A symbol for the tourist industry

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Destination Switzerland took on new splendour thanks to its golden flower, first revealed in 1995. The official symbol gave a fresh new look to Switzerland Tourism's image. For the first time the industry had a single umbrella brand.

The new trademark even received approval at federal government level. The idea for the golden flower, which came from leading advertising executive of the day Herman Strittmatter, made quite an impression. Marco Hartmann, at the time the new director of Switzerland Tourism, gave the industry a unifying new look and thereby strengthened the reputation that always precedes our country: the new symbol was intended to facilitate the immediate recognition of Switzerland. It also represented natural beauty, joy, value and stability – ideas which were also reflected in the atmospheric landscape images and the conscious use of the term "holiday". The sophisticated logo quickly established itself in countless items of marketing material from partners – a brand, at last, for the entire industry.

New image, new mission

At the same time, on 1 May 1995, the national organisation was given a new name and altered structures. The Swiss National Tourist Office became Switzerland Tourism. The industry blossomed. "Adding value. Together and for everyone" was the intention of the first Swiss holiday conference at Chur in 1998, now known as Switzerland Vacation Day in keeping with its new positioning as a country of holidays, travel and conferences. This most significant trade conference had its roots as far back as 1994 when 200 representatives of the tourism industry approved the marketing strategy of the SNTO at the first Swiss Tourism Day. Under this strategy, the number of participants has increased six-fold; the new format "a whole village for Vacation Day" in Zermatt in 2015 held 1,200 visitors under its spell. All good things come to those who wait: patiently following the road from the first national SNTO campaign in 1931 has brought us to the point where everyone has now come together under one strong umbrella brand.

Switzerland Tourism.

75 years of the SNTO. The anniversary was celebrated with a special edition of "Revue Schweiz".

Foundation of the Switzerland Travel Centre (STC) for easier, networked selling of Switzerland as a destination. Still open today in Zurich, London and Stuttgart.

1991

Switzerland had a reason to celebrate: the country was 700 years old. The tree of flags was inaugurated at Swiss Court in London as part of the festivities.

1993

1998

How the golden flower was created

Hermann Strittmatter is a communications consultant, columnist and active Board President of GGK Zurich, the advertising agency which he founded and which developed the golden flower logo for Switzerland Tourism (ST) more than 20 years ago. He shared with us his memories of how the logo came to be created.

Mr Strittmatter, your advertising agency GGK created ST's golden flower logo over 20 years ago. How did this idea come about?

The logo was part of a competition for Switzerland Tourism's new ST campaign. My creative director Victor Zahn and his people came up with a range of designs. The concept was Swiss identity, the message was holidays. Quite simple. The original design looked very alpine, with a wreath of alpine flowers.

Why was that design altered?

It felt too much like a hike in the high mountains – the experiences that the cities had to offer were not given enough weight. Plus, the edelweiss has a German name, and that wouldn't go down well in French-speaking areas.

Seriously?

Yes indeed. By the way, it's amusing that Mrs Delamuraz, wife of then Economics Minister Jean-Pascal Delamuraz, who was responsible for Switzerland Tourism, asked, "C'est le nouveau logo? Mais que c'est joli – c'est un edelweiss!" (Is that the new logo? Isn't it pretty – it's an edelweiss!). But our reworked design, the solitary "golden flower", turned out superbly and, alongside the official flag, is one of the most recognised symbols for Switzerland today.

Does the golden flower logo still work as a brand for Switzerland Tourism?

Absolutely. It would be an irresponsible act to throw away this established brand and all that enormous hard work to try and create a new one.

The logo representing Swiss national advertising through the years, right up to the golden flower in 1995.

Logo of the Swiss National Tourist Office from the 1930s
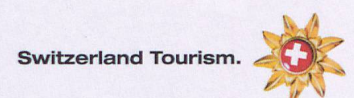
Logo of the Swiss National Tourist Office from the 1960s

Schweizerische Verkehrszentrale

Logo of the Swiss National Tourist Office 1980s to 1995

First design for the golden flower

Switzerland Tourism.

Switzerland Tourism logo since 1995