

Editorial

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Jean-François Roth, President Switzerland Tourism

“The previous year was decisive.”

A year ago, the franc was unpegged from euro.

What was the outcome of this strategy?

It was Switzerland's mountain regions which felt the greatest effect of the strong franc in 2015, as they derive the majority of their income from leisure tourism and European visitors. Taking this into account, ST's strategy of attracting tourists from places such as China and Southeast Asia, and encouraging them to explore new regions off the beaten track, is of great importance.

What role do you see for Europe?

ST's dual strategy of focusing on both emerging markets and the established European market has never been more relevant. Even though 2015 saw a sharp decline in bookings from European guests in terms of hotel nights, they will still account for a third of our total overnight stays in the coming years.

Has 2015 been a decisive year for your marketing strategy?

Yes, it has. This is a market in flux and since this is the environment we operate in, ST has undergone internal restructuring to redouble its efforts with targeted marketing strategies to the most lucrative customer segments. It has long been the case that when booking their holidays, people are swayed by the promise of unique experiences, and we have communicated this offering on all possible platforms.



Jürg Schmid, CEO Switzerland Tourism

“Grand Tour of Switzerland feedback shows we're getting it right.”

The Grand Tour is launched, what's next?

The Grand Tour has really taken off and it's now full steam ahead. We are confident we're on the right track, given the initial enthusiasm we've seen. What's on the agenda now is to breathe life into the Grand Tour so it becomes a long-term viable product. In my opinion, the Grand Tour is the best illustration of how willing the industry is to join forces, especially in difficult times.

#INLOVEWITHSWITZERLAND – has this promotion succeeded in inspiring visitors?

Absolutely. We interact directly with guests on social media and there's been a whole host of authentic and well-engaged contributions using that hashtag. This has motivated us to make a decisive effort to implement this new communication strategy as after all, who better to inspire our future guests than our current visitors?

What has been your personal highlight of ST's marketing in 2015?

I was really pleased by our collaboration with the legendary astronaut Buzz Aldrin – the promos we did with him still give me goosebumps. Buzz showed he was a true fan of Switzerland and a charismatic ambassador. The campaign has been successful both in his own country, the US, and internationally.