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Product marketing business — of MICE and money ...



The «Best Event in Europe» award is presented by the SCIB. Left to right: Ex-Miss Belgium (MC), Barbra Albrecht, Head of Business Marketing, and representatives of GVST Event Management.

The Switzerland Convention & Incentive Bureau (SCIB) is a non-profit organisation under the Switzerland Tourism umbrella that markets Switzerland as a destination for congresses, seminars, incentives and similar events.

Within its area of responsibility the SCIB has agreed a joint product marketing strategy with Switzerland Tourism in the Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) sector. With an estimated annual market potential of four million overnights and average daily spending of CHF 500 per person, this segment represents potential tourism revenues of CHF 2 billion per year.

The overriding objective remains to raise awareness for Switzerland as a meeting, incentive and congress destination. To this end, the Swiss offering is actively sold to events organisers, i.e. multinationals, specialist agencies and international associations, in the priority markets. These organisers now have a central point of contact, receive regular visits and are able to familiarise themselves with the products on study trips to Switzerland. They are sent regular infor-

The Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions sector offers great potential for tourism in Switzerland. Now, better use is being made of this potential.

mation on new developments and are invited to attend client events and workshops. In September 2001 the SCIB activated the venue finder search engine on MySwitzerland.com. This system enables users to locate congress, meeting and seminar venues all over Switzerland quickly and easily and enter into direct contact with the venues of interest. As a meeting destination Switzerland also maintains a presence at the most important trade shows and works closely with the specialist media. All this goes to ensure that Switzerland is not forgotten

when it comes to selecting venues for events. And it works: The number of enquiries received by the SCIB from the individual markets climbed by 50% in 2001 compared to the previous year. The number of directly generated overnights rose by 150%, representing an encouraging start to the marketing of meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions.



Dutch clients cooking Swiss meals.

Donning the chef's hat

In November 2001 Switzerland was actively marketed as a meeting destination at client events in The Hague and Brussels attended by decision-makers for major congresses, seminars and incentive trips from international firms, associations and organisations, professional organisers and specialist agencies. The central theme, the

«excellent Swiss cuisine», was an ever-present feature of the events, starting with the wooden ladle invitation and ending with the cookbook with souvenir photos sent out afterwards. On completion of the information workshops, presentations and discussions the informal highlight was a visit to a cooking studio, where the guests were given an apron bearing the slogan «Switzerland. Where the World Meets.» and then prepared a Swiss evening meal in groups under the instruction of leading Swiss chefs. This certainly wasn't a case of too many cooks spoiling the broth, as the delighted guests claimed they had rarely eaten so well. But that's not all: they also placed concrete requests for offers with regard to congresses, seminars and incentive trips, confirming that the efforts of the last two years are bearing fruit.