

SWISS MOUNTAIN RAILWAY ON A DOWNWARD TREND, IN AUSTRIA IT'S BETTER



Disenchantment dominates the Swiss Mountain Railways: At the end of 2013, the Swiss Cable Car Association stated, that the members started off well in the winter season and also, that initial admissions and transport volumes increased in December in comparison to the previous year. In January, the picture changed: 4.4 percent less guests were transported, the sales went back by 2.9 percent. In addition to "unusually bad" weather in the mountains (half as much sun hours as usual), the continuing strong Franks is mentioned as the reason for that. There are no January numbers available about Austrias Mountain Railways, the lack of snow has surely upset the plans. The Austrian Mountain Railways have developed significantly better and even on a much higher level.

The recent setback hits Swiss Mountain Railways very hard. They invested a lot for the winter 2013/14. Approximately 400 million Franks (about 326 million Euro) were invested Switzerland-wide for the optimization of facilities, its comfort as well as for the slope snow, also partially for new facilities. Goal was to not only stop the longstanding downward trend of the ski days but also to turn it into its opposite.

Admittedly, there was a plus of 2.6 percent in Switzerland in 2012/13 with 25.4 million ski days but this value was 6.7 percent under the five-year average. There were intense declines in the three previous winters.

In the previous winter 2012/13, the industry turnovers reached ca. 756.5 million Franks (618.5 million Euro), which is 2 percent more than in the winter before that.

By way of comparison: Austria's cable cars reached twice as much in the winter 2012/2013 with 50.9 million ski days (plus 11.9 percent), the spot sales reached 1.178 billion Euro (plus 14.8 percent). Different from Switzerland, there were greater turnovers than frequency increases and both were in the double-digit area.

For the winter season 2013/2014, the Austrian cable car companies have invested 507 million Euro. If you compare the investment sums with those of the Swiss cable car companies, you'll see the major efforts which were undertaken by the Swiss for the current season: the mentioned investment volume of 327 million Euro in Switzerland corresponds to more than half (52.3 percent) of the lastly reached turnover. For the season 2012/2014, Austria's cable cars invested with 43 percent "only" roughly 2/5 of their turnovers.

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