and oral communications show a consistent value overlap, strategy and practices overlap, and the description of the role of the winery as a member of the collective identity. Themes referring to affective commitment are not emphasized.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS	PRELIMINARY CONTENT ANALYSIS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>						
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline			Only associated to collective events	NO LOGO, NO CLAIM
		Franciacorta			Into individual logo.	Franciacorta 9 sentences (4 product and 4 territory). Associated mainly to the method. Not associated values. Smaller than other names on labels.
		Franciacorta glass		Yes	Yes	n.a.

		Satèn (emphasis)	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Book				n.a.
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Product categories and profiles		Yes		n.a.
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements		Yes		n.a.
		Future ambitions			Yes	n.a.
		Method praise		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Territory praise	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Positive values	Innovation	Innovation, research.	Innovation/technology	Innovation 3 Quality 1 Trustworthiness/guarantee 2 Elegance/refinement 3
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Similarity other collective identities		Like a small Tuscany		n.a.
		Distinctiveness other collective		We are not ultra-premium wineries (we are not		n.a.

		identities		Sassicaia). We are not Prosecco.		
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive)	Yes (distinctive)	
		Winery architecture		Yes		n.a.
		Wine labels/bottle packaging				n.a.
		Other artifacts	Peculiar promotional materials			n.a.
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	History	Yes, visionary entrepreneur, the property group	Yes, visionary entrepreneur, the property group	Emphasis on youth. The owner, the team.	n.a.
		Filière	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Cellar peculiar details		Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Specific products	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.
		Prizes		Yes		n.a.
		Positive values		Youth, joy	Youth Joy	Youth 2 Joy 1
		Individual Projects	Yes		Yes	n.a.
		Investments	Yes	Yes		
		Events, other activities	Yes			n.a.
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Reference social communities	University		University, tourism.	n.a.

INTENT						
Intent: legitimacy	Maintain/increase collective legitimacy	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes			n.a.
		Franciacorta first	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Emphasis on conformity		Yes	Yes	
Intent: distinctiveness	Distinctiveness from the outgroup		Yes (thanks to terroir)	Yes (method)		n.a.
	Internal relational distinctiveness			Yes, visual identity markers and specific products (overconformity)		n.a.
SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION						
Social embeddedness	Status	High status				n.a.
		Middle status	Yes	Yes		n.a.
		Low status				n.a.
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Yes			n.a.
Identification	Cognitive	Overlap degree	E, moderate overlap	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		Firm actor in Franciacorta	Yes			n.a.
		Value overlap	Yes	Yes, partial	Yes, partial	
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Yes	Yes	Yes	n.a.



### **WINERY 13**

Winery 13 was not included in the preliminary analysis. It was added to the sample because other interviewees indicated that it would be an interesting additional case and because winery 13 was no longer associated with the *Consorzio*.

In terms of visual identity markers, as the winery is no longer part of the *Consorzio*, the only visual identity marker used is the trademark Franciacorta. In fact, this winery produces Franciacorta wines and respects the regulations. The name Franciacorta is included in the winery's logo. The winery itself is both an individual and collective visual identity marker, being a typical historical Franciacorta farmstead. Despite not belonging to the *Consorzio*, Winery 13 projects many collective verbal accounts, especially in terms of acclaiming accounts of the territory, the method used, and historical achievements. These themes are strictly intertwined with individual identity themes, especially regarding the history of the winery and its characteristics. Winery 13 starts its identity communication with collective themes (Franciacorta first) to increase the recognition of the collective identity. Winery 13 was founded before the establishment of the Franciacorta collective identity. It was a farmhouse that also produced wine. In the early years of Franciacorta, being among Franciacorta pioneers, the winery decided to convert its entire production to wine. They were among the founders of the *Consorzio*. Winery 13 is a middle status winery within Franciacorta (based on self-definitions, mentions in wine guides, and other interviewees). Its brand has a high reputation in a niche market. The winery's entrepreneur declared a strong identification with the Franciacorta identity, even if not part of the *Consorzio* anymore. This is supported by value overlap and the description of the winery as a relevant actor of the Franciacorta history. Finally, a high affective commitment toward Franciacorta emerged in the interview.

OVERARCHING THEORETICAL DIMENSION	THEORETICAL DIMENSION	SECOND ORDER THEMES	INTERVIEWS	OBSERVATION	DOCUMENTS
<b>IDENTITY PROJECTIONS</b>					
<b>Collective identity projections</b>	<b>Collective identity markers</b>	Logo and tagline	No	No	No
		Franciacorta	Yes	Yes (into winery logo) In label Franciacorta smaller firm, bigger product name.	Yes (into winery logo).
	<b>Authoritative verbal account</b>	Method-rules			Yes
		Territory – geomorphology and boundaries			
		Product categories and profiles			Yes
	<b>Acclaiming verbal accounts</b>	Historical achievements	Yes		Yes
		Method praise	Yes		
		Positive values	Quality, Passion, Commitment		Quality, Excellence, Uniqueness.
	<b>Categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Distinctiveness other collective identities	Yes, Franciacorta makes different from others		
<b>Individual identity projections</b>	<b>Individual identity markers</b>	Logo	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Winery architecture	Typical Franciacorta farmstead	Typical Franciacorta farmstead	Typical Franciacorta farmstead
	<b>Individual acclaiming verbal</b>	History	Yes		Yes
		Filière	Yes		Yes

	<b>accounts</b>	specific products	Yes		Yes
		Prizes			Yes
		Positive values	Craftmanship, family, territory/terroir		Craftmanship, family, territory/terroir
	<b>Individual categorizing verbal accounts</b>	Reference social communities	Yes, wine associations		Yes, wine associations
<b>INTENT</b>					
<b>Intent: legitimacy</b>	<b>Maintain/increase collective legitimacy</b>	Keep consistency of messages among producers	Yes, (although the collective story seems to be changing from the original one)		
		Franciacorta first	Yes		Yes
<b>Intent: distinctiveness</b>	<b>Distinctiveness from the outgroup</b>		Yes		Yes
	<b>Internal relational distinctiveness</b>		Yes (filière, prizes)		Yes, (Filière)
<b>SOCIAL ROLE AND IDENTIFICATION</b>					
<b>Social embeddedness</b>	<b>Status</b>	High status			
		Middle status	Yes		
		Low status			
	<b>Historical and strategic role</b>	Pioneers	Yes		Yes
		Strategic role into the <i>Consorzio</i>	Not now, but in the past		Not now, but in the past
	<b>Friendship ties</b>		Yes in the past		

<b>Identification</b>	<b>Cognitive</b>	Overlap degree	F big (not with Consorzio)	n.a.	n.a.
		Firm actor in Franciacorta	Yes		Yes
		Value overlap	Yes		Yes
		Overlap of strategy and practices	Partial		Partial
	<b>Affective</b>	Personal involvement when Franciacorta criticized or praised.	Yes		
		Love	Yes, for Franciacorta as a territory and as a way of doing things		