

Switzerland

Market Summary

The Swiss economy continues to struggle due to its heavy reliance on the export market with all key economic indicators at record lows. Consumer insights reveal that travel plans for the Swiss consumer continue to be a priority but reduced budgets and a trend for short haul destinations continue, as well as further contraction of the booking lead time.

1. Market News

- The employment barometer indicators published each quarter by the Federal Statistical Office (FSO) show a slight downturn in total employment for the first time since the third quarter of 2003.

Source: Federal Statistical Office, Neuchâtel 2009

- The Swiss government cut its 2009 economic forecast for a second time this year after the worst global recession in more than six decades eroded exports. Swiss gross domestic product may drop 2.7 per cent this year and 0.4 per cent in 2010, representing the worst contraction since at least 1975. Swiss leading economic indicators remained at a record low in May. The Swiss government announced a third stimulus program in June to counter the crisis.

Source: Bloomberg, www.bloomberg.com, 27 August 2009

- The free Swiss newspaper *Basler Zeitung* is in negotiations with the Swiss publisher Tamedia about the sale of 25 per cent interest on 'News' as a result of financial problems. *Source: www.nzz.ch, July 2009*

2. Consumer Insights

- 77 per cent of the Swiss population will not change vacation plans because of the finance crisis.

Source: Carat, August 2009

- 25 per cent of the Swiss population will slightly reduce their holiday budget.

Source: Carat, August 2009

- 42 per cent of the Swiss population who are intending to maintain the same holiday budget will travel abroad but closer to Switzerland (e.g. France, Italy, Austria, Mallorca), whilst 33 per cent will holiday domestically.

Source: Carat, August 2009

- Despite the financial crisis, the sale of organic products – usually more expensive than non-organic products - has remained steady amongst the Swiss population.

Source: Carat, August 2009

- Blogs have increased the appeal of newspaper NZZ Online. Since autumn 2008, readers of the Swiss Newspaper *Neue Züricher Zeitung* have been able to participate in blogging on the website; www.nzzvotum.ch, a portal used by politicians and key public figures.

Source: www.nzz.ch, July 2009

For the latest in visitor arrivals, please visit 'Research & Statistics' at www.tourism.australia.com

3. Trade Update

- The economic crisis has forced some wholesalers to take action in order to secure profitability of their business; e.g. Kuoni introduced part-time work, effective 1 September 2009.

Source: <http://www.kuoni-group.com/Media+Relations/Media+Releases/Media+Releases+2008/Articles/>, 27 August 2009

- Wholesalers report that bookings either have shorter lead times or very long ones. Pre-bookings for second half of the year are looking negative for most wholesalers. Aggressive online offers by Australian products is steering some business away from wholesalers.
- As at July 2009, there were 302 Aussie Specialist agents, of which 52 per cent were fully qualified.

4. Airline News

- Qatar Airways will increase its services from Zurich to Doha for their winter schedule 2009. The airline will service Doha five times a week and starts services to Australia from 6 December 2009. The first gateway will be Melbourne, with Sydney planned for early 2010.

Source: TRAVEL INSIDE Newsletter, 17 August 2009

- The Federal Statistical Office has published figures on Swiss airports and its passenger flows. The first quarter of 2009 has experienced a massive drop in passengers with total numbers dropping by 359,918 passengers. Flights to Central America from Zurich Airport are down by 33 per cent and flights to North America from Geneva are down by 13 per cent. Flights to Asia from Bern Airport are down 16 per cent.

Source: Federal Statistical Office, www.statistik.admin.ch, 17 August 2009

- Singapore Airlines are promoting their Australia campaign with a special fare of CHF 1,599 (including taxes and fees) return to Australia.
- Emirates are offering a promotional fare to Sydney from CHF 1,896 (including taxes and fees) for the travel period of 1 August 2009 to 31 October 2010.

Source: www.emirates.com, 17 August 2009

5. Competitor News

- Mauritius reported a decrease of total visitor arrivals between January and June of 9.3 per cent compared to the same period of previous year. Figures dropped from 455,758 to 413,504.

Source: ST-Newsletter, 10 August 2009

- New Caledonia have launched a new e-learning tool for travel agents www.caledonie-learning.com.

Source: TRAVEL INSIDE Newsletter, 27 August 2009

- Between January and May 2009 the US reported a decrease of 10 per cent in terms of total visitor arrivals compared to the same period of 2008. The main source markets show a significant decrease (Great Britain down 19.4 per cent, Japan down 13.9 per cent, Germany down 7.5 per cent), visitor numbers from Switzerland have increased slightly by 0.3 per cent.

Source: TRAVEL INSIDE Newsletter, 07 August 2009

- Canada have reported stable visitor arrivals from Switzerland. For the period of January to June 2009, a total of 37,956 Swiss visitors came to Canada. This is the same number of visitors as in the same period in 2008.

Source: www.corporate.canada.travel 07 August 2009

6. Key Campaigns and Activities in Market

Current Campaigns and Activities				
START DATE	END DATE	DESCRIPTION	TARGET AUDIENCE	PARTNERS
31 August 2009	30 September 2009	<p><i>Singapore Airlines Campaign</i></p> <p>Singapore Airlines and Tourism Australia launched a major media partnership with Swiss newspaper <i>Blick</i> and leading online portal <i>blick.ch</i>.</p> <p>The campaign involves special Australia airfare offers from Singapore Airlines combined with Australian news stories around Singapore Airlines gateways in the German speaking part of Switzerland for 10 days in September 2009. The campaign also includes a major competition to win a trip to Australia and double page advertorials in <i>Sonntagsblick</i> and <i>Blick am Abend</i> on barefoot luxury and '10 things you can only do in Australia'.</p> <p>Australia.com features dedicated campaign page and tour operator offers on the site.</p>	Swiss first time experience seekers, including barefoot luxury angles	Tourism Australia, Singapore Airlines, Publishing House Ringier

Upcoming Campaigns and Activities				
START DATE	END DATE	PROJECT/EVENT	TARGET AUDIENCE	PARTNERS
07 September 2009	10 September 2009	<p><i>Gretz Winter Destination Roadshow</i></p> <p>Travel agent training in four Swiss cities.</p>	Aussie Specialist, Travel Agents	Various destination and product partner