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1,600 municipal flags measuring 50x50 cm: the "flag forest" at the National Exhibition in Zurich in 1939 tempted visitors to take trips to discover their homeland.

Exhibition Switzerland

Switzerland for mind, body and soul: in shop windows and on exhibition stands, the holiday nation knows how to present itself at world and national exhibitions – always imaginatively. The world watches, enthralled.

Walking on the “Road of Flags”, with its 1,600 municipal flags, at the end of which the white cross of Switzerland hung resplendent, was an unforgettable moment for the ten million visitors to the “Landi 39” national exhibition. The installation portraying a united confederation beneath a colourful forest of flags was a symbol of patriotism. But it was more, too. As war loomed, the SNTO sought to use the national exhibition to encourage Swiss citizens to travel within their own country.

A presence in all the best places

Communication means showing off – in the best possible sense, of course. Since its foundation, the SNTO has made pioneering and dynamic use of shop windows, principally in its own agency offices. Enticing window displays have also grabbed attention at banks and major department stores, such as Harrods, Galeries Lafayette and Rinascente. Grand boulevards, avenues and futuristic settings

such as Paris’s La Défense district have become the SNTO’s stage. Whether with scenes of folklore and traditional dress, abstract mobiles featuring Swiss motifs or a Grand Tour with an Oculus Rift headset, visitors around the world are transported for a moment and in 3D quality to Destination Switzerland. Thanks to the talent of SNTO curators, official Switzerland also triumphs at world expositions. One highlight was the Jollyball machine by Charles Morgan, at the EXPO in Vancouver in 1986. This gigantic pinball machine, which took you on a playful journey through touristy Switzerland, was even listed by the Guinness Book of Records. The witty exhibits by SNTO graphic artist Hans Küchler are also legendary: his walking stick exhibition, which premiered at the Mustermesse Basel in 1974, went on tour, appearing countless times in hotel lobbies and on cruise ships.

At major trade fairs and public exhibitions, tourist Switzerland has shown what “swiss made” design really means – naturally in red and white and using sustainable materials. Switzerland’s exhibition stand, redesigned in 2010 in lounge style, with large screens and strong images, repeatedly garners world acclaim. It made first place at the World Travel Market 2010 in London – and Switzerland Tourism’s stand won Best Booth Design Award at the first World Winter Sports Expo in Beijing in 2016.

Foundation of the Swiss Film Board (SFZ) with the participation of the SNTO; the objective was the improved distribution of tourism films abroad.



1936



The SNTO (SVZ in German) became a corporation under public law. The SBB, PTT (Swiss Post Office) and SNTO combined their tourism advertising. The Federal Railways made their international network of sales points available to the Swiss National Tourism Office.

1939

Start of World War II. Tourism came to an almost complete halt due to the war.

