

Passenger traffic

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Passenger Traffic




A photograph of a red double-decker bus in London. The bus has a sign on its side that reads 'STARLIGHT EXPRESS' and 'APOLLO VICTORIA'. It is driving on a street with a large, ornate building in the background. A street sign is visible on the right side of the street, pointing towards 'Horse Arch', 'Regent's Park', and 'Garden'.

Meeting place: marriage altar.

Right in the centre of the pulsating life of the metropolis of London. This is not the worst way to spend one's honeymoon. As supplier of comprehensive mobility, the SBB make dreams come true. Whether a visit of Europe's most exciting cities or a trip to Australia: the SBB are far more than a means of transport. The ticket window of our forefathers has been opened wide. In cooperation with their partners, the SBB at their stations have opened a door to world-wide travel.





A photograph of a young woman with long, wavy brown hair, looking down and to the left. She is wearing a green, horizontally-ribbed crop top and light blue denim jeans. A dark watch is visible on her left wrist. The background is dark and out of focus.

Direct connection SMS.

Using public transport must be as easy as the use of a Handy, always available and not far away. With the SBB, hourly, half-hourly, and in regional traffic even quarter-hourly cadence of train services is nearly a matter of course already. The trains follow each other with increasingly smaller intervals, and always more often turn night into day. Late night returnees let themselves be driven at 1 a.m. from Zurich to Bern. And once the party or rave is over, the revellers return home in the early morning on the new "Night-bird" bus of SBB and Postauto Schweiz, safely and comfortably.

Passenger Traffic: the journey to the clients

More services for more customers – and for satisfied ones: the year 2000 was a good year for passenger traffic. As supplier of comprehensive mobility, the SBB want to remove the last barriers to public transport and to hold the course of success.

How do customers judge the performances of the SBB? This is an essential question for an enterprise that makes customer orientation the centre of its strategy. The answer is gratifying: with 84.7 percent of satisfied customers, this rate increased again in the past year. The share of dissatisfied customers steadily decreased in the past years – from 18.8 to 16.7 percent in the year 1999, and finally to 15.3 percent in 2000.

A remarkable result of the yearly customer satisfaction survey is the increased satisfaction among young customers (age segments up to 25, and 26 to 39). The points most criticised are shortage of seats, followed at some distance by timetable problems (delays, broken connections), room climate in cars, and cleanness. What the customers rated as absolutely top was friendliness of railway staff at the counters and in the trains. The price/performance ratio has significantly improved, in the judgements of both the commuters and the other passengers.



Nearly 85 percent are satisfied: customers give high marks

More trips, more revenues, more trains

In regard to performance and revenue, passenger traffic could write new record figures in 2000. The revenue could be increased by 1.7 percent to 1630 million CHF. The number of passenger-km went up by 1.6 percent to 12,815 million, and the number of passenger-trips even grew by 3.9 percent and reached 286.8 million.

With this result, the SBB could profit from a constantly good economic situation which favoured mobility. The customers on their part could profit from further stepped-up performances. Although the big timetable changes normally occur in uneven years, the train service offer was significantly improved by end of May 2000. Main areas were Eastern Switzerland with the new S-Bahn St. Gallen, Central Switzerland, and new early morning and late night services. With a night bus trial operation starting in autumn between Zurich and Lucerne, and between Geneva and Lausanne, the SBB and their partner Postauto Schweiz increased the travel offer for the growing number of people returning home very late, with respectable first results. Last but not least, the year 2000 brought a comfort gain to long-distance passengers through the stepwise introduction of the Intercity tilting trains (ICN):



With or without a handicap:
all customers are welcome

To keep Passenger Traffic on the lane of success also in 2001 is a challenge. To wit: according to prognostics, economic growth becomes less pronounced, and the still growing number of road vehicles per household makes competition between public and private transport keener. The SBB fortify themselves with a further important performance increase in the scope of Bahn 2000, and with a further range of innovations that simplify customers' access to the railway and make train use more attractive.

Faithful clients – the biggest potential

It is not by chance that customer care ranks foremost on the marketing plan 2001. The regular clients are a very valuable capital of passenger traffic. The sale of General Abonnements (GA) has again increased by 5 percent in the past year. By the end of the year, 230,895 clients were in possession of this key to boundless mobility with public transport, now 12 percent of these in first class. Added to these "Super-Users" are 840,000 regulars with point-to-point and traffic community season tickets. The Half-Fare Card as a railway door opener

for casual travellers remains a best-seller. With 1,924,213 Cards in circulation at the end of the year, the figure steadily approaches the record value of the early 90s. At that time, the two million mark could be surpassed.

The regular clients are being given special care – by way of direct marketing, automatically renewed cards, or the new possibility to "subscribe" to the GA by instalments. Via a central database, all regular clients can now be addressed in a targeted way.

Each customer is welcome

Different market sectors call for different offers. The range of passenger traffic products is adapted to the different clients:

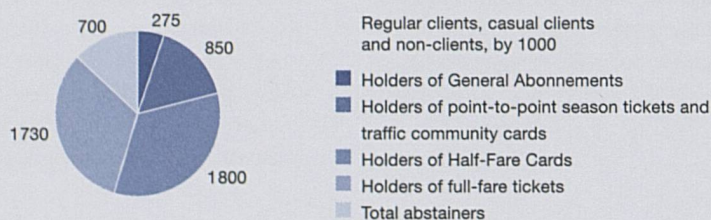
- The "Track 7 Abo" offers unlimited travel to the evening party and back again at night. It is newly positioned on the market as "hot card complementing the Half-Fare Card". The need to have a Half-Fare Card has at first led to loss of clients. By end of the year, circulation has stabilised at 70,000 items.

- Since last year, families can travel at little cost with the Junior Card. For CHF 20 per child (free as from third child) the card is good for unlimited travel for a whole year if the child is accompanied. From May through December, the Family Card in its new form sold 250,000 times.

- Also disabled travellers are welcome of course. Since the end of May 2000, a central Call Center in Brig organises your trip upon a telephone call from you. When you board a train and get off, mobility helpers, most of them specially trained, will take care of you. 12,600 such trips have been organised within the first seven months, and many of these trips would not have been possible without the extra service of the railway.

- Passengers encumbered with luggage increasingly profit from the Check-in service for Fly Luggage at the station. The Swiss pioneer offer is in constant development and is available at 36 stations now. "Ordinary" luggage can now as before be registered between all staffed stations. Because of the extended possibilities to take things along on the same trains (for example bicycles), and the improved access ways to the train, luggage registration is admittedly on the decline. In holiday regions, the SBB are expanding the offer of direct luggage transport to the hotels, as a niche product.

The Swiss and the SBB





The choice is nearly unlimited:
touch-screen ticket vending machine

Sales: electronics on the advance

Alternatives to the classical counter sales become increasingly important to the clients. Measured by the number of sales transactions, self-service at the ticket machines has outstripped counter sales in the past year. By end of the year, the ratio approached 3:2. At that time, already 257 ticket vending machines with touch screen control and nearly unlimited range of products were at disposal. Newly, in bigger stations, there are machines that specifically cater for clients who pay in the cashless mode.

At the railway counter, the customers can get much more than just tickets and abonnements. They can also buy and sell foreign currencies, send and receive money to and from any place in the world, buy tickets for a concert, hire a bicycle or a car, or book a round-the-world tour. The most important field of diversification in the context of rail travel is the travel agency business. With a turnover of 150 million CHF, the SBB travel agencies are the third-largest travel agency chain in Switzerland. Around 220 stations offer the full range of products of the Swiss major tour operators, such as Kuoni, Railtour, Hotelplan and Frantour. Distribution of tickets for entry to events as an additional business is greatly expanded by the SBB.

By a cooperation contract with "Ticket Corner", this service is expanded this year from today's 8 to 100 stations, perfectly in line with the strategic goal of using all potentials of added value in the wider mobility field as a provider of comprehensive mobility. In the same connection, the SBB push the sale of packages including train travel and additional services. The subsidiary RailAway, founded in 1999, is on an unbroken course of growth. In the first business

year, turnover in the leisure travel segment could be increased by 40.5 percent, and for 2001 a growth of another 20 percent is targeted. RailAway shows that the railway can significantly increase its share in the booming leisure travel market thanks to professional market presence.

At the counters, a new IT platform is forthcoming, offering significantly more possibilities to sales staff and indirectly to customers than the present one. Teething troubles have momentarily interrupted the transition, which will be terminated countrywide in the second half of 2002. To have competent sales staff remains an absolute necessity in the increasingly demanding sales function. Intensive training efforts to enhance customer-mindedness have contributed to the excellent values on customer satisfaction for personnel at the counters and in trains. By end of 2000, no less than 16,500 of the 28,000 strong SBB workforce have followed a training programme titled "Future", placed under the motto: "What can I do for you?"



Sensors for the ticketless journey:
"EasyRide" test in Geneva

The field of distribution moves

The strategies of the SBB will change the distribution and the customer-railway interface in general. "EasyRide", "eMarketing" and "Customer Care Center" are the three central terms in passenger traffic that stand for the strategic goals of offering comprehensive mobility, of distinguishing the SBB as "eCompany", of being a technological avant-gardist, and of becoming an enterprise with sustained profitability.

The "EasyRide" concept promises the customers a tremendously simpler access to the railway. This spring, it is subjected to first live tests in the regions of Geneva and Basel. If this project which is an offspring of all means of public transport, masters all technical hurdles, the "trip without ticket" becomes a reality. A personal chip card registers the customers automatically when stepping on and off the vehicles. At the end of the month, the accumulated trips, no matter whether on the Intercity or the tram, will be invoiced. Apart from a universal "mobility card", also electronic individual tickets are possible.



Popular and always more numerous:
Intercity tilting train ICN

Railway counter via Internet and telephone

"eCommerce" is in the offing. Starting this year, the customers not only can receive their personal travel schedule via Internet, but can at the same time order their ticket. The website "www.sbb.ch", already today one of the busiest in Switzerland, is given a completely new structure and design. With SMS, cellular phone users can also access the timetable, and the SBB are working on a project of a "Handy Ticket".

Besides, and in analogy with SBB Cargo, passenger traffic bunches client service functions together. The ten decentralised Rail Services existing today shall in the future be controlled from one "Customer Contact Center" in Brig. The remit is a high-quality handling of the more than three million calls and of the strongly increasing number of online transactions.

Long-distance traffic: speed and new livery

The train-km performance offer of passenger traffic continues to grow in the context of the Bahn 2000 scheme. In 1999, the increase was 8000 km per day (up 3 percent), in the last year 5000 km (up 2 percent), and this coming June, another big extension step will bring another increase by a good 8000 km (3 percent). These figures stand for regional and long-distance traffic combined.

In long-distance traffic, customers can benefit from an always denser timetable with half-hour cadence on lines with strong demand. But they also gain in travel comfort. The new Intercity tilting trains ICN that last year began to join the fleet, are very well received by the customers. They were first used for special runs to the Automobile Salon and the Swiss Samples Fair, and from the timetable change end of May increasingly in timetabled service between St.Gallen and Lausanne via Zurich and the Foot-of-the-Jura line. Of the 24 elegant seven-car trainsets ordered, 16 were delivered by end of the year.

The fleet of the Intercity double-deck cars IC-2000 has also continued to grow. After delivery of the fourth and last series, ordered in early 2001, a total of 320 of these modern vehicles will be in use, constituting an important pillar of today's Intercity and Interregio services. Bistro cars newly upgrade the in-train services of these double-decker trains. Thanks to a subsequent technical change of the air-conditioning on already delivered cars, the customer complaints because of disagreeable draughts in the compartments went down strongly.

In future, the SBB's long-distance trains will have a uniform livery. The perennial green will be replaced by a white primer, in analogy to the IC 2000 and the ICN tilting trains. Dark bands between the windows and contrasting colours to mark the doors give the trains an elegant character. The 550 standard type cars Mark IV, still popular with the customers, are receiving the same livery on occasion of the conversion to speed 200, currently going on. The customer wish for an interior with lighter colouring is also fulfilled on this occasion.

Cooperations across national borders

The SBB are giving new impulses to international traffic through cooperation agreements. Of importance to Swiss customers is "TEE Rail Alliance" with the German DB and the Austrian ÖBB, intending to increase traffic by way of modern tilting trains and harmonised fares. This spring, the three partners have issued a call for tenders for 116 trains, 34 of which on charge of the SBB. Another alliance by name of "Rhealys" comprises the French SNCF, DB and SBB. Switzerland is concerned by this project company with the route Zurich-Basel-Paris. The TGV connections via Geneva and Vallorbe are managed by a dedicated bi-national registered company, and the tilting trains between Switzerland and Italy by the Cisalpino AG, now as before.

The performance offer of passenger services increases
from year to year and brings the customers
more ride comfort and more punctuality.



Competitive advantages through
cooperations: MThB and SBB

The commitment in night traffic however is less strong because the most important destinations can easily be reached from Switzerland by day trains. In the past year, the SBB have sold a 40 percent participation in CityNightLine (CNL) AG to the DB AG. With the exception of the night connections between Switzerland and Italy, still enjoying a good demand, the SBB withdraw from this market step by step.

Regional traffic: more for less

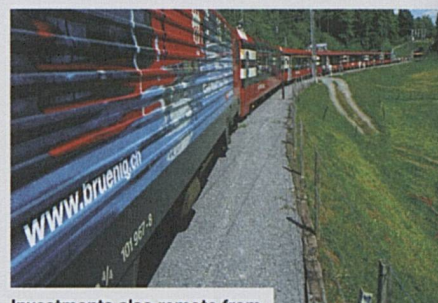
"More Service public for less money": This motto is particularly well adapted to regional passenger traffic, where the Cantons act as the direct clients of the SBB. Since the mid-90s, the PSO grants of public authorities have steadily gone down, while the performance offer in favour of the users increases year for year – by 13 percent in the past four years alone. Also in the future, efficiency increase is the way to increase performance in the interest of the customers and in the face of scarce public funds – and in competition with other operators in order to hold the leader position on the Swiss market. It is true that in actual fact, the market in regional traffic has only been opened to a modest extent, however multinational railway operators are on "standby" outside the Swiss border. The first public calls for tenders in Switzerland are to be expected for 2002.

Cooperations bring cost advantages for the orderers, and a better position in the coming competitive environment. For Regional Traffic, the most important one was the alliance with the Mittelthurgaubahn (MThB), announced in autumn. With the "Regionalbahn Ostschweiz", the working title of the joint venture shortly to be founded, the partners increase the efficiency of regional traffic and can

submit a better offer to the Cantons, at the same price, enhancing client benefit. Furthermore, the alliance with the MThB who is already active in Germany, will make a commitment in the border-near region easier.

The plans for Eastern Switzerland in an exemplary way symbolise the strategy of growth applicable to regional traffic, and its international orientation. Thereby, the business field Regional Traffic defines the European regions near the Swiss border as its market areas. Out of eight S-Bahn systems in Switzerland, either existing or still to be built up, four serve regions outside the Swiss borders. In the Basel area, SBB regional trains operate in the Alsace already today, and in the Geneva area, a cooperation for connections to France is being built up.

S-Bahn systems with dense timetables have yet a considerable potential for development for conurbations in Switzerland. The S-Bahn of Zurich as the first countrywide, celebrated its 10 years of successful operation in 2000. By end of May, the S-Bahn St. Gallen started with 8 lines. For an S-Bahn Central Switzerland, the SBB have received a planning mandate from the Cantons last year.



Investments also remote from
the towns – for example at the Brünig

Chances for rural regions

The strategy of growth comprises also rural and touristic regions. An ambitious turnaround programme with investments of around 100 million CHF shall bring the Brünig Railway between Lucerne and Interlaken out of the red. The core measure to improve productivity is remote control of train operation on the whole line. A dedicated new management must not only increase productivity, but also revenues.

For the Seetal line between Lucerne and Lenzburg, the SBB, jointly with the two Cantons concerned, have started a 200 million CHF sanitation programme. 17 new trainsets, ordered last year, will step up the attractiveness of this and other lines. The trains in low-floor design for agglomeration traffic, developed in Switzerland, make boarding very easy. Their somewhat lesser width makes it possible to continue to use the existing tramway-like line alignment. Expensive relocations of the line can thus be avoided.