



Despite the high costs of adding new technology, on average Chilean wineries of all sizes are well-equipped to compete internationally with good quality products. The challenge now is to automate most processes.

It's time for automation

AUTOMATION

Given the scarcity of qualified labor and the rising costs associated with it, wineries are increasingly automating their processes. Andrés Schloss, owner of Importadora y Exportadora Hans Schloss, a company with more than 30 years in the market and one of the first to bring automation technology to Chile, explains the budget required to automate a winery is not as high as one would expect. "A large winery with big production volumes may recover the investment in less than three years, while a small one may take four or even five years. But the big advantage is that you gain full control over what you want to do and what you don't, plus you don't have to deal with labor issues," he points out.

As an example, he mentions the case of a large winery where the whole pumping over process was automated at a cost of USD 700,000, which was recovered within three years. The machine does the job of 16 workers and, what's best, the pumping over operations are now conducted when and how the winemaker decides, which has had a very positive impact on the quality of the wine. The decision was made after checking the surveillance cameras and discovering that the night-shift workers were using their time to sleep instead of pumping over the wine.

The winery referenced in this article is the Puente Alto facility owned by Concha y Toro. The system installed in January 2014 was VinWizard.

Functionality included:

- Automatic heating and cooling temperature control
- Automated pumpover with air injection

The cost mentioned in the article included supply and installation of all components.

- Temperature control included VinWizard pneumatic air valves on the Hot supply.
- Pumps were premium Graco diaphragm pumps operated via VinWizard pneumatic air valves.
- Air injection included Venturi valves operated via VinWizard pneumatic air valves.

The full article can be read on the following link:
http://www.vitismagazine.cl/n_anteriores_70.htm