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A wide-angle photograph of Lake Thun, Switzerland, showing a winding asphalt road along the right-hand shore. The lake's water is a deep, vibrant blue-green. In the background, forested mountains rise under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A small boat is visible in the lower-left corner of the lake.

# Marketing organisation.

Into the deep blue: the road along Lake Thun near  
Beatenberg (Bernese Oberland) hugs the coast.  
© Martin Mägli



### 1. Priority markets

#### 78 % of overnights in the Swiss hotel sector

China (with Taiwan), Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland, USA, UK (with Ireland)

### 2. Active markets

#### 9.4 % of overnights in the Swiss hotel sector

Australia (with New Zealand and Oceania), Belgium (with Luxembourg), Japan, Canada, South Korea, the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden), Austria (with Hungary), Spain, Czech Republic



## Switzerland Tourism in a nutshell:

**Switzerland Tourism promotes Switzerland worldwide as a holiday destination with its slogan “Switzerland. get natural”.**

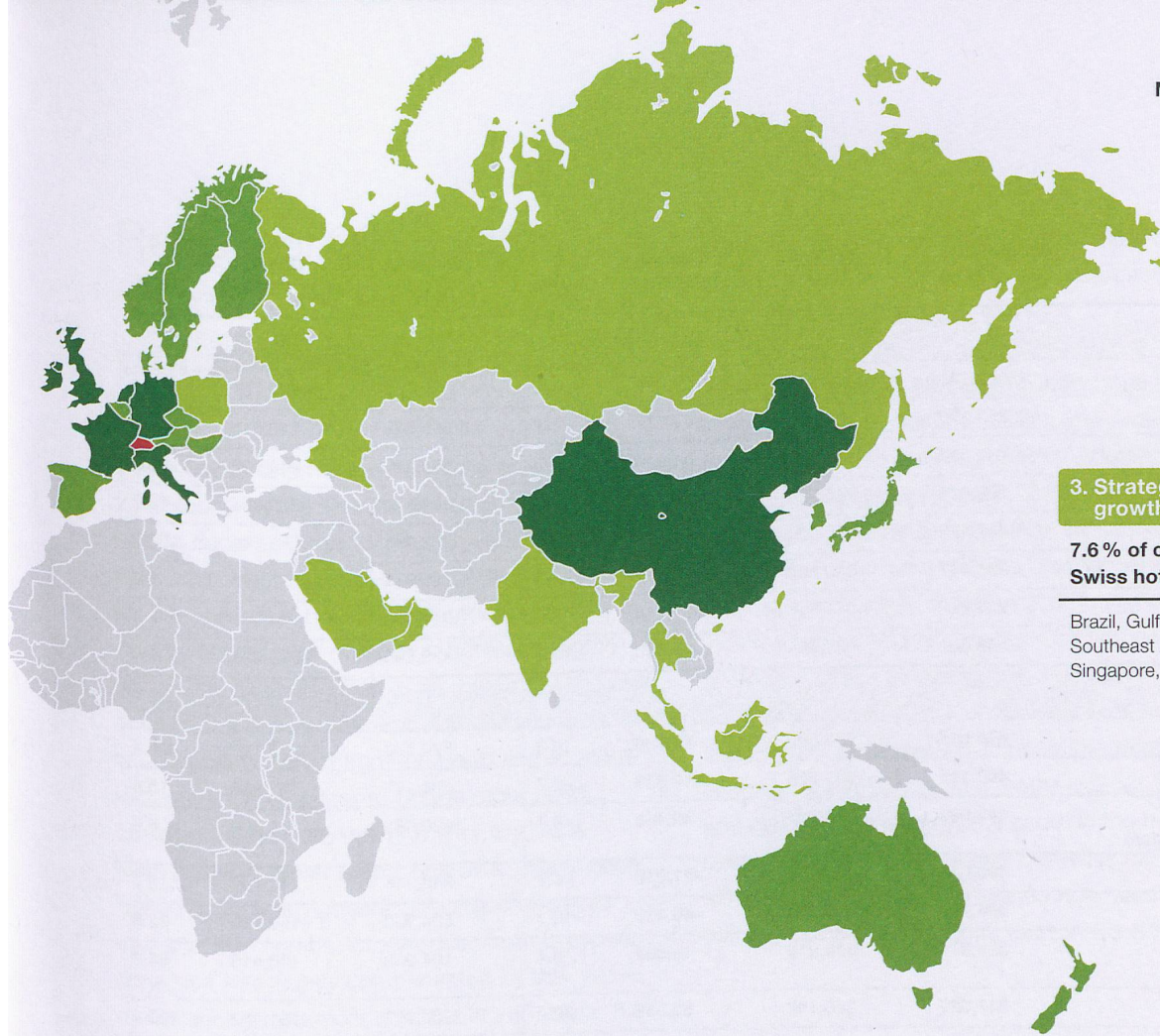
The Switzerland Tourism (ST) marketing organisation has a long history. It has been promoting Switzerland as a travel and conference destination at home and abroad for almost 100 years, by federal mandate. ST positions Switzerland as a tourism brand which stands for quality, naturalness, sustainability and modernity, under the overall concept of “Swissness”. To do so, ST develops marketing initiatives which it implements creatively with its partners through a full range of promotional and sales techniques. ST is a public corporation. Its board comprises 13 representatives from tourism, business and industry associations. ST’s president is Jean-François Roth, while Jürg Schmid is responsible for operational management.

In 2015, the Parliament extended ST’s credit facility for 2016–2019 to 230 millions Swiss francs, the maximum upper limit. Parliament can vote annually on whether to increase that limit, but in late 2015, the Parliament did not extend ST’s credit for 2016 in a bid to make significant savings.

### Facts and figures.

Regional representations		26
Staff		244
– of whom trainees		23
Spending	CHF m	96.01
– of which regular federal funding	CHF m	52.90
Spending abroad	CHF m	73.22
Degree of self-financing	%	44.72
Marketing budget / marketing staff	CHF	312,000





### 3. Strategic growth markets

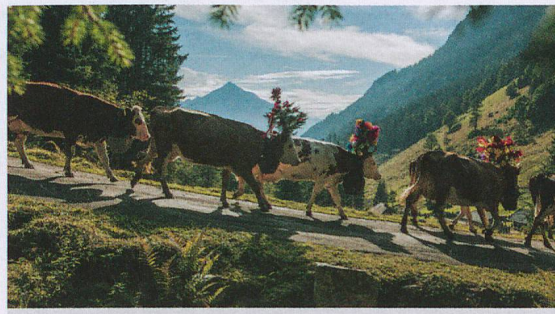
**7.6% of overnights in the Swiss hotel sector**

Brazil, Gulf states, India, Poland, Russia, Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand)

### Positioning of the holiday destination Switzerland.



Nature



Authenticity

**The Swiss experience → slogan: "get natural."**

### ST combines two top trumps into one winning hand:

The main draw for most visitors to Switzerland is the variety of sublime natural landscapes, – but also the exceptional first-hand experience of authentic, living traditions. This combination is highlighted by ST's slogan "get natural".

A promise as well as an invitation, this is how Switzerland sets itself apart from the competition by emphasising, above all else, the experience it offers.



Hotel  
overnights.

	Overnights 2015	Overnights 2014	Change 2015 / 2014	in %	Overnights 2005	Change 2015 / 2005	in %
<b>Priority markets</b>							
Switzerland	16,052,181	16,026,135	26,046	0.2	14,622,420	1,429,761	9.8
Germany	3,853,180	4,394,457	-541,277	-12.3	5,563,695	-1,710,515	-30.7
USA	1,738,838	1,644,424	94,414	5.7	1,494,210	244,628	16.4
UK (with Ireland)	1,708,878	1,736,723	-27,845	-1.6	2,088,879	-380,001	-18.2
China (with Taiwan)	1,647,492	1,240,051	407,441	32.9	282,351	1,365,141	483.5
France	1,254,447	1,337,882	-83,435	-6.2	1,225,619	28,828	2.4
Italy	936,913	1,014,058	-77,145	-7.6	1,011,279	-74,366	-7.4
Netherlands	583,831	681,671	-97,840	-14.4	828,889	-245,058	-29.6
<b>Active markets</b>							
Belgium (with Luxembourg)	655,616	730,555	-74,939	-10.3	890,733	-235,117	-26.4
Austria (with Hungary)	460,115	472,758	-12,643	-2.7	388,177	71,938	18.5
The Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden)	449,099	497,544	-48,445	-9.7	420,663	28,436	6.8
Spain	396,044	417,114	-21,070	-5.1	348,245	47,799	13.7
Japan	394,784	439,894	-45,110	-10.3	584,923	-190,139	-32.5
Australia (with New Zealand and Oceania)	325,374	314,810	10,564	3.4	194,959	130,415	66.9
South Korea	317,022	263,189	53,833	20.5	135,610	181,412	133.8
Canada	234,218	230,848	3,370	1.5	178,202	56,016	31.4
Czech Republic	103,239	113,975	-10,736	-9.4	63,346	39,893	63.0
<b>Strategic growth markets</b>							
Gulf states	929,799	770,725	159,074	20.6	252,181	677,618	268.7
India	591,924	485,216	106,708	22.0	249,070	342,854	137.7
Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand)	444,030	412,509	31,521	7.6	180,144	263,886	146.5
Russia	369,264	532,775	-163,511	-30.7	276,322	92,942	33.6
Brazil	225,239	222,211	3,028	1.4	102,677	122,562	119.4
Poland	160,151	174,652	-14,501	-8.3	77,484	82,667	106.7

Overnights at Swiss hotels and spas (by selected countries of origin, partially aggregated)  
Source: HESTA, Federal Statistical Office 2015, 2014 and 2005

## The Swiss hotel sector remains stable.

In 2015 the Swiss hotel sector recorded 35.6 million overnights, representing only a slight change compared to the previous year (-0.8 %). In view of the discontinuation of the minimum euro exchange rate, the consistent result is encouraging. This stability is primarily due to the growth of 18.6 % generated by Asia (China +33 %, India +22 %, Gulf states +21 %), which largely compensated the decline of

Europe (-9.3 %). With 1.6 million overnights, China is replacing France as the fourth-highest foreign market of origin. Switzerland, with 16 million overnights (+0.2 %), achieved another new record. Losses were suffered by rural and alpine areas (-2.8 %/-3.0 %), while the Swiss cities continued to grow again this year (+1.6 %).



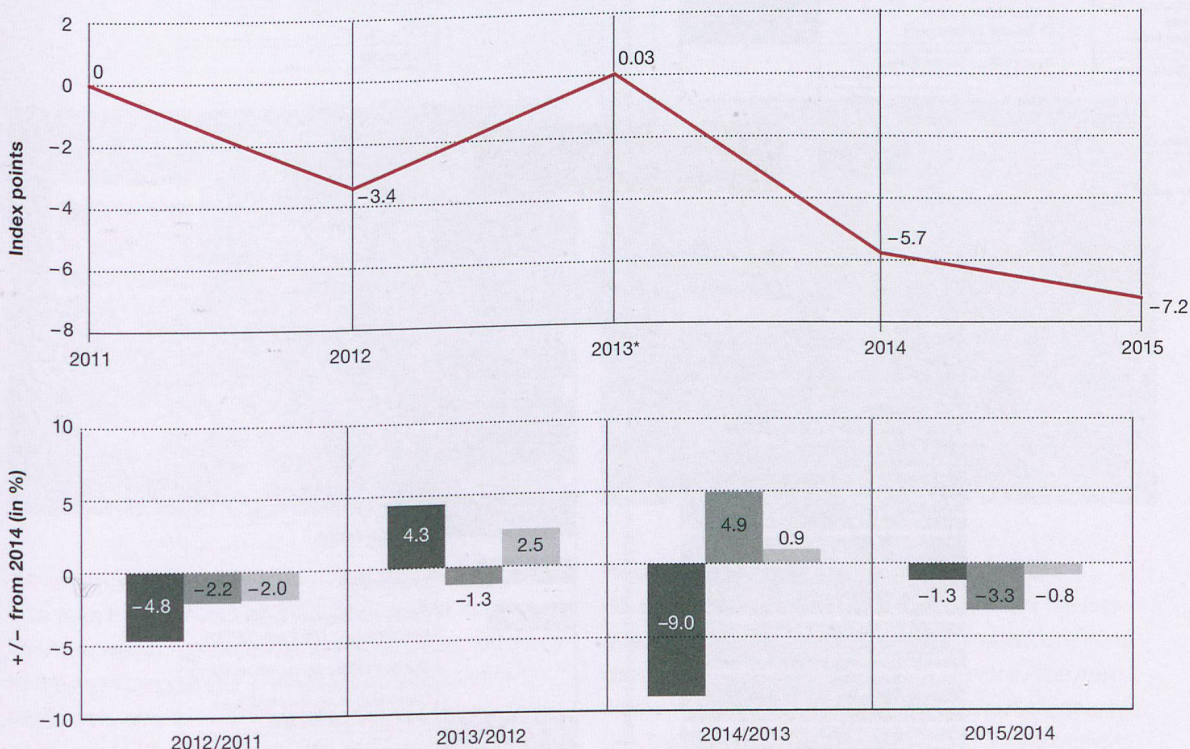
## Review of 2015: currency shock was followed by a picture-perfect summer.

The currency and the weather have shaped the 2015 tourism year. The Swiss National Bank's surprising decision to discontinue the minimum CHF / EUR exchange rate in January made the situation for Swiss tourism considerably more difficult. It directly affected the number of hotel overnights generated by nearby European markets. The hotel industry, as the key element of Swiss tourism, was unable to benefit from the beginning economic recovery in the Euro area. On the other hand, business developments in America and Asia were positive: Never before has Switzerland been visited by as many guests from these overseas markets. The number of absences from European countries was largely compensated by this. Aided by the second-warmest summer in 150 years, the

domestic market also reported a record in overnights. Overall, the hotel industry ended the year with only a slight decline (-0.8 %).

In addition to the hotel industry, non-hotel accommodations as well as day tourism and excursions form the core of the Swiss tourism industry. The Tourism Development Index (TDI) indicates, as a result of the frequencies, how the economic basis (number of overnights, visitors, passengers and entries) has changed for the industry. Based on the TDI, the tourist frequencies have slightly decreased again throughout Switzerland in calendar year 2015 (-1.5 index points). For non-hotel accommodations, it was particularly difficult to compensate the absence of the European guests (-3.3 %). The day and event tourism enjoyed a boom in the hot summer season with little rainfall. It grew significantly, although it was unable to fully compensate the marked decline in the winter season (-1.3 %).

### Tourism Development Index (TDI).



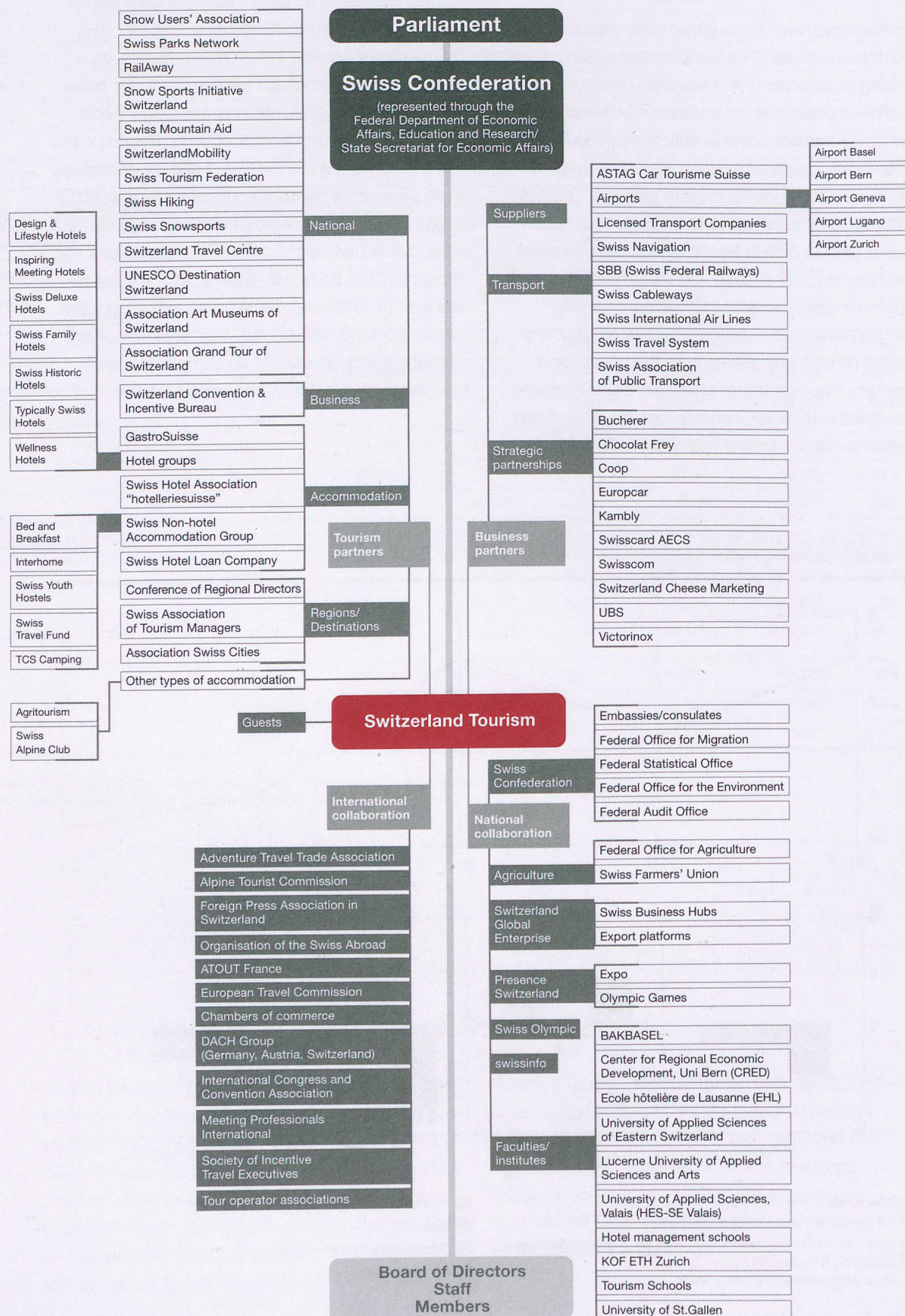
\* Not factored in: the 2013 Züri-Fäscht event (if counted, there were 2.3m extra visitors, up 3.7 points).  
Sources: Hotel associations (HESTA, BfS); para-hotel associations (HESTA, BfS, ST); day trip figures (ST).  
Provisional results; subject to revision.

■ Tourism Development Index  
■ Day trips  
■ Non-hotel accommodation  
■ Hotel industry



## ST network, key to success in 2015.

Through its network, ST plays matchmaker between suppliers and travel agents, and also briefs politicians, economists, and state and private organisations.





## Membership benefits.

**Access to strategically vital knowledge, a close network and ST marketing: these are the advantages of ST membership.**

ST members are always up-to-date: they enjoy exclusive access to STnet.ch, ST's B2B online portal dedicated to tourism and the industry's largest information platform. Through STnet.ch, members can view the ST business plan, medium-term planning, selected current studies and analyses, as well as the comprehensive representative visitor survey Tourism Monitor Switzerland (TMS). Membership in Switzerland Tourism forms the basis for extended cooperative opportunities. Members profit from an international network of tour operators, business partners and opinion-makers. Annual membership costs CHF 1,810.



ST members: analysing the latest trends on Switzerland Vacation Day.

## Facts and figures.

Collaborations within the tourism sector	2015	2014
Participating partners*	1,042	984
Members**	722	702
Marketing income from partners	CHF m	28.5
		26.3

\* Including collaborations with hotels and Switzerland Travel Mart

\*\* Current members are listed at [www.stnet.ch/mitglieder](http://www.stnet.ch/mitglieder)



### 18th annual Switzerland Vacation Day in Zermatt.

This year, the key event on the Swiss tourism industry calendar was completely overhauled by ST. In addition to the main programme of events, the 1,270 participants were able to tailor their two-day programme from a choice of 54 breakout sessions. Registration for these 45-minute panel discussions, featuring prominent guest speakers and tourism innovators, was done via a dedicated app. The 18th Switzerland Vacation Day was a resounding success, with satisfaction ratings at an outstanding 96.6 %.



Left:  
Tailored, on-the-job training during breakout sessions at the Switzerland Vacation Day.

Right:  
Business journalist Olivier Dominik and moderator Katja Stauber at the Hotel Marketing Day.

### Hotel Marketing Day: Swiss cultural zones.

For the sixth time, Swiss hoteliers met under the auspices of ST and hotelleriesuisse, the Swiss Hotel Association, for a day of interesting discussions. The main theme was the new developments in domestic tourism, with the spotlight on the differing holiday expectations between Switzerland's German- and French-speaking part. Participants were also able to gain valuable insight into digital strategies, particularly the "sharing economy" trend. A total of 350 delegates attended the Hotel Marketing Day in Geneva and Zurich.



## Industry partnerships.

ST serves the national tourism industry as its information hub and centre of excellence for worldwide marketing. Key to this collaboration and coordination are the tourist regions themselves. In 2015, 14 regional partners invested a total of CHF 12.88 million in marketing activities with ST.

### Facts and figures.

Industry partnerships		2015	2014
Regional partners		14	13
Investment by regional partners	CHF m	12.88	10.85
Investment by industry as a whole	CHF m	28.5	26.3



370 suppliers, 480 buyers: it's all go at STM.

### Valais:

STM in record demand.

At the 18th Switzerland Travel Mart (STM) in Zermatt, the largest and most important international buyers' convention in the Swiss tourism industry, 480 buyers from 50 countries met 370 Swiss tourism suppliers. The aim was to secure bookings for up to an extra 360,000 hotel nights, worth an estimated CHF 87 million. Thanks to the strong presence of leading foreign buyers and the success of one-to-one meetings, ST has every reason to expect that this mission will have been achieved.



Swiss edition of "Condé Nast Traveller".

### Bern-Bernese Oberland:

feature in "Condé Nast Traveller".

"Condé Nast Traveller" is acknowledged as one of the world's leading travel magazines. In partnership with ST, the publication brought out a special UK winter edition on Bern-Bernese Oberland, the canton's dramatic mountain region, with ten pages of inspiring coverage and special offers. "Condé Nast Traveller" is aimed at affluent travellers aged 40+ in the UK. Distributed via various outlets including as an on-board magazine by SkyWork Airlines on the London-Bern route, this special edition reached around 335,000 potential visitors.



Vanina Ickx, daughter of racing driver legend Jacky Ickx, in Vevey on Lake Geneva.

### Lake Geneva Region:

Following famous Belgians.

Belgian media representatives brought the Grand Tour of Switzerland into Belgian consciousness with a special tour. On the trail of famous personalities, they discovered the delights of Lake Geneva Region where a number of well-known Belgians lived and worked. The tour was hosted by Vanina Ickx, daughter of six-time Le Mans champion driver and Formula One runner-up Jacky Ickx. The adventure generated about 4.5 million media contacts.



## Business partnerships.

**All ST's marketing activities with its partners are themed around quality and Swissness, leading to a win-win situation for all involved.**

Through their partnership with ST, top-ranking partners enjoy excellent platforms to market their products worldwide and they also benefit from ST's strong market presence. In return, they support ST financially and through their goods and services. It's a mutually beneficial situation, due to the opportunities ST offers to "experience Swissness" and the outstanding qualities each partner offers in their own right. It opens up new markets and channels of communication, and in more mature markets, the alliance ensure a competitive edge, thanks to targeted actions. For both ST and its partners, the

2015 marketing agenda was a success, with sponsorship income for 2015 at CHF 9.5 million, almost the same level as the previous year.

**STnet.ch/strategicpartners**

### Facts and figures.

Business partnerships	2015	2014
Strategic Premium Partners	5	6
Strategic Partners	10	10
Official Partners	14	17
Special Partners	7*	3
Revenue from sponsorship	CHF m 9.50	9.67

\* Four former Official Partners became Special Partners in 2015.



In motion:  
100 experiences  
to enjoy along  
the Grand Tour.

### UBS:

**100 tips for a dream tour.**

ST once again teamed up with UBS this summer to promote the 100 most beautiful experiences along the new Grand Tour of Switzerland to our domestic market. The 280,000 printed brochures were handed out free by UBS in its bank branches and by ST in a variety of outlets across the country.

### Hallwag Kümmerly+Frey: travel map.

Publishers Hallwag Kümmerly+Frey produced 15,500 Grand Tour of Switzerland tour guides in German and French. This 288-page print guide is packed with tips on 25 sections on the route, and includes a detailed map of Switzerland. It proved to be a bestseller, spending eight weeks in the Swiss non-fiction Top Ten.



In demand: the official guide to the Grand Tour of Switzerland.

### Zurich International Airport: ready for ski season.

150 years winter tourism: ST teamed up with several financial partners — UBS, Appenzeller Bier and Chocolat Frey — to stage a "white Jubilee" anniversary event over four weekends. Taking place in seven promotional areas at Zurich International Airport, these included Arosa Lenzerheide and Engadin St. Moritz. The initiative netted 55,000 contacts.



## A toolkit for tourism marketing.

**ST is focused on having a globally coordinated, professionally created, high-impact market presence. Our partners can collaborate in a variety of ways.**

The scope of ST's marketing operations is clearly defined by the Swiss Confederation: the number one rule is that all key players in Swiss tourism must

benefit from ST's work. These operations include the global market presence and media presence that ST has through its offices in 26 countries, and providing information to visitors via MySwitzerland.com. ST passes on knowledge and experience from market research and crisis communication, and promotes quality development.

### Competence and quality are critical

ST believes in working with Swiss partners who, in their own sectors, are well regarded as competent key players, and represent high quality.

	Promotion	E-marketing	KMM	KAM	General
<b>Market key partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional / destination brochures</li> <li>Flyers / inserts, etc.</li> <li>Advertisements</li> <li>Events</li> <li>Trade fairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presence on third-party platforms</li> <li>MyS.com: landing pages / banners</li> <li>Additional topics ST E-newsletter</li> <li>Social media campaigns (specified)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media events in market</li> <li>Media excursions to partner</li> <li>Press releases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sales calls</li> <li>Workshops</li> <li>Switzerland Travel Experiences</li> <li>Study trips to partner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Account manager</li> <li>Individual partner reporting</li> </ul>
<b>Campaign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital brochures</li> <li>High frequency incl. distribution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skyscraper, teaser</li> <li>1x topic in ST E-newsletter</li> <li>Guaranteed social media presence (not specified)</li> <li>Flood of offers</li> <li>Additional access to MyS.com</li> <li>Campaign apps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presence at media conferences CH and main markets</li> <li>Press releases</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed campaign reporting</li> <li>Basic integration of all campaign partners in market activities</li> <li>Meetings (markets, key partner day)</li> </ul>
<b>Additional presence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional brochures</li> <li>Additional promotions</li> <li>Live events</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshops</li> <li>Switzerland Travel Experiences</li> <li>Switzerland Travel Mart participation</li> <li>Snow Travel Mart Switzerland participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ST hands-on</li> <li>Switzerland Vacation Day participation</li> <li>Strategic Partnerships platforms</li> <li>Enjoy Switzerland participation</li> </ul>
<b>Basic mandate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advising Swiss market cultivation providers</li> <li>TV ads</li> <li>Switzerland magazine</li> <li>Best of ...</li> <li>Travel tips</li> <li>Mood flyers</li> <li>Sponsoring marketing platforms</li> <li>Generic advertisements</li> <li>Generic banners</li> <li>Trade fair stand / basic presence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic E-marketing</li> <li>MyS web presence</li> <li>Description region / destination</li> <li>Search engine optimisation and marketing, banner</li> <li>Calendar of events</li> <li>Activities: hiking, etc.</li> <li>Sights, top attractions</li> <li>Newsletter content cooperation</li> <li>Social media content</li> <li>Generic apps</li> <li>Hotel booking platform</li> <li>Holiday apartment platforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advising Swiss providers</li> <li>Inviting and accrediting media</li> <li>Media customer relationship management (CRM)</li> <li>Distributing information to media</li> <li>Media conferences</li> <li>Media excursions</li> <li>Editing and distributing media stories</li> <li>Twitter messages</li> <li>PRIX BIENVENU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advising Swiss providers (incl. lists of TOs)</li> <li>Developing events with promoters</li> <li>Global accounts</li> <li>Study trips</li> <li>Switzerland Travel Mart</li> <li>E-learning programme</li> <li>Promoter customer relationship management (CRM)</li> <li>Snow Travel Mart Switzerland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advising and coaching providers</li> <li>Switzerland Vacation Day</li> <li>Global ST presence</li> <li>Contact centre</li> <li>Mailing centre</li> <li>Q-programme</li> <li>Enjoy Switzerland basic</li> <li>STnet.ch</li> <li>Branding incl. usage rights</li> <li>Content management</li> <li>Market research / R&amp;D</li> <li>Photos / film</li> <li>Swiss-Image</li> <li>Video library</li> <li>Annual report, AGM</li> <li>Marketing to Swiss abroad</li> </ul>



## Market key figures.

	Number of staff	Media reports generated	Visits to MySwitzerland.com	High-value customer contacts*	Marketing contacts
<b>Priority markets</b>					
China (with Taiwan)	11	757	392,075	408,517	194,077,661
Germany	17	2,894	1,838,331	607,282	593,992,039
France	10	528	1,828,827	278,144	622,145,157
Italy	9	1,248	1,900,884	574,807	671,558,762
Netherlands	8	416	575,267	343,752	94,573,005
Switzerland (headquarters: activities for all markets)	128	2,294	11,387,182	520,500	501,000,000
USA (with Canada)	16	918	1,822,075	488,333	132,125,319
UK (with Ireland)	11	1,269	1,086,483	381,571	229,739,684
<b>Active markets</b>					
Australia (with New Zealand and Oceania)	1 / (1)	484	207,421	19,570	5,383,206
Belgium (with Luxembourg)	4	482	363,330	67,280	96,740,184
Japan	6	135	876,718	93,997	250,410,949
Canada	2	incl. with USA	incl. with USA	incl. with USA	incl. with USA
South Korea	5	671	180,745	152,280	428,024,301
The Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden)	(2)	54	165,920	31,000	28,000,000
Austria (with Hungary)	1 / (1)	1,021	180,598	41,118	30,202,977
Spain	3	335	704,250	198,153	49,000,729
Czech Republic	(2)	394	143,730	75,000	25,472,877
<b>Strategic growth markets</b>					
Brazil	1 / (2)	72	289,233	557,776	115,259,506
Gulf states	3	126	440,405	30,479	108,122,218
India	1 / (5)	175	318,275	437,035	269,491,311
Poland	(2)	214	219,024	78,500	123,613,984
Russia	5	923	361,564	63,005	394,989,377
Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand)	2 / (5)	120	250,247	21,774	23,274,582

( ) Mandated staff

\* Number of E-newsletter subscribers, contacts via the call centre (phone calls, emails, letters), brochure requests and downloads, travellers booking at STC / MySwitzerland.com, respondents via MySwitzerland.com, STC and tour operators, app downloads, feedback / likes on Facebook, followers on Twitter

## Continuing a dual strategy.

**The Swiss National Bank's decision in early 2015 to abolish the minimum euro exchange rate led to fundamental shifts in the tourist industry.**

ST continues to develop its dual strategy of investing both in its traditional short-haul markets and in new markets, and is compensating for the decrease in European visitors with targeted marketing of Switzerland further afield. In the fast-growing long-

haul markets, it aims to focus chiefly on inspiring the independent traveller to visit Switzerland.

The growth in US visitors has been particularly welcome to Swiss hoteliers. With 1.74 million hotel stays booked, the largest number of visitors come from North America. While there is a similar number from the UK, this is an established tourist market traditionally associated with Switzerland. Also showing above-average increases are visitors from India, South Korea, China and the Gulf states. China has even overtaken France to become Switzerland's fourth most important foreign visitor market.

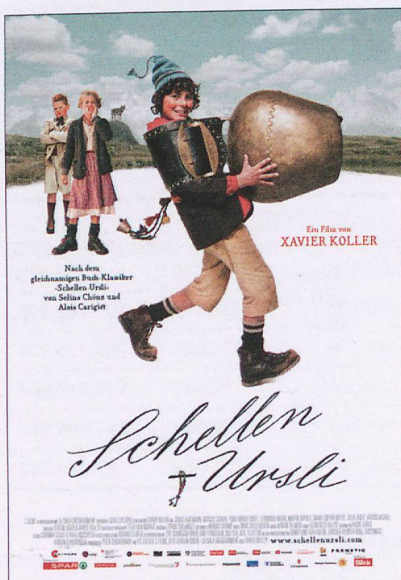


## Enjoy Switzerland: tailoring offering to demand.

**Enjoy Switzerland is a partnership programme with tourist destinations which aims to come up with innovative products, aimed at clearly defined traveller segments and target markets.**

A suggestions box, a coach, a motivator and a think tank... Enjoy Switzerland, run by a department of ST, has been playing all these roles for

12 years. With a tight focus on visitor segments, marketing campaigns and target markets of ST, it helps tourist destinations hone their products and devise new special offers. A new concept is allowing several destinations to team up to fill the gaps in their product via a cooperative model and become an "Enjoy Partner". The scheme has been updated, creating a more multi-tiered approach. As the name "Enjoy" suggests, an experiential offering is central to this scheme. The destinations use ST's project-by-project tendering rounds with their outcome-focused "Enjoy" themes to decide whether to become a cooperative partner, and if so, for which project.



Schellen-Ursli, the children's story character who has made Engadine famous.

### Enjoy Schellen-Ursli.

Since Schellen-Ursli was recently shot on location in the village of Guarda by Xavier Koller, the boost to tourism has been clear, with four "Enjoy" projects centred around the character of this local hero. Initiatives to spruce up the village included modernising the Schellen-Ursli Trail, offering Schellen-Ursli menus at hotels. An old Engadine house will be turned into "Chasa Guarda", a lively meeting and exhibition center for locals and guests.

## PRIX BIENVENU: the nation's friendliest hotels.

### ST presents the hospitality "Oscars" for the third time.

TrustYou consulted more than 250 online rating sites for visitor feedback, based on hospitality, before an expert jury evaluated the hotels with the highest ratings. In the Best Small Holiday Hotel category, Schlosshotel Chastè in Tarasp (GR) was a winner, while in the Large Holiday Hotel category (41 rooms and over), the winner was Hotel Ascovilla in Ascona (TI). The City Hotel category also came from this canton: Hotel Giacometti in Locarno. In the Luxury City Hotel category, the friendliest hotel title went to the Bellevue Palace in Bern while Villa Honegg in Ennetbürgen (NW) won the award for the second time in the Luxury Hotel (non-urban) category. ST partner American Express once again presented this year's PRIX BIENVENU.

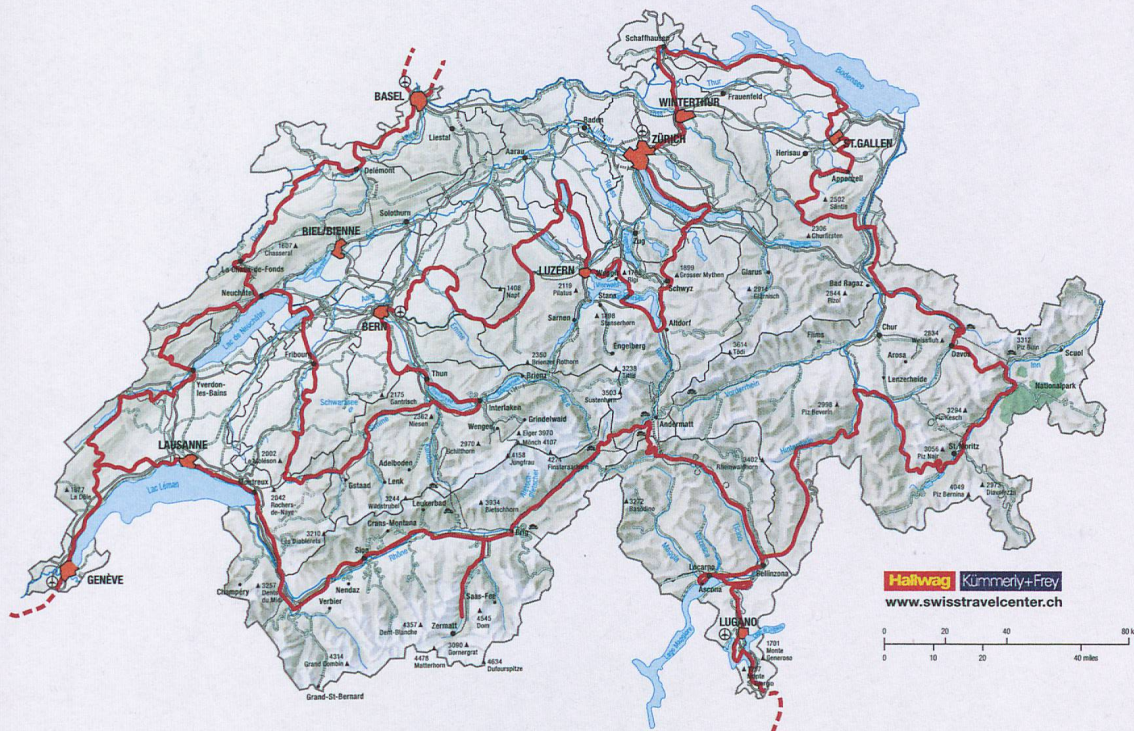


The winners of PRIX BIENVENU: Peter Durrer, Villa Honegg, Ennetbürgen NW; Isabelle Giacometti, Hotel Giacometti, Locarno TI; Margot Faucher, Hotel Ascovilla, Ascona TI; Martina Hänzi (Engadin Scuol), representing Schlosshotel Chastè, Tarasp GR; Urs Bühler, Bellevue Palace Bern.

### Enjoy Schwyz: innovation station.

A new valleys and summits tour combines seven of its mountain railway journeys and offers attractive ticket prices for this unique experience. To encourage school trips in the canton for local pupils, ST started the "Biggest Classroom" initiative. This tool allows school trips to be put together at the click of a mouse including finding and booking group accommodation. Last but not least, online portal "ächt Schwyz" showcases all the restaurants in the canton which offer traditional local cuisine.





The Grand Tour of Switzerland brings over 1,600 kilometres of the country's highlights into a single route.

## Investing in the Grand Tour for the long term.

**It was a challenge to translate the beginnings of the touring trend into what is now the fully fledged Grand Tour of Switzerland, but ST and the specially created Association Grand Tour of Switzerland met that challenge in record time.**

Touring is a global trend. This is clear from market research, where "touring" as a topic is becoming popular worldwide. It quickly became evident to ST that Switzerland was the land par excellence for an 'experience' route taking in the whole country. Where else are so many world-class experiences packed into such a compact space?

ST went into overdrive to set the itinerary. Tourism organisations and destinations were also inspired by the idea; in fact, it seemed the industry had been ready and waiting for an innovation like this. To guarantee widespread support for creating the Grand Tour and its ongoing development, the Swiss Conference of Regional Tourism Directors (RDK) and ST founded the Association Grand Tour of Switzerland (VGTS), which all the RDK directors joined, along with project partners from the world of finance. Chairing VGTS is Martin Sturzenegger, Director of Zurich Tourism who succeeded

Gaudenz Thoma, ex-director of Graubünden Tourism, in September 2015. The general manager is Maria Sägesser. ST also brought three solid partners on board: Audi, Harley Davidson, and publishers Hallwag Kümmerly+Frey.

With this momentum and thanks to a concentrated effort from ST, the Grand Tour of Switzerland was up and running, and marketed worldwide, in just two years. Globally, ST has already seen 690,000 unique visitors arrive at the inspiration and information platform [MySwitzerland.com/grandtour](http://MySwitzerland.com/grandtour) which features a virtual version of the road trip. An initial survey of 4,618 motorists who travelled along sections of the route indicated that 27 % were aware of this new way of discovering Switzerland. The Federal Highways Agency (ASTRA) also assisted by notifying individual cantons that it was happy to place special Grand Tour of Switzerland signage along the route. This project should be fully implemented by summer 2016. More on page 32.



<sup>1</sup> Source: World Travel Trends Report 2013, IPK International