

Borders? Not for us

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Borders? Not for us.

Switzerland Tourism is concentrating on the markets with the largest potential in terms of numbers of visitors and the scope for sales. The most important market continues to be Switzerland itself, followed by Germany, the other European countries, North America, Asia and other markets of the future.

In the most important groups of countries, Switzerland Tourism has a presence through its own marketing teams or agents. Its responsibilities in individual markets include providing customers with professional assistance, targeted media work and activities in the travel trade sector. In the other markets with potential, Switzerland Tourism is stepping up its cooperation with trade attachés at Swiss embassies. Through a more appropriate and favourable choice of locations, it has been possible to reduce the cost of Switzerland Tourism's office network by 2 million Swiss francs in the last three years.

New structures in the worldwide marketing network.

Switzerland Tourism has opened its own commercial «travel agency» in London: since 1st June 1997, the Switzerland Travel Centre STC has been selling Swiss packages to the British as an incoming travel agency for Switzerland Tourism. On the Iberian peninsula, Switzerland Tourism has been collaborating on an agency basis with Sergat SA in Barcelona since April 1997. In the Nordic countries and in Taiwan, work has been taking place intensively with a view to cooperate with local agencies for 1998.

Cooperation with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

In countries with a growing potential for foreign travel where Switzerland Tourism has neither its own representation nor an

agency, local trade attachés will in future take steps to discover new visitor potential and increase the volume of travel to Switzerland. A working party consisting of representatives of the Swiss Office for Trade Promotion, Switzerland Tourism, the Swiss Federal Office for Economic Development and Labour, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Swiss Federal Office for Foreign Economic Affairs adopted a pilot project in Brazil in September 1997 which will examine the possible tourism services to be provided by trade delegations.

«Switzerland Network Convention».

«Switzerland Network» is a good example of successful cooperation with foreign representatives of the travel sector. Through «Switzerland Network», Switzerland Tourism has been exploring new openings in the North American market





for the past year. The aim is to train individuals who complete a two-stage training programme about Switzerland as competent, highly qualified travel agents, to open up new distribution channels for Swiss suppliers, to position Switzerland more effectively as a holiday brand in North America and, finally, to increase the number of journeys made to Switzerland.

From 15th to 22nd September 1997, 120 selected North American travel specialists who had passed the first part of the training programme (intensive home study with a final test) came to Switzerland for the second stage. Besides an individual study trip, the on-site training included taking part in the «Switzerland Network Convention». This conference, held in St. Moritz from 16th to 18th September 1997, provided a platform for workshops and discussions with Swiss suppliers.

Those who complete the programme successfully will be included in the «Switzerland Network» as Swiss specialists.

«Switzerland Network» is a success story. In 1997, graduates of this innovative course generated more than 11,000 additional overnights. In North America, the

training was rated as the best loyalty programme for a holiday destination. In a short period, bookings for travel to Switzerland have trebled in the participating travel agencies.

This course was the best training and experience I've had since I got into travel in 1983! (Ms. Elli O'Toole, Edelweiss Travel, South Lake Tahoe, California).

«In 20 years in travel this has been the most informative and enjoyable program I have experienced. Thank you!» (Mr. Varoujan Meneshian, American Express, Los Angeles, California).

«Switzerland Travel Experience STE».

The aim of «Switzerland Travel Experience STE» is to join with Swiss partners in presenting Switzerland as a holiday and travel destination in potential and existing markets, and to establish contacts with major tour operators and senior figures in the media.

In November 1997, a delegation of senior figures in the Swiss tourism

industry, led by Switzerland Tourism, spent two weeks visiting India and China. Through presentations, workshops and receptions, they were able to make Switzerland better known to the local representatives of the travel sector and the media. The events were organised in close collaboration with Swissair. With 400 and 450 visitors from the Indian and Chinese travel sectors respectively, these events were a complete success.

«The gods have smiled on Switzerland: all the beauties of the world are here in this country». (Jiang Hua, Director International, CNTA, Beijing).

Fairs.

Switzerland Tourism also ensured that ideal platforms were provided for its partners at the major international fairs in 1997. The programme included an extremely wide variety of specialist and public fairs, such as ITB Berlin, BIT Milan, MITCAR Paris, WTM London, Vakantie Utrecht, EIBTM Geneva, MITT Moscow and IT&ME Chicago.